Thank You for Arguing

INTRODUCTION

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF JAY HEINRICHS

Jay Heinrichs grew up in Connecticut and began his career as a journalist. In the 1980s he worked in publishing, and later became the head of *Spirit*, the inflight magazine for Southwest Airlines. In the late nineties, Heinrichs retired from publishing and began writing full-time. He's published three books, all of which revolve around the art of rhetoric, his lifelong passion: *Thank You for Arguing* (2007), *Winning Arguments* (2010), and *Word Hero* (2011). Heinrichs lives in New Hampshire with his wife, and he has two adult children, both of whom feature prominently in his books.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Heinrichs mentions many important historical events to illustrate rhetorical concepts. He's particularly interested in two historical periods: first, the late Roman Republic, during which rhetoric was considered one of the fundamental arts of leadership, and orators like Marcus Tullius Cicero perfected the art of public speaking; second, the early years of the United States, during which the Founding Fathers tried to build a democracy governed by a group of educated, rhetorically-trained citizens. More than once, Heinrichs cites President Barack Obama, who was elected in 2008 and reelected in 2012, as an example of a great orator.

RELATED LITERARY WORKS

Thank You for Arguing is written in an irregular fashion, and in many ways, it could be considered a self-help book—like most self-help books, it's designed to help readers improve their minds and live happier lives, and it's written in the first person, with frequent references to the author's life, as well as the lives of great figures of the past. Perhaps the most influential self-help book ever written is *How to Win Friends and Influence People* by Dale Carnegie (1937); Carnegie pioneered the self-help genre, dividing up his argument into clear, distinct steps and citing his own experiences to strengthen his argument—techniques that Heinrichs uses to great effect in his own books. For an interesting account of the history and psychology of the self-help genre, readers might want to check out Louis Menand's *New Yorker* article "The Life Biz," available online.

KEY FACTS

- **Full Title:** Thank You For Arguing; What Aristotle, Lincoln, and Homer Simpson can Teach Us About the Art of Persuasion
- **When Written:** 2002-2006
- **Where Written:** New Hampshire and Connecticut
- **When Published:** February 27, 2007 (revised edition August 6, 2013)
- **Genre:** Nonfiction, rhetoric, self-help
- **Point of View:** First person

EXTRA CREDIT

Famous clients. In addition to his work as a writer and a journalist, Jay Heinrichs has built a career out of "persuasion consulting" for high-paying clients, including Southwest Airlines, the U.S. Department of Defense, NASA, Harvard University, and Walmart. Which would explain how he lives on a 150-acre property in New Hampshire…

College-ready. *Thank You For Arguing* has been very popular in high school and college classrooms—in fact, as of 2015, it had been taught in more than 3,000 different college courses.

PLOT SUMMARY

In *Thank You for Arguing*, Jay Heinrichs endeavors to show why the lost art of rhetoric—the study of argument and persuasion—can help people understand the world, help them succeed, and generally improve their lives.

In Part One, "Offense," Heinrichs lays out the basics of arguing. Every argument has three basic steps: first, stimulating the audience's emotions, second, changing the audience's opinion, and third, getting the audience to do or choose something. There are, furthermore, three distinct kinds of arguments. The Greek philosopher Aristotle identified these three kinds as forensic argument (which is concerned with blame, and which takes place mostly in the past tense), demonstrative argument (which is concerned with values, and which takes place mostly in the present tense), and deliberative argument (which is concerned with choices, and which takes place mostly in the future tense). One of the key rhetorical techniques is find the proper tense for a debate. Too often (and especially in politics), a deliberative debate about what to *do* devolves into an unwinnable demonstrative debate about values. Aristotle also developed another important rhetorical distinction: the three methods of persuasion: *logos* (argument by logic), *ethos* (argument by character), and *pathos* (argument by emotion).

In the rest of the first part of the book, Heinrichs discusses how to use *logos*, *ethos*, and *pathos* to win an argument. In order to bolster one's *ethos*, or character, a good persuader will try to

master decorum, or the art of fitting in with one's audience. Decorum might involve dressing in appropriate clothing or using words with which the audience identifies. Other important ways of increasing one's *ethos* in the audience's eyes include appearing virtuous (i.e., to share the same values as the audience), appearing to have practical wisdom (i.e., being a competent, savvy person), and appearing to be morally disinterested (i.e., having the audience's best interests in mind).

To use *pathos*, persuaders need to be conscious of their audience's emotional needs. Humor is one of the most powerful emotions, and therefore, it's one of the best ways to appeal to *pathos*. Another clever technique for using *pathos* is to appear to be holding back one's emotions. Many advertisements use *pathos* by appealing to people's desires, especially sexual desires.

One of the most important aspects of *logos* is the definition of terms. By defining terms in an advantageous way, rhetoricians can stack the deck against their opponents. One useful debating technique is to re-define an opponent's definition of the terms, without being overly detailed. But on other occasions, debaters can be more successful by agreeing with their opponent's definitions and then using these definitions to win. Heinrichs refers to this technique of tactical agreement as concession. Another important application of *logos* is logic. Deductive logic involves reaching conclusions through syllogisms—showing how certain categories fit together. By contrast, inductive logic involves reaching conclusions by generalizing from a series of related examples. Both inductive and deductive logic can be useful in an argument.

In Part Two, Defense, Heinrichs begins by discussing some of the major logical fallacies that show up in arguments. By mastering these fallacies, rhetoricians can take control over the argument and show that their opponents aren't thinking rationally. Common logical fallacies include false comparisons (drawing a bad analogy), the bad example (generalizing from insufficient evidence), ignorance as proof (mistaking absence of evidence for evidence of absence), tautology (offering a conclusion as proof for itself), the false choice (narrowing an audience's decisions), the red herring (offering distracting, irrelevant evidence or conclusions), and the wrong ending (drawing the wrong conclusion from the evidence). Heinrichs stresses that, in an argument, a good rhetorician won't simply call out his opponent for using a logical fallacy; instead, he'll find a clever way of exposing the fallacy while seizing the higher ground and moving the argument forward. Heinrichs further writes that the only reason to "call foul" in an argument is if someone argues the inarguable—for instance, if someone refuses to budge on their beliefs or argues only to humiliate an opponent. In the rest of Part Two, Heinrichs demonstrates how to evaluate someone's *ethos* by testing their values, practical wisdom, and disinterest.

In Part Three, Advanced Offense, Heinrichs discusses some rhetorical tricks that rhetoricians can use to spice up their arguments. There are many figures of speech and figures of thought that can be used to make an argument elegantly simple or make the expression of that argument seem particularly succinct and memorable. Good rhetoricians must also use code grooming—they must immerse themselves in their audiences' favorite words in order to use language that will persuade and boost the rhetorician's *ethos*. As a consultant, Heinrichs pioneered a technique called the halo: offering a symbol that encapsulates a complex idea. Many talented speakers use halos as a kind of shorthand for their ideas.

In the rest of Part Three, Heinrichs explores two important aspects of offensive argumentation. First, he gives some pointers for how to apologize skillfully. A good apology doesn't belittle the audience's problems, and emphasizes the apologizer's practical wisdom and disinterest. Second, Heinrichs explores the concept of *kairos*—the "right time." A good rhetorician will be aware of his audience's thoughts and emotions, and will be able to recognize the perfect time to launch into an important point. The study of *kairos* can also help a rhetorician identify the proper medium for an argument: each medium (texting, TV, phone calls) favors a different rhetorical technique, and lends itself to a particular kind of *kairos*.

In the final part of the book, Advanced Agreement, Heinrichs gives some examples of how to use rhetorical techniques. He delivers a short speech in a town hall about fighting noise pollution, using the five-step method of oration developed by the great Roman orator Marcus Tullius Cicero: invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery. He also studies the oratorical techniques of Barack Obama, one of the great recent rhetoricians. In the final chapter of the book, Heinrichs observes that the study of rhetoric has almost vanished from the American educational system. Partly as a result, politics has become increasingly polarized—American leaders don't know how to create deliberative rhetoric, and instead become bogged down in demonstrative rhetoric. If Americans were to study rhetoric in more detail, Heinrichs suggests, then they'd be able to find more common ground and reverse the growing polarization and tribalization of American society.

CHARACTERS

MAJOR CHARACTERS

Jay Heinrichs – The author and narrator of *Thank You for Arguing*, Jay Heinrichs is a successful consultant, author, and public speaker, and a lifelong lover of the art of rhetoric. In his book, Heinrichs tries to convince readers that learning about rhetoric can help them lead more fulfilling lives: it can help them win arguments with their friends, succeed professionally, and even bond with their loved ones. Although Heinrichs' primary role in the book is to narrate and explain the art of

rhetoric, he gives readers a great deal of information about his personal life (illustrating his point that an effective communicator builds *ethos* by telling first-person stories and building familiarity with his audience). Heinrichs has a wife, Dorothy Heinrichs Jr., and two children, Dorothy Heinrichs Jr. and George Heinrichs. At times, Heinrichs writes about using rhetorical tricks to win arguments with his family and even manipulate them into agreeing with him. Heinrichs also acknowledges that the way he uses rhetoric might seem "devious" and manipulative; however, in writing *Thank You for Arguing*, he wants to illuminate the little-understood rules of rhetoric and train his readers to *resist* rhetorical manipulation.

Aristotle – A famous ancient Greek philosopher, cited many times by Jay Heinrichs in the book. Aristotle was one of the founders of the art of rhetoric, and divided rhetoric into three forms of argumentation (forensic, deliberative, and demonstrative), in which speakers could use three methods of persuasion (*logos*, *ethos*, and *pathos*).

Marcus Tullius Cicero – Ancient Roman orator and politician, often considered the greatest public speaker in Western history. Cicero was a key figure in the history of rhetoric: he pioneered countless persuasive techniques that speakers continue to use in the 21st century, and developed a sophisticated method for planning and delivering effective speeches, which Jay Heinrichs uses toward the end of *Thank You for Arguing*.

MINOR CHARACTERS

George Heinrichs – The adult son of Jay Heinrichs, who figures in many of Heinrichs' examples of rhetorical technique.

