Geoengineering Can Solve The Planet's Global Warming Problem, According To David Keith

By Nick Quon, an avid blogger

Over the past several years, the topic of geoengineering has become a growing controversy. The idea that man can engineering the planet's climate to solve worldy problems has people wondering the effectiveness that the methods could have. In a relatively recent interview with climate scientist David Keith, reporter Brad Plumer asks Keith the ideas surrounding the idea of what he calls, "solar engineering." What Keith says in the interview may have people fuming while others may accept his ideas with open arms. This essay will focus on the rhetorical strategies Plumer and Keith use to effectively give their readers a sense of connection. The Washington Post's Brad Plumer and David Keith, who also carries the title of Harvard Professor and Carbon Engineering co-founder, utilize multiple rhetorical strategies to better connect with readers to aid in the presentation of geoengineering and the environment.

From research into Plumer via various websites, he can be considered a credible and reliable source of information. The issue here is that his use of an interview may or may not be of the most reliable way to convey the information given. Nevertheless, for those interested in the topic of geoengineering, namely "solar geoengineering" (as Keith calls it), or those in support of the methods, the ideas presented by Keith in the interview may be solid evidence of reliable and credible information. Plumer's main reason for an interview is to help readers get a breakdown of each specific sub-topic in a person's perspective. The interview was first initiated by Plumer after the release of the Keith's book, "A Case for Climate Engineering." Interviewing Keith, in Plumer's eyes, may bring out some pertinent information on the mindset of the author

when writing his book. A great thing to come out of conducting the interview was that Keith gives insight on his own opinions and beliefs first-hand. Something that does not appear in many articles regarding a controversy is the statements of the subject being called unethical or inappropriate. In the interview, Keith is allowed to present his story without much criticism as he gives a sense of doubt to some of the methods he advocates *for*. From the article, "...climate scientist David Keith has long argued that we should start thinking seriously about *both* strategies." Both of the strategies being "stop adding carbon-dioxide to the atmosphere" and "try to artificially cool the planet." All in all, Plumer's choice of an interview is most effective for a topic of this sort. Keith is presented the ability to express his opinions freely without much direct criticism at the time of the interview. This method is best to explain a person's thoughts on a topic, or in this case a much debated subject that affects the entire planet.

From the conducted interview, Plumer formats his article as a direct script of the conversation between himself and David Keith. He presents a bolder, larger text for his titles and questions, while leaving Keith's answers in an unthickened black font. This type of organization for this article helps readers navigate the page better. The ease of sight each question and answer can help a reader find the information they desire without having to read the entire article. Each subcategory in the article is introduced with a question from Plumer and followed by a personal response from the expert. For the questions asked, Keith provides an in-depth explanation of his standpoint and view with regards to the planet's climate, mainly on the subject of global warming. Plumer's article format is best for this kind of publication especially because he conducted an interview with an expert. Readers want the truth so what is better than providing the word for word Q&A between interviewer and scholar. To add to the effectiveness, an interview utilizes the method of questions and answers -- readers again want

the details and truth, so using questions that any ordinary person might ask is an effective way to connect with an audience.

An audience can effectively understand a controversy if an argument is countered with a refutation. This rhetorical strategy is clearly displayed in the article and given by David Keith in his responses to Plumer's questions on the topic of geoengineering the atmosphere to 'solve' global warming. A benefit to readers in this article is Keith's presentation of the benefits *and* the risks of geoengineering while also advocating *for* such methods. He gives examples and possibilities of predicted outcomes as well as consequences to the uses of solar geoengineering. Keith counter's his own support with a minor flaw in the methods used in geoengineering, "Nothing we know about cutting carbon-dioxide emissions says that's going to help us deal with the risk of CO2 that's already in the atmosphere, or deal with climate risks in the very short term." This statement was made by Keith in response to a question asking why reflecting the sun's rays is a reasonable method to cooling the earth. He provides a slight doubt of the possibilities showing readers and Plumer that he sense of reasonability on the subject. Not surprisingly, Keith presents his slight doubts to his opinions on several occasions throughout the duration of the interview. In another instance, the climate scientist provides his support for geoengineering while also giving a reasonable amount of attention to the risks. In his mind, he still is a very strong advocate of geoengineering the planet's natural occurrences to reduce the human impact. He states with regards to his company, "(And full disclosure: I work on a company related to that.)" This statement, which Plumer decides to include in his article, tells a reader that Keith wants to continue to argue his evidence even though stating possible risks. In the quote, "that" refers to technology with the means of removing carbon-dioxide from the atmosphere on a large scale. The "company" Keith works with is Carbon Engineering, a independent Canadian company based in Calgary, Alberta. The firm grew from university

studies conducted on carbon management technologies by David Keith, then a professor at the University of Calgary, and his research group working alongside Carnegie Mellon University in Pennsylvania. Carbon Engineering's vision per their website, "CE will bring industrial-scale air capture to market, by designing and building the world's first air capture plant." In the article, the good and bad aspects of geoengineering the planet come into perspective. Keith presents his positive views on the methodology of geoengineering while also stating certain consequences that may become apparent. As global warming is a large factor being taken into consideration for this issue, Keith understands that he cannot persuade all people to follow him so he decides on understanding the whole controversy as a broad idea with multiple populations taking on different views.

The prominent three rhetorical strategies presented by Plumer, as previously stated, are: the use of an interview, the formatting of an article based on the interview, and the presentation of arguments with counterarguments and refutations. He uses these strategies to aid a reader in better understanding the context of geoengineering and its applications with regards to global engineering. In review, the use of an interview greatly increases a reader's ability to comprehend a person's opinions and beliefs from which he or she is commenting or answering in the interview. The author's choice of formatting his article in comparison to the interview is a great addition to the using the strategy of an interview itself. And lastly, how the author conveys questions in argument presentation form while Keith reluctantly answers in a two sided manner helps a reader develop a clear understanding of Keith's opinions from his responses in the interview. These strategies employed by Plumer help his article become a significant source of information on geoengineering from the view of an advocate of the methods used. His goals are seemingly to inform his readers the ideology behind solar geoengineering while also giving evidence of the support for it and the possible risks that come with it.