



“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."



# The Specific Features of Rhetoric are...

- ▼ **EXIGENCE:** What's bothering the writer?
- ▼ **AUDIENCE:** Primary and Secondary Audiences (Appeals- Logos, ethos, pathos)
- ▼ **PURPOSE:** What does the writer want the reader to DO after reading the text?

# Rhetorical Situation: SOAPS



1. SPEAKER/WRITER

Meaning

2. OCCASION  
Context  
(time, place, etc.)

4. Purpose

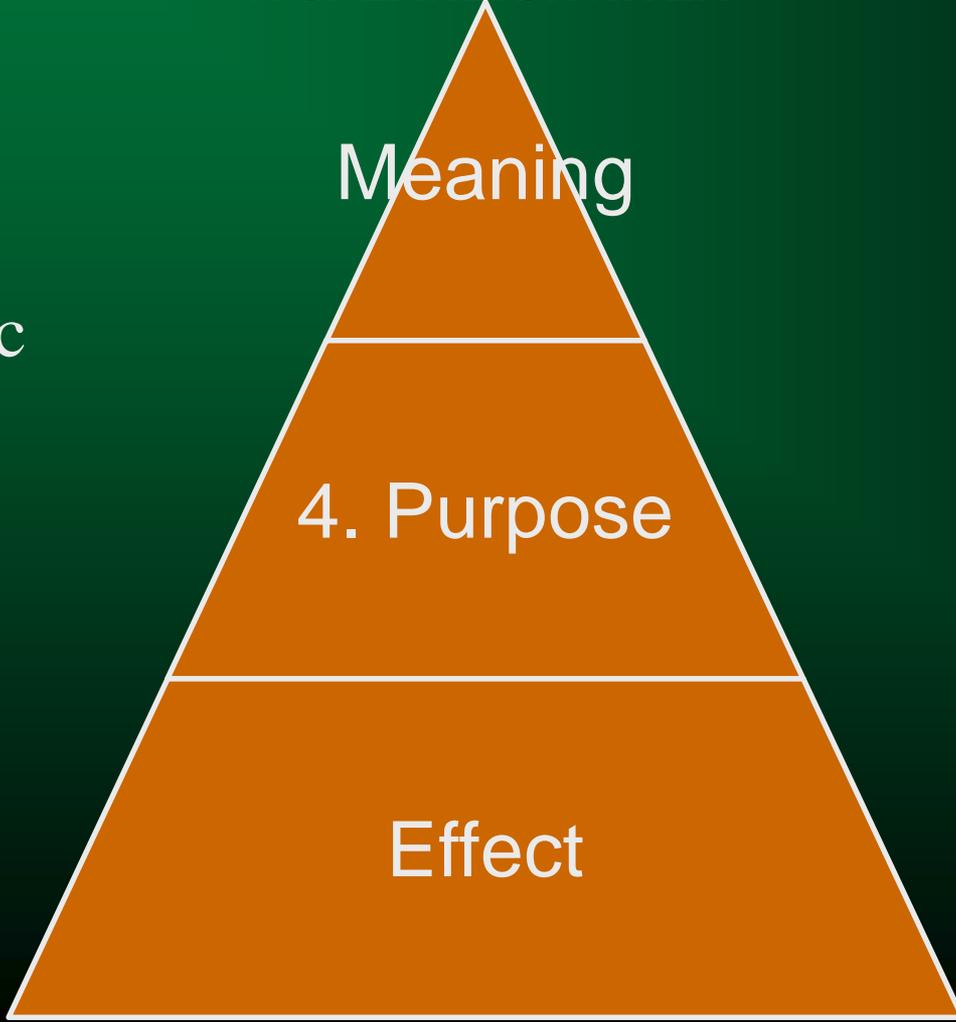
Effect

3. AUDIENCE

5. SUBJECT

GENRE

▼ Essay,  
letter,  
speech, etc





# 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”?



# Pathos Example

In the following example from a speech by Winston Churchill, note the use of **anaphora** (repetition of a word or group of words at the beginning of items in a series).

This repetition emphasizes the point and expresses passion and emotion. Moreover, the repetition affects the audience emotionally.