Dorothy Heinrichs Sr. – The wife of Jay Heinrichs, who figures in many of Heinrichs' examples of rhetorical technique.

Dorothy Heinrichs Jr. – The daughter of Jay Heinrichs, who figures in many of Heinrichs' examples of rhetorical technique.

John Heinrichs – Brother of Jay Heinrichs.

Annie – Jay Heinrichs' sister-in-law.

Saint Augustine – Writer, theologian, and a key figure in the history of Christianity, who used his extensive rhetorical training to convert thousands of pagans.

John Belushi – Actor who played a famous fictional character in the movie *Animal House*, cited by Jay Heinrichs as an example of someone who fails to establish his *ethos* by emphasizing his practical wisdom.

George W. Bush – 43rd president of the United States, praised (only half-seriously) by Jay Heinrichs for his unique rhetorical flair.

Carlo – A likable Italian man who Jay Heinrichs meets during a trip to the Italian Riviera.

Cato – Ancient Roman politician and orator.

Prince Charles – English aristocrat.

Bill Clinton – 42nd president of the United States.

Johnnie Cochran – Lawyer famous for defending O. J. Simpson in his 1994 murder trial.

Tim Cook – President of Apple.

Michael Dukakis – Democratic president candidate who lost to George H. W. Bush in the 1988 elections.

Eminem – Rapper and actor whose rap performance at the end of the movie *8 Mile* is a masterpiece of decorum, in the sense that it creates a strong bond between Eminem and his audience.

Atticus Finch – Fictional character in the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*, cited by Jay Heinrichs as an example of someone who fails to establish his *ethos* by sharing values with his audience.

Gianni – A likable Italian man who Jay Heinrichs meets during a trip to the Italian Riviera.

Roger Goodell – Head of the NFL during the 2012 referee controversy.

Patrick Henry – Founding Father and orator, who borrowed his best-remembered line, "Give me liberty or give me death!" from a play about the ancient Roman politician Cato.

Sherlock Holmes – Fictional detective and a master of deductive logic.

Herbert Hoover – 31st president of the United States, cited for his failure to prove his practical wisdom and *ethos*.

Greg House – Fictional doctor from the TV show *House*, and an exemplar of practical wisdom.

Steve Jobs – Founder and former president of Apple, notable for often refusing to apologize for his mistakes.

Kathy – A friend of Annie, and a staunch Republican.

President John F. Kennedy – 35th president of the United States, remembered for his quote, "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country," one of the most famous and elegant uses of the rhetorical art of *chiasmus*.

John Kerry – Democratic candidate for the presidency in 2004, defeated by George W. Bush.

Martin Luther King Jr. – Civil Rights hero and a master of *kairos*.

Abraham Lincoln – 16th president of the United States, notable in *Thank You for Arguing* for his masterful rhetoric and his skillful manipulation of his audience.

Nelson Mandela – Renowned political dissident during the era of apartheid in South Africa, and eventual leader of South Africa.

John Marshall – Early Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of

the United States.

Richard Nixon – 37th president of the United States, cited as an example of someone who failed as a politican because he failed to establish his *ethos* by emphasizing his shared American values.

Barack Obama – 44th president of the United States, praised by Jay Heinrichs for his first-rate rhetoric.

Quintilian – Ancient Roman rhetorician.

Donna Reed – Famous Hollywood actress who appeared alongside Jimmy Stewart in *It's a Wonderful Life*.

Jimmy Stewart – Famous Hollywood actor who appeared alongside Donna Reed in *It's a Wonderful Life*.

Mitt Romney – Republican candidate for president in 2012.

Donald Rumsfeld – Secretary of Defense under President George W. Bush.

O. J. Simpson – Famous American football player who was later prosecuted for the murder of his wife and defended by Johnnie Cochran.

Josef Stalin – Totalitarian leader of the Soviet Union, notable also for his masterful understanding of *kairos*.

Mother Teresa – 20th century Christian saint, notable for her disinterested aid to the poor and suffering.

Daniel Webster – Renowned 19th century American senator and orator, who Jay Heinrichs praises for his ability to use *pathos* to convince his audiences.

Oscar Wilde – Famous 19th century poet, playwright, and wit, praised by Jay Heinrichs for his talent for manipulating figures of speech and figures of thought.

P. G. Wodehouse – Beloved 20th century humorous novelist.

Jeremiah Wright – Controversial preacher who caused a minor scandal in the 2008 presidential campaign of Barack Obama.

THEMES

In LitCharts literature guides, each theme gets its own color-coded icon. These icons make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. If you don't have a color printer, you can still use the icons to track themes in black and white.

ETHOS

In *Thank You for Arguing*, Jay Heinrichs studies rhetoric, the art of arguing. Over the course of the book, he categorizes this art in many different ways; however, the most important distinction he draws is the distinction between three different methods of convincing an audience of a point. The first such method is *ethos*, the ancient Greek word for an argument from character. Whether they're aware of it or not, audiences are more likely to agree with an argument when they respect the character of the person who makes it. Over the course of the book, Heinrichs writes about which aspects of a rhetorician's character are most relevant to *ethos*, and how to emphasize them in an argument.

In order to analyze *ethos* more clearly, Heinrichs (borrowing from the Greek philosopher Aristotle) divides it into three categories. The first component of *ethos* is disinterest. An audience is most likely to trust speakers whom they perceive to be selfless and uninterested in bettering their own situations. The second component of *ethos* is virtue, understood in the sense of upholding an audience's values. It's not always enough for an audience to believe that a speaker respects the audience's happiness; the speaker should also seem to respect their culture, language, traditions, and morals. Thirdly, good rhetoricians can reinforce their *ethos* by showing off their "practical wisdom." Put another way, audiences are most likely to trust persuaders who project competence and experience in the field they're speaking about. By combining all three components of *ethos*, a talented rhetorician can better persuade their audience that they should trust their arguments and act on their recommendations.

It might be objected that a speaker need not have good character to be persuasive—just because a speaker isn't a good person doesn't mean they're wrong, after all. One could also argue that *ethos* is fundamentally dishonest, since the persuader need only *seem* virtuous, disinterested, and competent. (See "Rhetoric and Ethics" theme.) But Heinrichs argues that *ethos* is more than just a useful supplement to logic; it's a fundamental part of a good argument. People choose to act based on their instincts and feelings about other people, not just pure rationality. Therefore, a relatively logical speaker who's perceived as having great *ethos* will almost always be more successful than an impeccably logical speaker with poor character. Furthermore, speakers need to have good *ethos* in order to lead by example, inspiring their audiences to improve their own character. Heinrichs further suggests that *ethos* can inspire people to *be* better, not just *seem* better while making a speech. If everyone were to value good rhetoric, as Heinrichs advocates, then they could better recognize speakers with a high degree of virtue, disinterest, and practical wisdom, instead of being fooled by speakers who did a poor job of pretending to possess these qualities. By celebrating *ethos* in his book, Heinrichs stresses the importance of character and virtue, reminding us that rhetoric isn't just a verbal art, but also a moral practice.

PATHOS

The second important form of persuasion that Heinrichs discusses in *Thank You for Arguing* is

pathos, the ancient Greek word for an argument based on emotion. Emotion is perhaps the most powerful, and most disrespected, form of persuasion: most of the time, to characterize an argument as a purely emotional appeal is to criticize that argument. But human beings are emotional creatures, so no book on rhetoric would be complete without a thorough analysis of how emotions can convince people to make decisions, and how rhetoricians can train themselves to both make emotional appeals and resist these appeals.

Over the course of the book, Heinrichs discusses many different human emotions, and the kinds of emotional appeals that correspond to each one of them. He agrees with the great rhetoricians of the ancient world that humor is probably the most powerful kind of emotional appeal, since laughter is involuntary. Even if humor is the most powerful emotional appeal, however, it's not always the most *effective*. Often, appeals to an audience's anger, patriotism, or desire to "fit in" prove more successful in compelling a group to actually *do* something. For example, Heinrichs discusses the ways that skilled rhetoricians can manipulate a crowd into becoming angry with a specific figure, especially if the rhetorician implies that the figure has ignored or belittled the audience's needs. A skilled rhetorician can also inspire an audience by appealing to people's desire to go along with the group—a desire that becomes more powerful as the group gets bigger. At the same time as he categorizes different emotional appeals, Heinrichs discusses which media (forms of communication) are best-suited for each kind of emotion. For example, a speech before a big crowd might be a good venue for an appeal to people's desire to fit in with the group, while an intimate, candle-lit dinner would be the better time and place for a passionate marriage proposal. In all, Heinrichs's discussion of emotion and emotional appeals highlights a counterintuitive truth: although emotions themselves are involuntary, emotional appeals can be carefully planned and rehearsed for maximum effect.

Appeals to *pathos* are often criticized for being "cheap" or sappy. But for better or worse, human beings are hard-wired to respond to emotional cues. By studying the rhetorical art of eliciting *pathos*, then, people can improve their communication skills in a few distinct ways. First, they can learn how to control other people's emotions—a practice which could easily be considered manipulative (and which, Heinrichs often admits, *is* inherently manipulative). Second, however, people can learn how to resist cheap emotional appeals, breaking down the steps in an appeal to *pathos* until the appeal no longer clouds their decision-making so completely. Third, the study of *pathos* can help people express their emotions in a clear manner, without necessarily sacrificing any sincerity. In this sense, *pathos* isn't "cheap" at all—it's an invaluable, subtle way for people to communicate how they feel.

LOGOS

The third main form of persuasion that Heinrichs discusses in *Thank You for Arguing* is *logos*, from the Greek word meaning "word." In modern times, *logos* refers to an argument that appeals to an audience's sense and reason.

