Cities are forever evolving, shaping their history throughout time. In every city, someone must complete the difficult jobs that come with dangerous and hazardous conditions. Kiera Feldman and Vanessa Lowe highlight these employees doing the work no one else wants to do. In both "Trashed: Inside the Deadly World of Private Garbage Collection" by Kiera Feldman and "Stay Warm, Be Careful" by Vanessa Lowe, the authors choose to inform and persuade their audience to stand up for the mistreated workers in cities by telling other people’s stories, however, Feldman uses primarily one man and his hardships to display the wrongdoings while Lowe uses two contrasting characters.

On the podcast “Stay Warm, Be Careful”, Lowe begins by speaking to Stephanie about delivery drivers in the city. Stephanie does not give them much respect and is more often than not quite hypocritical. She complains that delivery drivers do not follow the rules of the road and this leads to dangerous streets and sidewalks because of their recklessness. Lowe then purposely asks Stephanie if she jaywalks, forcing Stephanie to admit that she does quite often. To create contrast, Lowe then speaks to Cesar. Lowe sympathizes with Cesar through the timeline because Lowe finds ways for Cesar to show off the difficulty of his job to the listener. Cesar says his bike is frequently stolen and speaks about the many injuries/close calls on the job. Lowe builds sympathy and compassion for Cesar by doing this. The listener has a much easier time pitying a 21-year-old man whose need for money drives his work ethic than a successful wealthier woman such as Stephanie. At one point, Cesar claims many pedestrians
do not follow the traffic rules either and Taxi drivers have opened the door on him before and sent him to the hospital for his wounds. Riding a bike constantly in a city is clearly treacherous to the listener because of this. Lowe structures her message to counter the counter-argument and convince her audience. The podcast ends with Cesar asking a rather simple request to those who use delivery in a city, just be considerate and thankful. These words are powerful and purposely included towards the end of the podcast. The very last line of the podcast is, “They are out in the rain they are out in the snow. So when we don’t want to go out they are going out. I wouldn’t want to do it. And we thank them for that.” As the listener reflects on this piece told by Vanessa Lowe, they now see a hardworking young man who knows that his job is dangerous and stressful, yet he continues doing it to fund his goal of going to school to learn to read and write English. Meanwhile, Stephanie, who earlier in the podcast expressed that she fantasizes about sticking her umbrella in the spokes of a bicyclist, is rendered as apathetic and insincere.

Kiera Feldman takes a different approach to the organization of her piece and uses a tremendous amount of statistics as well as a garbage truck driver named Alex Caban to create empathy from the audience. “Trashed: Inside the Deadly World of Private Garbage Collection” is an article in which Kiera Feldman attempts to draw attention to exploitations of the garbage truck system of New York. This driver named Alex is used to show a first-hand account of how risky this industry is. The author expresses this by writing, “Perhaps the most gruesome injury was from November 2013, when another Viking worker moved a container at just the wrong moment, crushing his hand. That night, he lost the tip of his right index finger.” By describing this and other previous injuries in detail, Feldman created compassion from the reader. This supports her endeavor to grow support for these employees. She uses statistics such as, “In New York City overall, private sanitation trucks killed seven people in 2017. By contrast, city municipal sanitation trucks haven’t caused a fatality since 2014.” To further confirm to the
reader that this job is unsafe, these facts are brought forward and shown off in their own independent paragraph. At the end of the article, Feldman describes Alex’s personal life by asking, “When would he ever meet someone, let alone go on a date? A nice meal out on a Saturday night, he told me, would surely end with him falling asleep at the table. “I can’t be alone anymore,” he said.” This has the same effect as the end of “Stay Warm, Be Careful” and leaves a melancholy taste in the reader’s mouth. This taste acts as a catalyst for the audience to take action against the dreadful garbage truck business.

Both of these pieces serve as motivators for change in their author’s intended industries. “Stay Warm, Be Careful” is targeting food delivery while “Trashed: Inside the Deadly World of Private Garbage Collection” is addressing the garbage truck business. Vanessa Lowe and Kiera Feldman want to bring light to the mistreatment of these industries and they do it by telling stories. Lowe organizes her podcast in order to allow Cesar and Stephanie to have a conversation, but one that clearly proves her narrative. Feldman tells stories too, such as the story of Alex Caban, the man who represents the exploitation of his job. The audience is compelled to stand up for these people because they can relate to them personally. Without these stories, people can’t connect to these vital issues.

Works Cited