

Venkatraman Varatharajan

Ms. Small

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### Analysis of Dihydrogen Monoxide - The Truth

Online news has made information more readily accessible than ever. Unfortunately, this also means the higher prevalence of fake or exaggerated news. The main way that people aim to combat Throughout “Dihydrogen Monoxide - The Truth,” the ironic use of logos and reductio ad absurdum to mock sensationalist news is highly effective in educating readers and making them think more carefully about where their information comes from.

Dihydrogen Monoxide ironically uses logos to prompt people to be more careful about the credibility of their sources. In many locations, the article uses many logical facts and overloads the reader with information. The most prominent example of this was in the bulleted section titled “Dihydrogen Monoxide Facts”. This section contains bullet points about many “dangers” related to Dihydrogen Monoxide. One example is “Dihydrogen monoxide has been found in the excised tumors of terminal cancer patients.” This technically not false: all body tissues, including cancerous tumors, have water in them. However, the way the fact is stated presses the reader to assume that water causes tumors. It highlights how easily facts can be twisted to support a narrative. In another ironic appeal to logos, the piece discusses how scare tactics are to be avoided. “The Dihydrogen Monoxide Research Division does not endorse the use of such scare tactics, particularly when telling people about the invisible killer, Dihydrogen Monoxide.” There is a blatant contradiction present in this sentence. The reader likely reread this sentence two or three times to ensure that they did not misunderstand its meaning. The paradox almost acts as an invective, surprising the reader and drawing attention to it. It forces the reader to use their common sense and encourages the reader to use common sense whenever they read.

The reductio ad absurdum in this piece is very nuanced and does an excellent job at advancing the satire’s purpose. Everyone who reads this piece will be certain that it is ridiculous. If read at face value, it

claims that water is a substance that poses a significant threat to life. The blog is applying *reductio ad absurdum* to sensationalist news. It shows that even the legality of water can be challenged using sensationalist news. The reader comes away feeling like this piece was a comedy and that this does not apply to them. In the last paragraph, the true target is directly hinted at. "Is it any wonder that people are skeptical after reading all of that slanted, anti-DHMO propaganda?" At first glance, this seems to be declaring the target of this satire: sensationalist news. However, it has a hidden message. It also implies within it that the public should take some responsibility while learning information online. It shows the reader that they were easily able to identify the questionable credibility of the article above. An invisible question is asked between the lines: Why are you not able to determine other sensationalist news? This article, while satirizing sensationalist news, also satirizes people who are ready to believe whatever they read online. By not explicitly revealing this target, it makes the satire feel less like a personal attack and more like a reminder. By not directly satirizing the naive people who believe what they read online, the satire is able to soften the blow. It shows them how ridiculous their behavior is and is also able to incorporate humor. A direct approach is likely to offend the reader, who may perceive it as a criticism of their intelligence. Overall, a nuanced use of reduction is highly effective in getting the audience to change.

"Dihydrogen Monoxide - The Truth" uses both *logos* and reduction to achieve an effective satire against sensational news while also encouraging the reader to think critically while reading. These two devices used in conjunction effectively create a piece that can effectively achieve its purpose.