Most of the book's discussion of *logos* consists of defining what does and doesn't constitute a "rational" argument. First, the book sketches out the two main forms of logic. Deductive logic is concerned with studying the relationship between different interrelated groups and categories through the mathematical concept of the syllogism (i.e., "if A is B, and if B is C, then A is C"). Inductive logic, the other main branch of logic in rhetoric, studies the process of drawing conclusions from multiple, interconnected examples—for example, one could use inductive logic to examine many different "examples" of human life and conclude that all humans will die eventually. A thorough study of logic allows the student of rhetoric to identify logical fallacies—rhetorical statements that break the rules of logic. One such logical fallacy is the bad example, in which the persuader illogically generalizes from a small amount of evidence (or, put another way, uses faulty inductive logic). Another is the red herring, in which the persuader offers up misleading premises to reach an unrelated conclusion (that is, using faulty deductive logic). All logical fallacies violate the rules of inductive or deductive logic in some way, and by studying logic, a good rhetorician can out-reason their opponent and prevent the opponent from drawing the wrong conclusions.

Although Heinrichs emphasizes the importance of deduction and induction in rhetoric, it's crucial to recognize that there is a difference between *logos* and logic—and, more to the point, a different between rhetoric and logic. While logical fallacies exemplify errors in formal logic, many accepted techniques of logos are actually mild logical fallacies themselves. In this sense, *logos* isn't a list of what is and isn't strictly logical, but rather a guide to what one's audience will interpret as a reasonable point. Perhaps the key difference between logic and a *logos*-focused argument is that, in the latter, the argument doesn't end if someone commits a logical fallacy—even if an opponent points out the fallacy, the argument continues, with both sides appealing to their audience's sense of *logos*, *ethos*, and *pathos*. Heinrichs likens the art of rhetoric to a soccer game in which there are no hard rules, other than scoring: it's much more productive (and much more fun) to keeping playing such a game, using opponents' logical fallacies against them, than it is to "call foul" whenever somebody commits such a fallacy. If anything, the study of *logos*, as distinct from logic, proves that there is no such thing as an unbeatable, perfectly rational argument. All rational arguments have their own strengths and weaknesses, and the art of *logos* helps a good rhetorician recognize which weaknesses to exploit. Moreover, *logos* is only one third of a good rhetorician's arsenal: a great speaker will

use reason, character, and emotion to beat opponents and convince as many people as possible.

DEMONSTRATIVE VS. DELIBERATIVE RHETORIC

In addition to making a three-pronged distinction between the methods of arguing, *Thank You for Arguing* draws another important distinction between the different "tenses" in which an argument takes place. Aristotle hypothesized that all arguments fall into one of three categories: forensic rhetoric, which is concerned with blame, and which usually takes a past-tense view of the world; demonstrative rhetoric, which is concerned with values, and which usually takes a present-tense view; and deliberative rhetoric, which is concerned with choices and decisions, and which takes a future-tense. While Aristotle named three different kinds of arguments, Heinrichs is most interested in the latter two. He shows that many of the most frustrating elements of an argument—and, in general, the reason why so many people hate arguing—arise from confusion over the correct "tense" for the argument. Or, to put it another way, the confusion, exasperation, and ignorance of arguing in 21st century America arise from a conflict between demonstrative and deliberative rhetoric.

Early on, *Thank You for Arguing* points out that the vast majority of arguments are never truly won or lost. Often, this is because the two arguing parties choose to focus on demonstrative rhetoric, the rhetoric of values, when they should be moving to deliberative rhetoric, the rhetoric of choices. Most of the time, it's difficult, if not impossible, to win a demonstrative debate. In such a debate, both sides argue on behalf of their values or moral convictions; for example, Heinrichs claims that the debate over abortion has devolved into a debate between two sets of moral values: the Judeo-Christian language of life, and the secularized language of freedom. While it's certainly possible to have a productive demonstrative debate about values and beliefs, politicians debating abortion tend to argue past one another. Similarly, when two people argue over their tastes or opinions, there usually isn't enough time for them to reach any kind of conclusion.

For both conceptual and practical purposes, then, it's often a good idea to nudge a debate away from the demonstrative and toward the deliberative—in other words, away from a language of values and towards a language of choices. By changing the scope of the debate from the present to the future, a talented rhetorician can gain control over the argument and win an important tactical victory over an opponent. Even setting aside these strategic concerns, however, *Thank You for Arguing* suggests that switching from the demonstrative to the deliberative is the most useful, productive move: When people talk about actions and decisions, rather than eternal, unchanging values, they're more likely to make compromises. In part, this is because talking in the future tense is inherently uncertain, meaning that people are more likely to hedge on their choices, even if they wouldn't hedge on their values. Furthermore, talking about choices is an inherently practical matter, meaning that people are forced to discuss the implementation of their values in the real world, which often involves compromises and meeting the other side halfway. In all, deliberative argument is far more likely to reach a compromise—and, therefore, a conclusion—than demonstrative argument.

Heinrichs certainly isn't suggesting that deliberative rhetoric is *preferable* to demonstrative rhetoric—in fact, he makes it clear that there can be no discussion of choices and actions without some guiding beliefs behind them. However, he emphasizes again and again that the purpose of good rhetoric should be to reach a conclusion of some kind; in order to do so, we need deliberative rhetoric. Especially in the world of politics, where debates too often get bogged down in competing sets of values, rhetoric could play a major role in moving the debate forward and, ultimately, getting things done.

RHETORIC AND ETHICS

Throughout *Thank You for Arguing*, Heinrichs raises the ethical question of how rhetoric can, and should, be used. Rhetoric can be a tool of manipulation and hypocrisy, with which a skillful speaker can con an audience into believing utter lies. On the other hand, it's clear that rhetoric can introduce a level of clarity, rationality, and productivity that's all-too rare in modern society, particularly American society. Put more dramatically, *Thank You for Arguing* asks whether rhetoric is a force for good or evil.

The word "manipulation" appears again and again in *Thank You for Arguing*, emphasizing that rhetoric is, in many ways, the art of getting people to do what the rhetorician wants them to do—a potentially unethical practice. Heinrichs lists many examples of masterful rhetoricians who effectively used their powers to cheat their audiences into supporting decisions that didn't uphold their own best interests. For example, the book lists the totalitarian dictator Josef Stalin as a master of rhetoric, in particular the art of *kairos* (sensing the precise moment in which an audience is most receptive to an argument). More mildly, Heinrichs gives many examples of how he's used rhetoric to trick or pressure his wife and family into upholding his wishes. While Heinrichs tends to laugh off these examples, or counterbalance them with examples of his wife and family tricking *him*, the fact remains that rhetoric can be a deceptive, even disrespectful technique, which treats an audience like a flock of sheep.

While it's certainly true that rhetoric can be used to deceive, *Thank You for Arguing* emphasizes that there are still natural "checks and balances" in the art of rhetoric, which prevent even

the most devious rhetorician from manipulating their audience too greatly. For example, one of the cornerstones of rhetoric is appealing to one's audience through decorum, values, and language. Therefore, to be persuasive, one must first adapt to the audience's expectations. This would suggest that rhetoric is a two-way street: it's about persuaders adjusting their position and appearance to agree with their audience, not just controlling how the audience thinks and acts. Furthermore, the art of rhetoric doesn't just teach people how to persuade; it also teaches them how to recognize and see through persuasion. Even if rhetoric can be used unethically, it empowers the audience as well as the speaker, making the overall process of persuasion much more enlightened.

While acknowledging some of the ethical pitfalls of rhetoric, Heinrichs concludes his book with a strong argument for the ethical importance of rhetoric. Rhetoric is useful, especially in contemporary American society, because it steers debates toward moderation and, in the long term, progress. American government was founded by talented rhetoricians who sought to limit the influence of factions (i.e., distinct, self-interested social groups). Furthermore, the Founding Fathers believed that rhetoric, and particularly deliberative rhetoric, would encourage different factions to work together and reach more widely accepted agreements. However, with the removal of rhetoric from the American educational system, politics has devolved into an exhausting, unwinnable war of insults. By reintroducing rhetoric into the educational system, and society in general, Americans could resolve some of their most important problems, and perhaps politics would become more civil and productive. Furthermore, studies have shown that couples who argue rhetorically are more likely to stay happy together: their rhetorical savvy helps them work together instead of bottling up their feelings and staying frustrated with each other. There's no rule that says that rhetoric has to be helpful, productive, or enlightening—however, if America as a whole embraced the lost art of rhetoric, Heinrichs argues, it's likely that it would mostly be a force for good.

SYMBOLS

Symbols appear in **teal text** throughout the Summary and Analysis sections of this LitChart.

THE PLASTIC VOLCANO

Jay Heinrichs uses hundreds of examples from history, pop culture, and his personal life to illustrate his arguments. One example—the little plastic volcano that Heinrichs sends the governor of Washington after mistakenly placing Mount Saint Helens in the wrong state in a magazine story—could also be considered a full-blown symbol. Heinrichs sends the governor the plastic volcano as a way of apologizing for his mistake, humorously thanking the governor for letting him "borrow" Mount Saint Helens. However, in doing so, Heinrichs also demonstrates his practical wisdom and his talents as a communicator. Thus, the plastic volcano symbolizes how rhetoric can help people turn their defeats into victories.

GIANNI'S DRUNKEN RANT

Another example from *Thank You for Arguing* that qualifies as a symbol—not just an illustration of one particular concept—is the drunken rant that Jay Heinrichs's friend Gianni delivers in the final chapter of the book. Gianni is talking about how Americans are fat because they drink too much water. While this argument isn't meant to be taken seriously by either Heinrichs or Gianni, it symbolizes the playful joy of rhetoric, a joy that contemporary American society largely denies itself.

QUOTES

Note: all page numbers for the quotes below refer to the Three Rivers Press edition of *Thank You for Arguing* published in 2013.

Chapter 1 Quotes

To see just how pervasive argument is, I recently attempted a whole day without persuasion—free of advertising, politics, family squabbles, or any psychological manipulation whatsoever. No one would persuade me, and I would avoid persuading them. Heck, I wouldn't even let myself persuade myself. Nobody, not even I, would tell me what to do.

