



“If the only tool you have in your toolbox is a hammer, you tend to treat everything as if it were a nail.”

-Abraham Maslow



# Rhetorical Strategies: Ethos, Logos, and Pathos

“Rhetoric is the art of ruling the  
minds of men”

-- Plato



# What is Rhetoric?

✔ "the ability, in each particular case, to see the available means of persuasion."

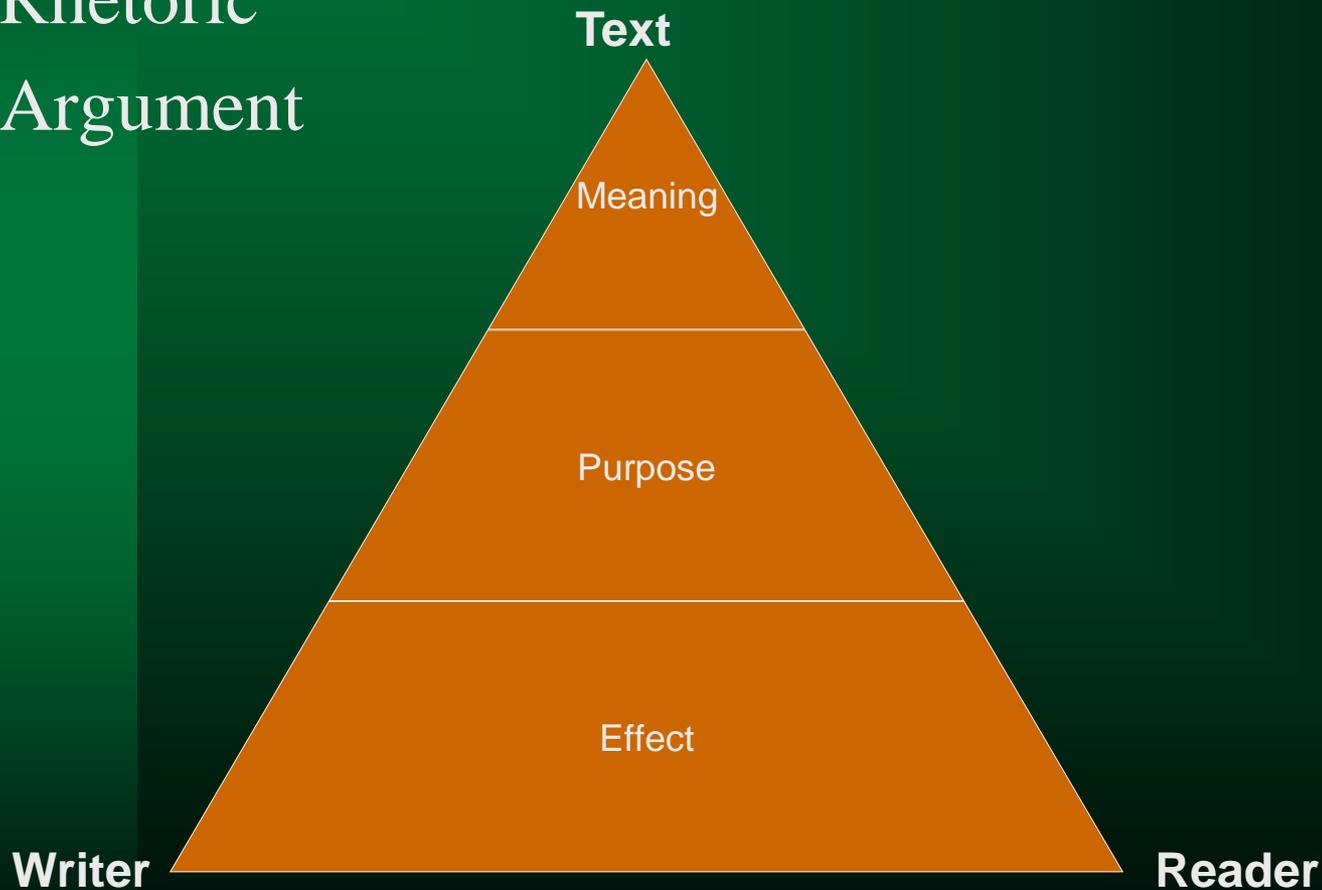
-- Aristotle

✔ A move or deliberate choice made by a writer to manipulate language for a purpose.

