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Rhetoric 321 Analysis 2 Assignment

The 21st century has brought with it a myriad of technological advancements all designed to make the lives of the developed world much easier, faster, and more fun. These new technologies are not coming without their own set of costs, though. One of the greatest prices people may be paying for their technology is the high cost of the loss of privacy that may come with many of these devices. Jim Hightower, an author for Creators.com is very worried about what the new technological age will mean for privacy. In his article, “Watch Out -- the Drones Are Coming Home to Roost” (<http://www.creators.com/opinion/jim-hightower/watch-out-the-drones-are-coming-home-to-roost.html>) Jim Hightower proclaims the dangers that an increased number of domestic drones will have on American privacy in an effort to urge the reader to take action against the U.S. government’s unmanned domestic drone policy that Hightower claims is being used to spy on U.S. citizens domestically.

The drones that Hightower is so worried about are, by definition, unmanned air vehicles that are piloted by trained personnel hundreds of miles away, are outfitted with cameras, and can strike using missiles at any time. Hightower employs a broad range of rhetorical figures throughout his article to decry the use of these drones domestically as an unnecessary infringement on U.S. privacy. Early in the article, Hightower employs a metaphor to put into context that the drones are merely “Orwellian Gnats” that the government is putting into our skies without answering any of the public’s questions about them. The metaphor is referring to the Orwell novel 1984 which describes a dystopia in which the government has become out of control and used technology and brain-washing to control a massive amount of people. This metaphor gives the reader the context for viewing these drones. Instead of seeing them merely as devices that can aid in the fight against crime, terrorism, or drugs, with this

metaphor the reader can see the drones as part of a government that is focused on controlling and surveying its people rather than protecting them. Another rhetorical figure that Hightower employs is the synecdoche relating the imposition of domestic drones as a part of a greater scheme to provide complete surveillance on American citizens and completely erode privacy. Hightower's main concern is not just that domestic drones will begin spying on Americans, but that these drones will become just one of many weapons used against American citizens in order to keep them in completely control. Hightower comments that with these drones, "We are on a fast track to becoming a society under routine, pervasive surveillance." According to Hightower, these drones are becoming part of a much larger, more insidious plot to delve into the privacy of American citizens. This synecdoche much more greatly increases the impact that drones would have on the lives of American citizens. Instead of surveillance stopping with drones, this synecdoche paints the picture of a much greater plot. Both the earlier metaphor and this synecdoche both help to further Hightower's underlying message that the American people should not passively accept having domestic drones cruise the American skies.

The main stasis that Hightower is arguing from is one relative to the quality or value of having the drones themselves. He is in agreement that drones do exist and he even offers his own definition of drones as "Cheap, small, noiseless and practically invisible" devices that are able to "take snooping to a whole new level." Though he understands they exist and even offers a definition of what they are, Hightower is claiming that they are not good for the future society in America. The rest of the article is dedicated to proving why they need to be abolished, and he even links to a website (www.epic.org – the electronic privacy information center) as a place the reader should go to find more information on fighting the emergence of drones in America.

Hightower also uses many formal topics to convince the reader that they should not passively accept the surveillance on domestic drones. For example, Hightower employs is analogy when he

compares the cries of those against drones in Congress to the cries of Paul Revere as he rode through New England proclaiming “The British are coming!” By making this analogy, Hightower is comparing the current government, or at least those in it who are pushing domestic drones, to the oppressive British government that the American colonists broke away from in the late 1700s. In using this analogy, Hightower is creating a similar call to action against the part of the American government that would push a policy that Hightower sees as equally oppressive. This analogy brings a historical issue fresh into the mind of the reader and contextualizes the current battle over privacy into a context involving another battle, The American Revolution, that the reader is probably much more familiar with.

Hightower’s discourse is deliberative in nature. He is writing from a point of view that criticizes a policy that is currently being put in place and he is criticizing it based on the effects that the policy will have on the future privacy of the American people and integrity of the American government. He is not writing about something that has already happened, as a juridical essay would, and he is not just saying that drones are bad, as an epideictic discourse would entail. Instead he is claiming that the policy of domestic drone surveillance that is being more greatly accepted amongst our leaders will have very bad future impacts on the privacy of the American public. The exigency for his essay is created in the first lines of the essay when Hightower mentions that Obama recently promoted John Brennan to the head of the CIA. Brennan, Hightower says, is the “architect of this high-tech [drone] kill policy.” Therefore, with the promotion of a man whom Hightower claims is responsible for the idea of domestic drone surveillance, Hightower is called to immediately give his speech act in broad opposition of domestic drone surveillance. There seems to be no better time to pre-emptively write against the use of domestic drones than right after the champion of domestic drone surveillance is promoted to the head of the Central Intelligence Agency.

The main argument that Hightower is making that Americans should not passively accept being under surveillance by domestic unmanned drones is built through a main enthymeme. The major premise of the enthymeme is that American citizens should oppose any effort by their government to closely and actively watch them. This premise is built through Hightower's historical example of Paul Revere riding to warn about the British government coming. For Hightower, this is a similar kind of oppression from a government that must be stopped immediately, because American citizens have a history of rising against unnecessary government actions such as high taxes and surveillance. The minor premise is that domestic drones provide a way for the government to closely and actively spy on whichever American citizen they want. This minor premise is built through Hightower's cataloging of all of the drones' abilities. He mentions how drones have "super-high-powered lenses, infrared and ultraviolet imaging, radar that can see through walls." Hightower even discusses how the drones can be "weaponized" so that police agents can go from intrusion to repression. The capabilities that the drones have help to establish the minor premise that they provide a means for the government to closely and actively watch the citizens. The major and minor premise of the article lead the reader to a conclusion that the reader must take immediate action to stop the imposition of domestic unmanned drone surveillance. Hightower even makes this conclusion explicit when, in the last line of his article, he states that, "Not only is this a fight that grassroots people can win against the profiteers and privacy invaders, but it's one we must win." Hightower is using the conclusion of his article to conclude his major enthymeme with a call to action. He believes the American people must take immediate action against the drone policy in order to put a stop to unnecessary surveillance of American citizens.

Jim Hightower, a writer for Creators.com, does not believe that there is anything good about the increased use of domestic unmanned drones in America. He uses a wide array of rhetorical figures, and formal topics to create his argument that the American people should not passively accept an increase

in unmanned drones across domestic skies. He situates his argument in one referring to the quality and value of drone surveillance and his exigency for his article comes on the heels of the appointment of a new head of the CIA. Hightower believes that the American people do not want to be unnecessarily spied on by their government, and he believes that these drones will allow the government to spy unnecessarily on its people. Therefore, Hightower has written this article to persuade the reader to take action against these drones to help ensure that they do not become a reality in the skies of America. With his article we can realize that while advancements in technology may make our lives faster and easier, we must also be cautious about what these advancements mean for the future of our privacy.

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