Related Characters: Jay Heinrichs (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 6

Explanation and Analysis

In Chapter One, Heinrichs tries an experiment: going one full day without rhetoric or arguing of any kind. Naturally, the experiment fails; as soon as Heinrichs wakes up, he's confronted with ads that use rhetorical techniques to persuade him, people who use rhetorical figures of speech to make their points, and even animals who could be said to use rhetorical techniques. Heinrichs' experiment could be considered an example of the logical technique known as *reductio absurdum*—proving a point by showing the absurdity of its opposite. Heinrichs effectively shows that rhetoric is an inescapable fact of life—and, therefore, people might as well learn about it.

The passage is useful in that it establishes the importance of rhetoric; furthermore, it responds to a potential objection to Heinrichs's project—namely, that it's devious and manipulative to engage in rhetorical displays. Heinrichs' answer to such a criticism, it would appear, is that whether we like it or not, rhetoric is here to stay—therefore, people should learn about it and learn how to use it to their advantage.

Chapter 3 Quotes

❝ Suppose your Uncle Randy decides to divorce your aunt on their thirtieth anniversary so he can marry a surfing instructor he met at Club Med. You have two issues here, one moral and the other practical. The moral issue is inarguable by our definition. Your uncle is either wrong or right. You could remind him that he is breaking a wonderful woman's heart, but you would be sermonizing, not arguing.

Related Characters: Jay Heinrichs (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 36

Explanation and Analysis

In this passage, Heinrichs demonstrates the difference between demonstrative and deliberative rhetoric. The purpose of demonstrative rhetoric is to reach a conclusion about values, especially moral values. For example, one could use demonstrative rhetoric to convince an uncle that he's wrong to divorce his wife and marry a younger woman. The problem with such an approach, however, is that demonstrative rhetoric doesn't always work: it requires too much time, and usually leads to a fundamental, unresolvable clash between beliefs. A productive approach would be using deliberative rhetoric, the arguing of future-tense decisions and actions. As Heinrichs shows, deliberative rhetoric takes place in a real, pragmatic world, meaning that it requires people to sacrifice some of their values and adjust their behaviors to practical considerations. Deliberative rhetoric, it's strongly implied, will move the debate forward in a way that demonstrative rhetoric often won't.

Chapter 5 Quotes

❝ One of the greatest decorum scenes in movie history graces the climax of *8 Mile*, Eminem's semiautobiography. He gets talked into a competition at a dance club in downtown Detroit where hip hop artists (orators, if you will) take turns insulting each other. The audience chooses the winner by applause. Eventually, the contest comes down to two people: Eminem and a sullen-looking black guy. (Well, not as sullen as Eminem. Nobody can be that sullen.) Eminem wears proper attire: stupid skullcap, clothes a few sizes too big, and as much bling as he can afford. If he showed up dressed like Cary Grant, he would look terrific—to you and me. But the dance club crowd would find him wildly indecorous.

Related Characters: Jay Heinrichs (speaker), Eminem

Related Themes:

Page Number: 49

Explanation and Analysis

Heinrichs is fond of using humorous and unorthodox examples to illustrate lofty points about the ancient art of rhetoric, and here, he cites the movie *8 Mile* to explain the concept of decorum. People have strong misconceptions about what decorum means—most people would probably say that it's all about manners, genteel politeness, etc. But as Heinrichs shows with this example (albeit rather condescendingly, assuming that his audience finds a "Cary Grant" look "terrific"), decorum isn't necessarily anything of the kind—the word simply means fitting in with an audience. Eminem needs to fit in with an audience of hip hop fans, so he wears clothing similar to that of his audience members, and calls out his opponent for going to a private school (when this goes against the usual hip-hop *ethos*). Decorum, then, can be a powerful tool for building the audience's loyalty and, ultimately, winning the argument (or, in this case, the hip hop battle).

Chapter 6 Quotes

❝ Lincoln made his audience well disposed toward him; emancipation was easier to accept coming from a racist than from one of those insufferable abolitionists up in liberal Massachusetts. If he had sermonized about racial equality the way they did, he never would have become president.

Related Characters: Jay Heinrichs (speaker), Abraham Lincoln

Related Themes:

Page Number: 61

Explanation and Analysis

Here, Heinrichs talks about Abraham Lincoln, probably one of the greatest rhetoricians in history. Lincoln was an effective politician, Heinrichs suggests, because he was willing to build connections between himself and his audiences—even if doing so required him to sacrifice some of his values. Lincoln would tell offensive jokes and even use the "n-word"—however, Heinrichs argues that in doing so, he was able to work with (some of) the opposition and build a coalition, which eventually proceeded to abolish slavery in America. (Heinrichs doesn't seem to consider the possibility that Lincoln might not have been "sacrificing" his values at all, but that he could have been racist and still opposed slavery as an institution—these are not mutually exclusive worldviews.) In general, though, Heinrichs uses Lincoln's life to illustrate one of his most important points: through the power of rhetoric, people can overcome their differences, move past their fundamental values, and make progress.

Chapter 9 Quotes

❝ Everyone lusts after something. If you can suss out the desire, exploit the lust, dangle the carrot, then you can bridge the gap.

Related Characters: Jay Heinrichs (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 95

Explanation and Analysis

In this passage, Heinrichs articulates some of the aims and tactics of the advertising industry—arguably the contemporary institution that makes use of rhetoric most successful and frequently. Ad agencies know how to appeal to people's desires; indeed, they spend billions of dollars every year determining what, precisely, people want. Then they find ways to associate their products with people's desires.

Notice that Heinrichs isn't judging the process by which advertisers sell their products. However, it wouldn't be hard to conclude that advertising is an unethical industry—in effect, it manipulates people into buying things that they don't really need, to satisfy desires that have nothing, fundamentally, to do with the product itself. In his book, Heinrichs shows readers how to see through the cheap trickery of the advertising industry, but also how to participate in this kind of trickery, using the tools of rhetoric to persuade and even manipulate other people.

Chapter 10 Quotes

❝ Early in my publishing career, I worked for a small magazine that had no fact checkers. When Mount St. Helens erupted for the first time, I wrote a short news piece in which I cluelessly placed the volcano in Oregon. I didn't realize my mistake until after the magazine was published and a reader pointed it out to me. I walked into the editor's office and closed the door.
Me: (looking stricken): I've got bad news, Bill. Really bad news.

Related Characters: Jay Heinrichs (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 102

Explanation and Analysis

Here, Heinrichs discusses one unconventional method of persuasion, using his own career as an example. In an article he wrote, Heinrichs placed Mount Saint Helens in the wrong state, resulting in a slightly embarrassing error in his magazine. But instead of waiting for his boss to find out about the mistake and yell at him, Heinrichs preempts his own punishment and tells his boss about the mistake upfront, claiming that his mistake was "really bad." The tactic works well, and Heinrichs' boss tells Heinrichs not to be so hard on himself.

Heinrichs' style of apology is a particularly clever form of concession, a rhetorical maneuver that involves agreeing with an opponent's point. Heinrichs manages to avoid any serious punishment for his mistake by agreeing with any potential criticism he might have faced from his boss—instead of waiting for his boss to tell him he did a bad job, he says so himself. In so doing, Heinrichs takes control over the exchange with his boss and steers clear of any punishment—a great example of how rhetoric can improve one's career.

Chapter 11 Quotes

❝ Different groups (such as dieters and healthy eaters) have different commonplaces. In fact, people identify with their groups through the groups' commonplaces. These attitudes, beliefs, and values also determine a person's self-identity—the assumptions and outlook on the world that define an individual. We will delve into identity later; right now, let's look at the commonplace as the starting point of rhetorical logic.

Related Characters: Jay Heinrichs (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 108

Explanation and Analysis

In this chapter, Heinrichs introduces an important concept: the commonplace. He defines a commonplace as a commonly-accepted, well-known rule or formulation that helps express the attitudes of a group of people. There are many different kinds of commonplaces—visual, verbal, even musical. However, the purpose of a commonplace is always the same: to simplify a complex set of ideas into a simple, easily digestible form. The importance of commonplaces in rhetoric is enormous: if a speaker can master the audience's commonplaces, then the speaker is already halfway toward persuading them.

Commonplaces also represent what is potentially unethical and duplicitous about rhetoric: a talented rhetorician can used commonplaces to manipulate an audience into acting against its own interests by making people believe that the speaker is more in touch with their values and beliefs than they actually are. (For example, as Heinrichs later shows, George W. Bush was able to evoke the commonplaces of the Christian right simply by using the phrase "I believe.") However, commonplaces are a two-way street: rhetoricians can use them to manipulate their audiences, but commonplaces also push rhetoricians to remain loyal to their audiences' interests.

Chapter 12 Quotes

❝ In the 1980s, conservatives called up the image of the "welfare cheat" who claims nonexistent children and lives high on the government dole. The political right repeated this message in speeches and ads until it was difficult for many Americans to see welfare as anything but a rip-off.

Related Characters: Jay Heinrichs (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 119

Explanation and Analysis

Here Heinrichs discusses the importance of framing a debate. At times, inventing certain key phrases and concepts can be more important than making prolonged, rational arguments for or against a point. For example, in the case of the longstanding debate over welfare in the United States, Republican advocates developed the image of the "welfare cheat," thereby reframing the debate over welfare and forcing Democrats to go on the defensive (i.e., argue that welfare was *not*, in fact, a way for lazy people to steal from the government).

Heinrichs' discussion of the welfare debate emphasizes one of his most important points: argumentation and rhetoric are logical, but they're not *only* logic-based. A savvy debater knows how to use appeals to emotion, appeals to authority, and—as we see in this passage—powerful images and phrases in order to sway an audience. Whether or not one accepts that the idea of welfare cheats is valid, one should recognize how successful politicians have been in using such an idea to frame the welfare debate.

❝ Suddenly, an intractable, emotional, values-laden issue like abortion begins to look politically arguable. Making abortions rare is to the nation's advantage, as Aristotle would say. Now, what are the most effective (and politically popular) ways to make abortions rare? The answers might give the extremes of both sides a lot to swallow; on the left, pro-choicers would have to agree that abortion is a repugnant form of contraception. On the right, pro-lifers would have to allow some abortions.

