

The inability for most to recognise that choice of diet contributes significantly to climate change has sparked a furore over what actions truly benefit the environment. Hannah Lyong, in her website post on “Less Meat Less Heat”, asserts the need to tackle climate change by reducing red meat consumption, whilst also extolling the benefits of the climatarian diet. As a climate change activist and volunteer for “Less Meat Less Heat”, Lyong starts in a fervent tone which later shifts into an empowered tone. Moreover, the advertisement at the start of the post also advocates for a climatarian diet by optimistically unveiling the vast range of food which can be consumed. Whilst the second image also corroborates Lyong’s idea, it contends that the benefits of implementing the diet are not limited to environmental- it positively impacts on health too.

Lyong initially accentuates the ineffectiveness of the current steps taken to combat climate change. The italicised “in”, when asserting that such efforts are rendered futile as a result of “what we put in those tote bags”, intimates that a trigger which worsens climate change is found in these bags. Thus, Lyong prompts the young adult readership to contemplate the irony: in their noble attempt to reverse climate change, they are inadvertently causing damage to the environment. Furthermore, the mention that the organisation who conducted the study is a “non-profit [and] non-governmental” bolsters the credibility of the study’s findings. This appeal to ethos adds gravitas to Lyon’s argument and hence, instills a sense of trust in the young adult readers due to the inherently unbiased and factual results of the study. In addition, the study reveals that in spite of the well-meaning efforts to limit climate change in non-diet-related ways, “the mean global temperature will still rise to an untenable level”. The adjective “untenable”, coupled with the qualifier “still” underlines the futility of these efforts as they have minimal impact in curbing climate change, which will nevertheless be incapable of being stopped. Hence, Lyong invites young adults to share her passion in overcoming climate change through what she perceives to be a more beneficial way: the adoption of a climatarian diet. This fervour is reflected in the accompanying advertisement of the app. The floating food, including succulent tomatoes and ripe apples, accentuates that the core of the diet will be comprised of vegetarian options. Through the assortment of food, young adults are maneuvered to acknowledge the variety of food which is permitted on this diet, overturning/ nullifying their potential fears that it will be limiting and dull. In addition, the dotted swirls, text in bubbles and the bright screen symbolise the excitement and sheer joy to be experienced whilst combatting climate change with the climatarian diet. Consequently, the advertisement impels young Australians to download the app to fully experience what the ad portrays as gratifying challenge.

Lyong moves on to reveal how the meat industry manipulates Australians to continue purchasing meat. The sarcastic phrase, “there has been some very clever advertising by Meat and Livestock Australia” in coercing Australians to eat meat, alludes to the company’s propagation of this ideal upon vulnerable Australians. By portraying them as a calculating body, Lyong challenges young adult readers to castigate Meat and Livestock Australia for their deviousness to suit their own purpose of increasing sales. Lyong compounds her admonishment of the company by incorporating their description of vegetarians as “soap-avoiding and pot smoking”- a denigrating portrayal of those who emphasise the need to save the environment. Accordingly, young adults may lambaste Meat and Livestock Australia for deliberately depicting vegetarians as unkempt and with no purpose, given their immense contribution in eradicating climate change.

Finally, Lyong delves into the environmental and health benefits of partaking in the simple climatarian challenge. The change from the first person plural pronoun “we” to the second person singular pronoun “you” shifts the onus of the germane issue and responsibility onto the young adult readers. Accordingly, Lyong encourages them to fulfil their common desire: to protect the planet against the dire ramifications of climate change through the Lyong’s proposed diet. In addition, by declaring that “generation before [them] and many others cultures around the world” only consume beef and lamb on special occasions, Lyong spotlights the widespread nature of this habit, which is not unique to Australia. Accordingly, young adults are compelled to realise that they will not be alone in this endeavour of reducing their meat consumption, as innumerable people also reduce their intake with no consequences. Furthermore, through the repetition of the adverb “simply” in outlining possible alternatives to foods damaging to the environment, Lyong predisposes young adults to the sheer eases of engaging in the climatarian diet as there are is no difficulty in finding environmentally-friendly replacements. Moreover, the accompanying food and environmental pyramid stresses that the benefits are not only environmental- incorporating vegetarian options is also in the best interest of one’s health. From the artist’s labels, young adults may infer that animal products have high environmental impact and are recommended for low consumption. Hence, they may be alarmed at the realisation that animal products, such as beef and fish, are as damaging to their health as the environment. Indeed, the artist may reassure them of the multifarious benefits as a result of substituting their diet with vegetarian options- the essence of the climatarian diet, whilst also potentially overcoming their scepticism that the benefits are limited.

In essence, Lyong and the accompanying images empower young adults to make a difference by challenging them to eliminate meat products, given their negative impact on the environment and their health. She also impresses upon the young generation of the ease with which they can diversify their diets, by drawing attention to the numerous, easily-accessible alternatives.