✔ "Rhetoric is the art of speaking well."

# How do we read texts?

- ✔ Rhetoric
- ✔ Argument





- ▼ **EXIGENCE:** What's bothering the writer?
- ▼ **AUDIENCE:** Primary and Secondary Audiences
- ▼ **PURPOSE:** What does the writer for the reader to DO after reading the text?



# Logos

- ✓ Greek for “word”
- ✓ Focus on argument itself, not the person making it
- ✓ Evidence (statistics, pictures, sources)
- ✓ Logic and Reasoning
  - avoid logical fallacies (more on this later)



# Ethos

- ▼ Greek for “character”
- ▼ Premise: we believe those whom we respect
- ▼ Focuses on the speaker or writer, not the audience
- ▼ The ethos: character, credibility, reliability



# Ethos, continued

- ✓ Credibility: remind others of the author's illustrious past or qualifications

Examples:

-- Companies include “since 19—”

-- Colleges advertise famous/successful alumnae



# Ethos, continued

- ✓ Character: Are you a good person?

Example: *“I am a husband, a father, and a taxpayer. I’ve served faithfully for 20 years on the school board. I deserve your vote for city council.”*

- ✓ Reliability: How does the audience know you’ll come through?

Example: On-Star commercials with “actual” recordings of distress calls



# Pathos

- ✔ Greek for “suffering” or “experience”
- ✔ Appeals to emotions and values of the audience
- ✔ Usually conveyed through narrative or story (hot topics: children, animals, the elderly, the disadvantaged)
- ✔ Think: Is the writer simply “playing me”?



# Summary

<b>Ethos</b>	<b>Logos</b>	<b>Pathos</b>
Speaker-centered	Argument-centered	Audience-centered
Credibility or Ethics	Logic or Facts	Emotions or Values

Closing thought: A good argument will use an effective combination of all three appeals. As a reader and viewer, pay close attention to how people are trying to persuade you.



# “Is Google Making Us Stupid?”

- ✔ What point is Carr trying to make?
- ✔ Who is his primary audience?
- ✔ What evidence does he use to support his point?
- ✔ What’s the problem that Carr outlines? What’s the Logos?
- ✔ How does the text appeal to Carr’s Ethos?
- ✔ How does the text appeal to our Pathos?
- ✔ What emotions and interests of the audience does it seem to be playing upon? What does Carr intend for us to DO with this info?



# “Rose’s Thorns”

- ✔ What is Deford’s exigence and who do you think his primary intended readers are?
- ✔ What is Deford’s intention, aim, purpose?
- ✔ What does he intend the reader to DO with this column?
- ✔ What’s the article’s *Logos*?
- ✔ How does the text appeal to Deford’s *Ethos*? Examples that he is intelligent, good willed, etc.
- ✔ How would you describe Deford’s persona? How does that persona contribute to the text’s appeal to *ethos*?
- ✔ How does the text appeal to *pathos*? What emotions and interests of the audience does it seem to be playing upon?



# “Why I Want a Wife”

- ✔ What point is she trying to make?
- ✔ What kinds of evidence does she present in support of her point?
- ✔ Whom do you think Brady envisions as her readers, and why focus on this particular population? How do you think these primary, “target” readers would respond?
- ✔ What kind of person does Brady strike you as? What leads you to form your impressions of Brady as a person?
- ✔ What sentences and/or words in the essay lead you to perk up and pay attention?
- ✔ What assumptions does Brady make about her audience? About wives?



# “Crack and the Box”

- ✓ What point is Hamill trying to make?
- ✓ Who is his primary audience?
- ✓ What evidence does he use to support his point?
- ✓ What’s the problem that Hamill outlines? What’s the Logos?
- ✓ How does the text appeal to Hamill’s Ethos?
- ✓ How does the text appeal to our Pathos?
- ✓ What does Hamill intend for us to DO with this info?
- ✓ What are his solutions?
- ✓ Hamill concludes by suggesting that television networks have something in common with the people who sell illegal drugs.
  - Why does Hamill feel this way?
  - Explain why “the defenders of television” might disagree.

**What’s Hamill’s Thesis Statement?**