Related Characters: Jay Heinrichs (speaker), Aristotle

Related Themes:

Page Number: 126

Explanation and Analysis

Heinrichs continues his discussion of the importance of different forms of rhetoric by discussing the history of the abortion debate in American politics. The problem with this debate, at least as it usually plays out in the 21st century, is that it becomes an argument between two competing sets of values: Judeo-Christian values and secular, freedom-centered values. Within the finite space and time of a political debate, this argument is effective unwinnable, hence the endless quagmire of the controversy over abortion.

Heinrichs suggests that the debate over abortion could become more productive if it shifted from an argument over values to an argument over choices—i.e., what to do in the future tense. The great advantage of a future tense, deliberative debate is that it forces both sides to make compromises. As Heinrichs says here, it's much harder to

remain stubborn about what to do than it is to remain stubborn about what to believe; therefore, pro-lifers and pro-choicers might have to compromise on some of their values in order to move forward. Deliberative rhetoric, the rhetoric of choices and future-tense decisions, isn't perfect, but it could create a more productive, mutually beneficial political landscape.

Chapter 14 Quotes

❝ CANDIDATE: I'm a successful businessman. Elect me mayor and I'll run a successful city.
So the guy made a lot of money in business. The problem is that City Hall is not a business. Many entrepreneurs have successful political careers, but at least as many do not.

Related Characters: Jay Heinrichs (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 150

Explanation and Analysis

In this chapter, Heinrichs discusses the dangers of logical fallacies, and lists many different examples of such fallacies. Having sketched out the basics of deductive and inductive logic in the previous chapters, Heinrichs shows how various fallacies violate the rules of logic and push the debate in an unfair, illogical direction. For example, many politicians use the false analogy fallacy when they run for elected office—a politician who used to be a businessman might claim that he'll be a great mayor because he ran a successful company. The problem with such a claim is that it draws an inappropriate comparison between the skills needed to run a business and those needed to run a city.

Recognizing logical fallacies is important, because it helps rhetoricians win debates and because it could help audiences see through faulty reasoning. By studying rhetoric, Heinrichs is simultaneously training his readers to become effective arguers and training them to see "behind the scenes" and rise above cheap tools of persuasion like the false analogy.

Chapter 15 Quotes

❝ Pure logic works like organized kids' soccer: it follows strict rules, and no one gets hurt. Argument allows tackling. You wouldn't want to put yourself in a game where the opposing team gets to tackle while your team plays hands-off. That's what happens when you stick to logic in day-to-day argument; you play by the rules, and your opponents get to tackle you. While it is important to know how to spot and answer a logical fallacy, if you limit yourself to simply pointing them out, your opponents will clobber you. Rhetoric allows logical fallacies, unless they distract a debate or turn it into a fight.

Related Characters: Jay Heinrichs (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 165

Explanation and Analysis

Having described some of the more common logical fallacies in the previous chapter, Heinrichs proceeds to talk about how to exploit logical fallacies in an argument. Heinrichs' fundamental point is that it's rarely a good idea to call out an opponent for using a logical fallacy, at least explicitly. Heinrichs compares the "game" of rhetoric to a game of soccer in which there are few rules, other than the importance of scoring a goal. Put another way, rhetoric is no fun when a rhetorician calls out his opponents for using logical fallacies in an explicit, heavy-handed way; it's far more productive, and more enjoyable, when rhetoricians spot logical fallacies and use them against their opponents, moving the debate forward instead of calling for a time-out. In making this argument, Heinrichs reminds his readers that rhetoric, despite often being based in logic, is not a strictly logical practice—it involves emotion, authority, and various other non-rational tactics.

Chapter 16 Quotes

❝ Here's a secret that applies to all kinds of rhetorical defense: look for the disconnects.

Related Characters: Jay Heinrichs (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 183

Explanation and Analysis

In Chapter Sixteen, Heinrichs writes about the tactics of the

typical American salesman: in particular, the practice of building an unspoken connection with a client, based on disinterest (i.e., the salesman supposedly acting out of selfless concern for the client, rather than a selfish desire to turn a profit). From the client's perspective, it's important to understand these tactics in order to avoid being manipulated by them. As Heinrichs puts it, the audience should try to recognize the disconnects in an argument—in other words, the steps in an argument that remain unstated, or, to return to the salesman and the client, the gap between what the salesman wants and what the client wants. In recognizing the disconnects, a good audience member can understand more clearly how rhetorical manipulation works.

The passage emphasizes that Heinrichs is writing both for rhetoricians and for audience members: by learning about rhetoric, his readers can become better persuaders themselves while also building up an immunity to persuasive tactics.

❝ The old expression "There's virtue in moderation" comes straight from Aristotle. Virtue is a state of character, concerned with choice, lying in a mean. When moderates face scorn from the faithful of both parties, what does that make our country? You can do your bit for democracy, and your own sanity, with this prefab reply:
I know reasonable people who hold that opinion. So who's the extremist?

Related Characters: Jay Heinrichs (speaker), Aristotle

Related Themes:

Page Number: 190

Explanation and Analysis

Toward the end of the chapter, Heinrichs discusses the importance of moderation in arguing. Since ancient times, rhetoricians have understood the importance of framing a decision as the "mean" between two extremes. Such a method arose from the philosophy of Aristotle, who argued that the good is always the mean of two extreme options. In modern times, Aristotle's ideas can seem unusual, especially since American politics (an important site of rhetoric) has become increasingly polarized in the last twenty years or so. Nevertheless, Heinrichs suggests, most people intuitively favor what they perceive to be moderation.

The passage is important because it brings up one of Heinrichs' key ideas: rhetoric can be a moral force. One of Heinrichs' most frequent targets in the book is the polarization of American politics, and the political quagmire that results from it. Perhaps by using the art of rhetoric to resolve differences and move the conversation forward, people can pursue a moderate course of action and fight extremism in all its forms.

Chapter 18 Quotes

❝ But here's a secret to make a cliché practically reinvent itself: take it literally.

OPPONENT: Let's not put the cart before the horse.
YOU: No. We might try something faster.

Related Characters: Jay Heinrichs (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 207

Explanation and Analysis

In Chapter 18, Heinrichs discusses the art of wit in rhetoric. Wit has to be one of the most difficult things to teach, and Heinrichs wisely doesn't try to teach his readers how to be humorous. However, he gives some general formulas for how to appear witty in a pinch. One time-honored technique for wittiness is to take a cliché or a commonplace literally. People intuitively find this rhetorical maneuver inventive and clever. Taking a cliché literally has many useful applications—it can make people seem more likable, help them score points at work, etc. Heinrichs has already covered the basics of rhetoric; here, he shows people how to add rhetorical flourishes to their arguments once they've laid the groundwork.

Chapter 19 Quotes

❝ America's forty-third president, George W. Bush, deserves a special place in the rhetorical pantheon owing to his particular talent for code grooming. The candidates who followed him have been more articulate than Bush, but they still have a lot to learn from the man. Pundits loved to talk about his Christian code, but religion formed only a part of his grooming lingo. He also had his male code, his female code, and his military code.

Related Characters: Jay Heinrichs (speaker), George W. Bush

Related Themes:

Page Number: 222

Explanation and Analysis

In this semi-facetious, semi-serious passage, Heinrichs talks about the rhetorical arts of George W. Bush, a president who was notorious for being a clumsy public speaker. Bush was mocked for his nonsensical, ungrammatical sentences, and his weak, repetitive rhetoric. However, Heinrichs points out that Bush's rhetoric was more effective than his critics would think: by repeating certain key words, Bush proved himself a master of code grooming—i.e., wrapping himself in the favorite phrases of an audience in order to cater to that audience's preferences.

Heinrichs isn't an admirer of Bush by any stretch of the imagination, but by choosing Bush for his example, rather than some more polished speaker, he makes an important point: although people love to make fun of repetitive speakers, people aren't as swayed by polished, rational oratory as they might like to believe. In other words, even if people pretend that they respond to great, creative rhetoric, Bush's crude code-grooming might be the more effective tactic of persuasion. Bush got to be president for eight years, after all—if anything, the joke's on America, not Bush.

Chapter 20 Quotes

"Love" and "support" are superb code words that test well among women voters, sexist as that may sound; it's a bit risky to use it on the man's wife, though, especially if she earns the steady income. But by evoking her mother, he creates a forgiving environment that brings the couple closer together in love, harmony, and shameless manipulation.

Related Characters: Jay Heinrichs (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 232

Explanation and Analysis

In this passage, Heinrichs talks about a hypothetical couple: the husband is trying to convince the wife to stay home for Thanksgiving, instead of flying to visit her parents. Heinrichs shows how the husband can use important code words like "love" and "support" to pressure and guilt his wife into staying home, while also tricking her into thinking that doing so would actually be the best thing for all concerned.

The passage is a good example of the manipulative, morally unsavory aspects of rhetoric. Rhetoric is the art of persuasion by any means necessary—there's no requirement that a good rhetorician argue fairly or honestly. Heinrichs occasionally admits that rhetoric can be unethical or manipulative (here, for example, he seems to acknowledge that the hypothetical husband is disrespecting or condescending to his hypothetical wife by pressuring her into agreement). However, he argues that, overall, rhetoric can be a "force for good" because it forces people to reach productive, mutually beneficial compromises.

Chapter 22 Quotes

I found a little plastic volcano and mailed it with a nice note thanking the governor for letting us borrow it. Some days later, I received a photograph signed by the governor. It showed her smilingly holding up the volcano along with a copy of the offending magazine. We published the picture with our correction in the next issue. My boss was so happy with the result that when the volcano exploded some months later he sent me out to do a cover story.

Related Characters: Jay Heinrichs (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 250

Explanation and Analysis

In this passage, Heinrichs continues with an earlier example, showing that he used a little plastic volcano to make an effective apology to the governor of Washington after mistakenly placing Mount Saint Helens in Oregon (the wrong state). Heinrichs was able to use the plastic volcano to turn his mistake into a joke; furthermore, by building connections with the governor of Washington, he was able to advance his own career—an excellent example of how rhetoricians can use concessions and verbal maneuvering to turn defeats into victories. It would be easy to imagine Heinrichs' mistake setting back his career. However, with the help of rhetoric, Heinrichs finesses his mistake and uses it as a launchpad for future success.