# Pathos Example

We shall not flag or fail. We shall go on to the end.  
We shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills. We shall never surrender.

—Winston Churchill, speech to the House of Commons, June 4, 1940



# 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.



# What is an Enthymeme? (Back to the handout)

- ✓ It is an argument/syllogism in which one premise is NOT explicitly stated (Unstated)
- ✓ An Enthymeme resembles a Syllogism (where all premises are stated): Syllogism-
  - All humans are mortal (Major Premise)
  - Socrates is a human (Minor Premise)
  - Therefore, Socrates is mortal. (Conclusion)



# A Syllogism in its parts

- All humans are mortal
- Socrates is a human
- Therefore, Socrates is mortal.

- ✓ All A's are B's
- ✓ Socrates is an A
- ✓ Therefore, Socrates is a B



## Another way to think about it:

- ✓ The enthymeme is like the syllogism, but it leaves out one of the premises.
- ✓ In zombie movies, for example, characters don't talk in syllogisms, they talk in enthymemes.
- ✓ If the other characters see Bob has bite marks, they shoot Bob. They don't say (a syllogism):
  - All zombie bites turn people into zombies. (Major Premise)
  - Bob has a zombie bite. (Minor Premise)
  - Therefore, Bob is a zombie. (Conclusion)



- ✓ Here is an example of an enthymeme derived from a syllogism through shortening of the syllogism:
  
- ✓ **“ Socrates is mortal because he's a man.”**
  - All \_\_\_\_\_ (Unstated Major Premise)
  - Socrates is a man (Minor Premise)
  - Therefore, Socrates is mortal. (Conclusion)



# Another Example of an Enthymeme

✓ “We cannot trust this man, for he has perjured himself in the past.”

*In this enthymeme, the major premise of the complete syllogism is missing:*

- All those who perjure themselves cannot be trusted. (**Major premise - omitted**)
- This man has perjured himself in the past. (Minor premise - stated)
- This man is not to be trusted. (Conclusion - stated)



# Another Enthymeme Example for you to try...

”America is great because she is good.”

- ✓ Reconstruct the argument using the following outline...



”America is great because she is good.”

1. All \_\_\_\_\_ are \_\_\_\_\_.
2. American is a \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Therefore, American is a \_\_\_\_\_



# Finished argument

1. All good nations are great nations. (Major Premise)
2. America is a good nation (Minor Premise)
- 
3. America is a great nation. (Conclusion)



# Enthymeme example from the handout:

“If I have to answer for the deeds done in my body just as much as a man, I have a right to have just as much as a man.”

- **Unstated Major Premise:** All those who are equally responsible by law for their actions should receive equal rights under the law.
- **Minor Premise:** Sojourner Truth has been called upon to take responsibility for her actions.
- **Conclusion:** Therefore, Sojourner Truth should receive the same rights as men do under the law.



## Your turn...from the handout

In his book *High and Mighty*, Kevin Bradsher label is the sport utility vehicle (SUV) “the world’s most dangerous vehicle.” He points out that the Ford Explorer gets 14 miles to a gallon of gas, less than half what the average new automobile in Japan gets. He notes that the Chevy Suburban emits 7.5 times more air pollution than the average automobile. He describes how in traffic accidents “SUVs...slide over cars’ bumpers and sturdy door sills, slamming into passenger compartments” of smaller vehicles.



# Get a partner to help you...

- **Unstated Major Premise:** All \_\_\_\_\_
- **Stated Minor Premise:** Kevin Bradsher \_\_\_\_\_
- **Conclusion:** Therefore, Kevin Bradsher \_\_\_\_\_



Read Frank Deford's essay  
"Rose's Thorns"



# Analysis of “Rose’s Thorns”

- ✔ What is the subject of Deford’s piece?
- ✔ What are some of Deford’s reasons for Rose to be inducted into the Hall of Fame?
- ✔ 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?



- ▼ Deford develops his case with anecdotes about baseball fans, religious references, etc...
- ▼ What is Deford's admission?



# “Why I Want a Wife”

- What point is she trying to make?
- What kinds of evidence (Logos) 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?