

Fyre Festival

A Cautionary Tale of Fraud and Crimes



Trailer for Eyre Festival

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mz5kY3RsmKo>

Background

- 2017
- 5,000 people
- Tickets were hundreds of thousands
- Luxury music festival on private island in Bahamas
- Gourmet food catered
- Party with celebrities
- Stay in villas
- The festival was a scam
 - Bare mattresses
 - Limited tents
 - Meals of cheese slices on bread

Billy McFarland

- 2013: Magnises (Black) American express card invention
- December 12 2016: influencers posted promotions on instagram
- April 27, 2017: guests arrive and find nothing
- June 30th 2017: Billy is arrested and charged with wire fraud
- August 30th 2017: Fyre Festival LLC goes bankrupt
- June 18th 2018: gets caught selling fraudulent tickets
- October 11 2018: sentenced to six years in prison



Promises Made

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uZ0KNVU2fV0> (netflix documentary trailer)

Performers: The final advertised lineup was for 33 artists, including Pusha T, Tyga, Desiigner, Blink-182, Major Lazer, Disclosure, Migos, Rae Sremmurd, Kaytranada, Lil Yachty, Matoma, Klingande, Skepta, Claptone, Le Youth, Tensnake, Blond:ish, and Lee Burridge.

Influencers: Most well-known supermodels like Bella Hadid, Kendall Jenner, Hailey Baldwin, and Emily Ratajkowski

Island amenities

- Famous celebrities on yachts
- Different packages available
- Fly in on private planes
- Gourmet food: Starr Catering Group
- Popular artists
- Luxury, eco- friendly domes and villas



Reality



The Rhetoric of Parties/Festivals

Why is this rhetoric so effective?

- Normally parties make others feel inclusive but this was about exclusion
- Parties are for cool kids
- Fyre Festival was on the basis of money
- The use of influencers to promote showing that if people spent the money on the festival then they can be just like them



Rhetoric of VIP

VIP section, VIP credit card, VIP Status -
What's the point of the different packages?

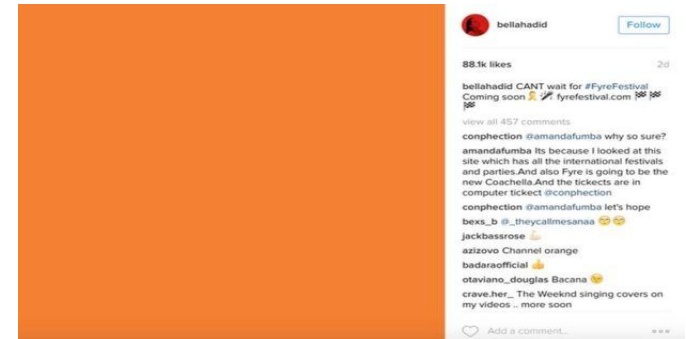
- Showing the world that one is at a higher status
- Conveying importance by spending money
- Billy stole even more money by promoting this rhetoric on social media to a specific audience via influencers



Social Media

Enabling Fraud via Influencers

- App Billy first made: Fyre media
- Using influencers through social media: Kendall Jenner 80 million followers
 - Advertised it as if they were going to be at festival
 - Was paid \$275,000 to advertise
- Instagram
- The attributes of marketing through influencers:
 - Adds credibility
 - Appeals to ethos
 - Reaches an audience that is mainly young adults
- 400 influencers dubbed fyre influencers
 - Rhetoric of exclusion



Context of the Time: Trump's presidency 🍌

- Trump presidency: a period marked by fraudulent activity
- Aggressive white masculinity mixed with entrepreneurialism



Hegemony

- Billy was a white male entrepreneur
- Hegemonic masculinity: gender inequality
- Discourses securing hegemonic white masculinity: image of the entrepreneur
- Traits of self-made man
- Parasitic masculinity virtues



Lack of Logos

- Lied about Fyre Media worth of \$90 million/cancellation policies
- Commitment to image over logistics
- Stakeholder engagement in delusional thinking
- 59 invested in Fyre Festival