The problem with an apology is that it belittles you without enlarging your audience. Belittling yourself fails to un-belittle the victim. That's why apologies often don't work. They rarely seem sincere enough or extreme enough.

Related Characters: Jay Heinrichs (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 252

Explanation and Analysis

Heinrichs makes the somewhat counterintuitive argument that apologizing is often a bad idea. By making an apology, one admits a mistake; however, admitting a mistake is often not enough to pacify or satisfy the victim of the mistake. The victim continues to feel belittled and ignored—thus, the apology doesn't always solve the problem. A more effective strategy for dealing with a mistake is to offer an immediate solution to the problem and—more subtly—frame one's admission of a mistake in terms that strategically make one seem skillful. For example, one might apologize for a mistake at work by saying, "I'm a perfectionist, and I want to do this again." In doing so, one emphasizes one's virtues ("perfectionist") and changes the discussion from the present tense to the future tense ("I want to do this again"). Morality tells us that apologizing is the "right" thing to do; however, Heinrichs counters by showing that apologizing isn't always the most productive, mutually satisfactory thing to do.

Chapter 25 Quotes

Cicero says I should be prepared to argue both sides of the case, starting with my opponent's pitch. This means spending some time imagining what he will say. I'm guessing he will talk about values a lot—the rights and freedoms that a noise ordinance will trample upon.

Related Characters: Jay Heinrichs (speaker), Marcus Tullius Cicero

Related Themes:

Page Number: 282

Explanation and Analysis

In Chapter 25, Heinrichs talks about a hypothetical speech he might make at a town hall meeting, in which he argues that local townspeople shouldn't use leaf blowers, since the noise is distracting. Throughout the chapter, Heinrichs talks about the classical structure of a speech, as articulated by Marcus Tullius Cicero, the Roman politican and rhetorician. Here, Heinrichs honors one of Cicero's rules by planning to anticipate his opponent's argument during his own speech. Heinrichs will preempt his opponent's discussion of rights and freedoms by arguing that leaf blowers interfere with homeowners' freedoms to enjoy their own property. In doing so, he'll take the wind out of his unfortunate opponent's sails and gain a major advantage in the debate.

Chapter 26 Quotes

[Obama] tells the story of parents—a goatherd who went on to study in America, a woman born "on the other side of the world, in Kenya" and ends with a moral that links his character with the American way: "I stand here knowing that my story is a part of the larger American story," he says. "This is the true genius of America, a faith in the simple dreams of its people."

Related Characters: Barack Obama, Jay Heinrichs (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 294

Explanation and Analysis

In Chapter 26, Heinrichs talks about a modern master of rhetoric, Barack Obama. Obama's political career was full of memorable speeches, so it's worthwhile to consider what rhetorical devices Obama used. Here, Heinrichs talks about the speech that first put Obama on a national stage, the speech he delivered at the 2004 Democratic National Convention. In the speech, Obama began by talking about his own heritage as the son of an immigrant father, and connects his own life with commonplace American values. In doing so, Heinrichs shows, Obama follows the format of a Ciceronian oration, and also connects with his audience, building trust and respect for himself. By using President Obama as an example of rhetorical talent, Heinrichs emphasizes the point that rhetoric, even if it's not particularly popular or commonly taught in America, is still a valuable skill.

Chapter 27 Quotes

First, though, think how you want to present that memo. Should it be printed and bound with a clear plastic binder? Or emailed as an attachment? If the boss is no reader, would he let you give a PowerPoint presentation? Or email one to him? That's *kairos* again—timing plus medium.

Related Characters: Jay Heinrichs (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 308

Explanation and Analysis

In Chapter 27, Heinrichs discusses more practical applications of the art of rhetoric. Heinrichs writes for a primarily business-focused audience (which explains why so many of his examples revolve around the workplace). An employee who's trying to impress a boss should use the art of rhetoric to craft a persuasive memo, which exploits the "right time," or *kairos*, and conveys the proper blend of *logos*, *pathos*, and *ethos*. One of Heinrichs' major points in *Thank You for Arguing* is that different forms of communication favor different rhetorical appeals; for example, a phone call often favors a rational, logical appeal, while Skyping would favor a more *ethos*-oriented appeal. Understanding the underlying forms of persuasion can help people gain a major advantage in their lives, particularly at work.

There are plenty more answers where that came from, and maybe some alternatives would test better with focus groups. But any concession that changes the tense from the past (accusation) and present (tribalism) to the future (the advantageous) will win the attention of your audience.

Related Characters: Jay Heinrichs (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 316

Explanation and Analysis

At the end of the chapter, Heinrichs discusses a hypothetical politician who has to defend himself from accusations of having smoked marijuana as a younger person. The politician could try to deny the accusations or shift the blame to someone else—however, the problem with such strategies is that they situate the debate in the past or present tenses, resulting in an unproductive conversation. The best strategy, Heinrichs argues, would be to focus on the future tense, using deliberative rhetoric—in other words, the politician should scold his accusers for dwelling on the past instead of working together to solve problems in the future. Heinrichs acknowledges that such a strategy might not work with all people; however, as a rule of thumb, it's better for everyone to situate a debate in the future than in the present.

Chapter 28 Quotes

The founders weren't starry-eyed about their republic. [They] believed that the symptoms could be ameliorated by the combination of checks and balances and the "cool, candid" arbitration of the liberally educated professional class.

Related Characters: Jay Heinrichs (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 323

Explanation and Analysis

In the final chapter of *Thank You for Arguing*, Heinrichs makes his most eloquent and ambitious argument for the continued relevance of rhetoric. Situating rhetoric in a lengthy American tradition of democracy and freedom, Heinrichs suggests that the Founding Fathers believed that rhetoric would be a crucial component of the United States of America, and even suggested that politicians and leaders needed rhetoric to work together. In other words, the system of checks and balances that's essential to American government can only function smoothly when politicians use the arts of *logos*, *ethos*, and *pathos* to convince people to cooperate with them and reach compromises. One could say that deliberative rhetoric is the art of reaching a compromise in order to move things forward, and the Founding Fathers supported the use of strong deliberative rhetoric. In the 21st century, when the different branches of government and political parties refuse to work together much of the time, people would do well to remember the importance of rhetoric in American history.

It is no coincidence that red and blue America split apart just when moral issues began to dominate campaigns—not because one side has morals and the other lacks them, but because values cannot be the sole subject of deliberative argument. Of course, demonstrative language—code grooming and values talk—works to bring an audience together and make it identify with you and your point of view. But eventually a deliberative argument has to get—well, deliberative.

Related Characters: Jay Heinrichs (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 325

Explanation and Analysis

Heinrichs continues to argue for the importance of rhetoric

in general and deliberative rhetoric in particular in American politics. Too often, politicians fight with one another over basic moral values. While moral values are obviously important, Heinrichs suggests that a more productive form of argument would revolve around choices and actions, situated in the future tense. Politicians made a huge tactical error when they framed global warming in primarily moral terms; in doing so, they forced their opponents to frame their own opposition in conflicting moral terms, leading to a stalemate on the issue of global warming. By embracing deliberative rhetoric, politicians could reach compromises and undo the stereotype that politics is a dull, tedious business where nothing ever gets done—just one of the many useful applications of rhetoric that Heinrichs talks about in his book.

SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The color-coded icons under each analysis entry make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. Each icon corresponds to one of the themes explained in the Themes section of this LitChart.

CHAPTER 1: OPEN YOUR EYES: THE INVISIBLE ARGUMENT

Early in the morning, Jay Heinrichs sits in his kitchen, watching as his teenaged son George Heinrichs eats breakfast. Noticing the empty tube of toothpaste in the bathroom, he shouts, "George, who used all the toothpaste?" George shoots back, "The point is how we're going to keep this from happening again." Previously, Heinrichs has taught his son that the purpose of a good argument is to discuss the future tense. Heinrichs concedes George's point, and then asks George to get some more toothpaste, which George does immediately. Considering this incident later, Heinrichs realizes that he won the argument by making George believe that *he* won the argument. George is happy to have corrected his father, and, because he's feeling victorious, he goes to get some toothpaste.

Jay Heinrichs, the author and narrator of the book, likes to use examples from his personal life, especially his family life. By beginning with a banal-seeming example of the power of arguing, Heinrichs tries to establish a connection with his audience (his readers), most of whom, presumably, will be familiar with the kind of low-stakes, everyday arguments that Heinrichs mentions here. Notice also that Heinrichs's argument with George reaches a clear resolution (unlike many arguments that people have in the course of a day). Heinrichs will show readers how to argue more intelligently and productively.

Rhetoric, the art of argument, is a vital tool for any parent with a moody child, Heinrichs says. Like it or not, arguing is a part of life: when people look at ads or listen to a politician's speech, they're bombarded with arguments. By studying rhetoric we can "decode" arguments, and learn how to craft arguments ourselves.

Having established the importance of arguing and rhetoric in a banal, everyday setting, Heinrichs generalizes to say that rhetoric is an inescapable part of life. Politics and advertising are two of the most important applications of rhetoric that Heinrichs discusses.

In the ancient world, rhetoric was considered a fundamental skill for leaders. Ancient Greeks pioneered the rules of rhetoric, and Roman statesmen perfected them. Many of the finest passages in the Bible reflect the rules of rhetoric, as does the text of the Constitution. Yet rhetoric became less popular in the 19th century, and nowadays it's rarely considered a central part of an education. Heinrichs wrote this book to persuade people that rhetoric is an important part of life, and that learning about rhetoric can improve life in countless ways. Through rhetoric, we can learn arguing strategies, and, in all, rhetoric gives us a "fresh new perspective on the human condition."

Here, Heinrichs lays out the thesis of his book: rhetoric is an important form of knowledge, and it's as relevant in the 21st century as it was in ancient Roman society. By studying rhetoric, he further claims, people can improve their lives in countless ways, both by boosting their awareness of other people's arguments and by improving their own argumentative strategies.

To study the importance of persuasion, Heinrichs decided to conduct an experiment: for one whole day, he tried to avoid arguments. He woke up and immediately noticed his Timex Ironman wristwatch, a watch that is marketed as the official watch of the Ironman competition. This form of marketing represents what the Romans called *argumentum a fortiori*, or "argument from strength"—in short, the idea that, if something works the hard way, it'll work the easy way (i.e., if the watch works for an Ironman competitor, it should work for Heinrichs).

To prove that rhetoric is indeed an inescapable part of modern life, Heinrichs attempts to live without *rhetoric—but of course, he finds himself surrounded by rhetoric and rhetorical approaches, even from something as basic as his wristwatch.*

Heinrichs sits at the breakfast table, writing in his notebook. After he quit his job, his wife, Dorothy Heinrichs, returned to full-time work; they agreed that Heinrichs would do the cooking. However, when Dorothy sees Heinrichs writing, she's often so charmed that she brings him breakfast anyway. Seduction, Heinrichs notes, underlies many forms of entertainment. Not too long ago, a car salesman "seduced" Heinrichs into buying a bad car by putting him in a good mood and taking him for a nice drive.

Almost any human interaction, Heinrichs suggests, has some persuasive—and therefore, rhetorical—underpinning. Interestingly, at the same time as he writes about the importance of seduction in rhetoric, Heinrichs uses *seduction to "sell" readers on his book.*

Seduction, Heinrichs continues, is the cornerstone of many a successful argument. Through seduction, a skilled rhetorician can bring his audience to a consensus—in other words, agreement with the rhetorician. Even Aristotle, one of history's greatest logicians, understood that rhetoricians need to use seduction and appeals to emotion to persuade other people—logic alone won't always work.

Heinrichs generalizes from the previous passage to argue for the importance of seduction (understood in the general sense of any non-logical appeal). While logic and reason are important aspects of any good argument, they're rarely enough to win the fight—a good rhetorician knows how to also use appeals to emotion and character to persuade other people.

Meanwhile, Heinrichs' attempts to avoid argument fail. He doesn't want to cook dinner for George, so he offers to cook stew (a meal that he knows George hates), thereby ensuring that George won't be home for dinner. Later, he calls Sears over the phone about an unfair bill, making sure to speak slowly, since he knows that, by taking up the Sears employees' time, he'll be more likely to get a quick refund. At lunch, he sits outside and listens to a mockingbird singing a song. The bird sings a tune, and then sings it in reverse—a rhetorical trick called *chiasmus*. In his inaugural address, President John F. Kennedy used chiasmus: "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country."

Most people think of arguing as a tedious activity in which nothing is ever really accomplished. But as Heinrichs implies here, this view of arguing arises from the fact that most people don't know how to argue well. *Heinrichs recognizes that skillful, well-planned rhetorical maneuvers can be very useful—for example, the not-so-subtle maneuver that helps him keep George out of the house that evening. Heinrichs finds rhetorical techniques everywhere—even in birdsong—suggesting that the desire or need to persuade is universal.*

Heinrichs' day has ended up being highly "rhetorical." Later, he finishes working and puts on a cashmere sweater that he knows Dorothy finds "bedroomy." He thinks, "Let the seduction begin."

The prologue ends with another reminder that rhetoric can be fun, useful, and downright sexy.

CHAPTER 2: SET YOUR GOALS: CICERO'S LIGHTBULB

In the 1970s, *National Lampoon* magazine publishes a parody of Plato's *Republic*, in which Socrates deals knockout punches to his opponents, using nothing but the force of his ideas. Throughout history, rhetoricians have imagined themselves as warriors. Nevertheless, it's important to see the difference between arguing and fighting. In a fight, a warrior tries to defeat an opponent. But in an argument, a rhetorician is really trying to *win over* an audience.

It's important to distinguish between arguing and fighting—arguing is as much about avoiding conflict as it is about facing conflict head-on. A skillful arguer like Heinrichs (presumably) or Socrates knows how to use rhetorical techniques to persuade an audience to agree voluntarily.

In the 1980s, psychologists conducted a study of married couples' behavior, and concluded that couples with "healthy marriages" argued as much as those with "unhealthy marriages," but in more productive ways. Heinrichs believes that the couples who stayed married were able to work out their differences with the help of argument. They didn't treat arguing as an excuse to attack each other's characters, and instead used more subtle, eloquent approaches to reach compromises. At the most basic level, "you fight to win; you argue to achieve agreement." Some people might think that arguing is "wimpier" than fighting. But in fact, arguing takes courage. Arguing can also help people gain power by making "a group yield to the dominion of your voice."

There's no rule that says that arguing has to be good for a marriage. However, if done correctly, arguing can be an invaluable tool for married couples: the right arguments, phrased in the right way, can help a couple resolve its differences in a productive way, preventing resentment or tension from building up in the marriage. It's significant that Heinrichs stresses the productive, positive applications of rhetoric, given that one could (and many do) fault rhetoric for being a manipulative, even unethical practice.

Imagine, Heinrichs says, that a police officer pulls you over for going fifty-five in a fifty zone. It would be tempting to make a sarcastic remark, in which case the officer will almost certainly give you a ticket. But instead, set yourself a more productive goal: not getting a ticket. It's also important to size up your opponent in the argument—the police officer, who, in this case, is also the audience for the argument. The only person you have to convince is him.

Heinrichs lists another example with which his readers will most likely be familiar: getting pulled over. A good rhetorician may be able to get out of the ticket by recognizing the real goal (not getting ticketed) and resisting the temptation to argue with the officer.

Let's say you try to convince the officer not to give you a ticket by lying and giving him a good excuse for speeding—your wife is in labor, e.g. It's quite likely that the officer won't care why you're speeding, and will give you the ticket anyway. But you could also try to concede the officer's point—you *were* speeding. You could then ask the officer for advice on how to stay under the speed limit, as long as you don't sound sarcastic. Doing so will appeal to the officer's expertise and, most importantly, allow him to believe that he's "won" the argument. It's more likely that the officer will then let you off with a warning. In short, conceding an opponent's points doesn't mean that you're giving up the argument. It might seem a little wimpy to concede an opponent's points so readily, but, Heinrichs argues, "wimps like us shall inherit the rhetorical earth."

Heinrichs' analysis of the traffic incident could apply to almost any argument: persuaders must always decide whether they should debate a point, concede to it, or lie about it. Often times, the best strategy is to concede a point and remain focused on the overall goal of the argument (namely, getting what one wants out of the argument). Notice that, once again, Heinrichs not only lists an example of a rhetorical concept (here, conceding a point), but also gives an example of the concept (and tries to throw in some humor as well).

Imagine, Heinrichs says, that you're interested in becoming romantically involved with someone. If the other person is a little reluctant, then you could stand to benefit from arguing. The first step in your seduction is to put them in the mood for love—playing romantic music, pouring them wine, complimenting them, etc. The great Roman orator, Marcus Tullius Cicero, said that persuading people consists of three different steps: 1) stimulate their emotions; 2) change their opinion; 3) get them to act. In some ways, stimulating the emotions is the most important part of an argument—steps 2 and 3 couldn't happen without step 1. For example, when filming *It's a Wonderful Life*, the director had to convince the actor Jimmy Stewart, who was unusually shy, to kiss the female lead, Donna Reed. The director eventually hit on the idea of staging a scene in which Stewart and Reed listen to the same phone at the same time, requiring them to sit very close to each other. By staging the scene in this intimate way, the director was able to put Stewart "in the mood," and his resulting kiss is one of the greatest in Hollywood history.

Cicero is one of Heinrichs's rhetorical heroes, and a prominent figure throughout Thank You for Arguing. *As with many of the examples of persuasion in the book, Heinrichs's discussion of putting someone "in the mood" might seem manipulative and belittling in the way it portrays the audience as easily pliable. Nevertheless, Heinrichs continues to bolster his argument for the importance of persuasion by citing examples that readers will be likely to know already, and which have a clear positive payoff (in this case, he cites the beloved Christmas movie* It's a Wonderful Life *and argues that the final product, the movie itself, justifies the light emotional manipulation during the making of the movie).*

One master of stimulating the audience's emotions was Saint Augustine, one of the fathers of the Christian Church. Augustine was a professor of rhetoric, and he later used his rhetorical training to convert pagans to Christianity, frightening them with "sheer emotional pyrotechnics." But manipulating the audience's emotions is easy compared with making your audience choose what *you* want them to. One way to do so is to engineer the choices available to the audience. For example, when Heinrichs visited his daughter, Dorothy Jr., in London, she wanted to dine at her favorite restaurant, even after he offered to take her somewhere new. Dorothy hesitated to name other restaurants, pushing her father to "choose" the restaurant where she'd wanted to eat all along.

Most people would say that an argument consists of step two only—getting people to choose something. But in fact, as Heinrichs shows, this is only one third of the overall process of persuasion. One of the reasons that arguments are so often tiresome and repetitive is that most people don't realize that there's more to a good argument than just outlining one's points. Nevertheless, Heinrichs also suggests that people (such as his daughter) intuitively know how to argue persuasively, even if they couldn't really explain what they're doing.

The third step in an argument, getting an audience to actually do something, is perhaps the most difficult. One strategy for doing so is to convince the audience that acting the way you want them to is easy. Years ago, while Heinrichs worked in publishing, his firm published a book called *The South Beach Diet: The Delicious, Doctor-Designed, Foolproof Plan for Fast and Healthy Weight Loss*. Although Heinrichs was skeptical that the book would be a success, it became a bestseller, partly because the title made dieting seem both desirable (since it evoked a fun, happy vacation) and easily attainable.

It's important to understand the difference between steps 2 and 3 of a good argument. It's one thing to convince an audience to agree with a certain choice; it's quite another to get the audience to act on their new conviction—to translate persuasion into action. Heinrichs cites an example from his career as a publisher—the first of many such examples in the book.

CHAPTER 3: CONTROL THE TENSE: ORPHAN ANNIE'S LAW

According to Aristotle, there are three kinds of arguments: 1) blame, 2) values, and 3) choice. Imagine, Heinrichs says, a woman trying to convince her husband to turn his music down. She begins criticizing him for playing "Free Bird" too loudly, and the husband responds, "So that's what this is about. You hate my music." The woman's mistake was to turn an argument about choice (turning down the music) into one about values (whether the music is good or bad).

The ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle was one of the greatest intellectuals in Western history; he was also one of the most devoted "categorizers" in history. Aristotle's insightful, tripartite distinction between different forms of rhetoric will come in handy throughout the book—and often, arguments devolve into bickering because people aren't aware of the Aristotelian distinction.

Aristotle also argued that each of the three kinds of argument corresponds to a different tense: blame corresponds to the past, values to the present, and choice to the future. On shows like *CSI*, for example, the detectives speak in the past tense, trying to determine who should be blamed for a crime. Aristotle referred to this kind of arguing as "forensic rhetoric." The present tense, however, is more commonly associated with arguments about what is and isn't good. For instance, sermons are almost exclusively delivered in the present tense. Aristotle referred to this kind of speaking as "demonstrative rhetoric." Finally, Aristotle used the term "deliberative rhetoric" to refer to arguments about what to do in the future.

Each kind of argument correlates with a certain topic and a certain tense. For example, it makes sense that people would talk about values and beliefs in the present tense—people think that their beliefs are eternal and unchanging. The further implication of Aristotle's distinction is that, by controlling the "tense" of an argument, people can implicitly control the content of that debate—by shifting the debate to the future tense, for example, a rhetorician can shift from discussing values to discussing actions.

Heinrichs returns to the couple arguing about the husband's music. This time, instead of arguing about the merits of the music (demonstrative rhetoric), the husband suggests watching a movie instead (deliberative rhetoric). The husband proposes watching a movie he knows his wife hates, so that his second suggestion (the movie he really wants to watch) sounds more appealing, and she agrees. Switching the tense—in this case, from present to future—is a good way to control the argument.

By switching to a discussion of the future, the husband takes control over the argument while seeming to be passive and accommodating in his manner: even though his wife is the one naming options, the husband is controlling the scope and direction of the conversation.


When arguing in the future tense, Heinrichs says, it's important to remember Little Orphan Annie, who sings, "the sun will come out tomorrow." But even Annie isn't *sure* that the sun will come out—she has to bet her "bottom dollar" that it'll happen. Thus, readers should keep in mind that, in deliberate rhetoric, they cannot stick to the facts—we have to make conjectures about the future. Deliberation is about uncertain choices, not eternal truths or the hard, cold facts of life.

Deliberation is about uncertain choices, which means that people can't just fall back on their core values and beliefs. It could be argued that Heinrichs's distinction between past and future tense debates is overly simplistic, because people's beliefs are often about *how to behave in the future.*

Imagine that a couple is arguing over whether to invest in stocks or bonds. The husband wants to invest in stocks, while the wife wants to be more cautious, since she's heard that the market is going to tank. This is an inherently deliberative, future-tense argument, based in probabilities, not certainties. Or imagine that you're trying to convince your uncle not to divorce his wife and marry a younger woman. You could tell him that he's morally wrong (demonstrative rhetoric), but you'd probably have more success arguing that his life will turn out worse if he divorces his wife (deliberative rhetoric). The way to win the argument is to recognize which issues are debatable (his future) and which issues are difficult or impossible to debate (the morality of divorce). Most arguments take place in the wrong tense. Rhetoricians must remember what the proper tense for the debate should be, in order to control the scope of the debate.

When beginning an argument, one should always consider the most appropriate tense for the argument—in fact, determining the correct tense could be considered the most important part of making an argument. Here, the best strategy for convincing one's uncle is to situate the debate in the future, and, implicitly, the realm of choices, decisions, and uncertainties. The reason that deliberative debates are usually more productive than demonstrative debates is that people are almost always more willing to budge on their actions than on their core beliefs.

CHAPTER 4: SOFTEN THEM UP: CHARACTER, LOGIC, EMOTION

Aristotle wrote that there are three ways to persuade: 1) argument by character, or *ethos*, 2) argument by logic, or *logos*, and 3) argument by emotion, or *pathos*. In this chapter, Heinrichs will discuss all three.

Aristotle was a master of categorizing, and in this chapter Heinrichs will discuss one of Aristotle's most influential ideas: the tripartite division of argumentation.

When George Heinrichs was a little boy, he wanted to wear shorts in the middle of winter. Heinrichs tried to convince George using argument by character (appealing to the fact that he was George's father). When this failed, he tried reason (George's legs would get cold). Finally, he tried to use humor to convince George, pulling up his own pants legs and joking that he looked ridiculous. In the end, he compromised with his son, allowing him to wear shorts at school if he wore his snow pants outside.

There is no single best way to convince George to wear long pants; Heinrichs tries all three of the basic approaches to argumentation, appealing to his son's reason, emotions, and respect for authority. Interestingly, Heinrichs chooses an example in which none of the arguments entirely work, perhaps emphasizing the importance of compromise (he cuts a deal with George instead of getting his way).

Of the three forms of persuasion, *logos* is the "smart child," who gets good grades in school. *Ethos* would be the charismatic child who gets elected class president, and *pathos* would be the sibling who's disrespected, but who gets away with everything. *Ethos* is often criticized for being cheap and illogical, but even Aristotle recognized that it's necessary for winning most arguments.

People tend to respect logical arguments and ignore (or try to ignore) emotional pleas, but in fact, no good argument is purely logical. The best rhetoricians understand how to combine logic with emotion and authority to convince the greatest number of people.

When Heinrichs tried to convince George to wear pants, George instinctively used *logos*, *ethos*, and *pathos* to counter his father. When Heinrichs cited his own authority as George's father, George replied, "They're my legs," citing his own authority over his own body. He insisted that he didn't mind if his legs got cold (*logos*), and he looked adorable when he tried not to cry (*pathos*). In the end, Heinrichs compromised with George, recognizing that George had matched him in their rhetorical argument.

Heinrichs emphasizes that learning how to argue isn't all about offense. A good student of rhetoric knows how to defend a position and, perhaps even more importantly, recognize other people's style of argument, just as George recognizes that his father is trying to convince him to wear long pants.

When using *logos*, rhetoricians must remember the importance of concession—agreeing with an opponent's points but still controlling the argument. By agreeing, rhetoricians keep the argument pleasant. For example, Heinrichs had a boss who was great at agreeing with Heinrich's points and yet refusing to do what Heinrichs suggested. When Heinrichs proposed an idea, his boss would say, "Let's circle back to it." With concession, it's possible to win an argument without saying "no" to your opponent even once.

Concession is an important concept, which Heinrichs has already discussed, because it emphasizes the difference between arguing and fighting. Fighting is about a strong offense, and refusing to accept an opponent's authority in any way. Arguing, by contrast, is about accepting an opponent's ideas, albeit in a strategy way.

When using *pathos* to persuade, rhetoricians transform themselves into emotional role models, showing other people how they *should* feel. In a way, rhetoricians make emotional concessions, steering the debate in a new direction. Once, Heinrichs came home from work, angry with his boss for ignoring an award his magazine had won. Dorothy, his wife, expressed sympathy and argued that Heinrichs should have gotten a bonus. Heinrichs found himself qualifying his anger, and even said, "It wasn't *that* big an award." Dorothy's sympathy may have been genuine, but it also steered the conversation in a new direction by convincing Heinrichs to side with his employer.

Dorothy's behavior with Heinrichs reinforces the importance of concession in rhetoric. Presumably, Dorothy doesn't want to hear her husband complaining about his lack of an award all night long; therefore, she cuts off her husband's complaints by complaining even more *than he does. In doing so, Dorothy gains control over the direction of the conversation and makes Heinrichs feel foolish for being so angry—all without ever actually disagreeing.*

CHAPTER 5: GET THEM TO LIKE YOU: EMINEM'S RULES OF DECORUM

In this chapter, Heinrichs will discuss the importance of concession for *ethos*, the appeal to authority. The Latin term for this kind of concession is *decorum*: character-based agreeability. Literally, *decorum* means "suitable," and indeed, one way to use decorum is to blend in with one's audience. However, this doesn't mean being exactly like one's audience. For example, when making a speech, it's often a good idea to dress slightly better than the average audience member. Decorum is sometime seen as fussy and impractical, but it's very important for persuasion: rhetoricians need to be aware of an audience's speech and manner in order to persuade. It's impossible to be indecorous and persuasive at the same time.

Decorum is important because it allows a persuader to win an argument by conceding, in an abstract sense, to the audience's culture, manners, and language. Decorum has a reputation for being old-fashioned and overly fussy, but Heinrichs isn't necessarily talking about decorum in the sense of etiquette and politeness. Decorum simply means fitting in with an audience in any way the persuader deems necessary.

In the climax of the movie *8 Mile*, Eminem shows up at a hip-hop competition. In the final round, he faces off against his opponent, rapping before a huge audience. Eminem shows the proper decorum by wearing clothes that help him blend in: baggy pants, skullcap, etc. However, in order to fully blend in with his mostly black audience, he needs to surmount the fact that he's white. Thus, he brings up the fact that his opponent, a wannabe gangster, went to an elite prep school. In doing so, he gets the audience on his side and makes his opponent's hip-hop manner seem phonier than his own.

To emphasize that decorum and etiquette aren't synonyms, Heinrichs cites Eminem (who few people would name as an exemplar of proper etiquette). Eminem exhibits masterful decorum, unlikely though it may sound: he blends in with his predominately black Detroit audience and makes himself seem like an insider by strategically ribbing his opponent for going to an elite prep school. One of the best ways for a speaker to exhibit decorum is to unite the audience against someone else (here, the other rapper and, more generally, elite, predominately white prep schools).

When trying to find the right decorum, rhetoricians should ask themselves, "What do these people expect of me?" This can be a tricky question. Once, Heinrichs and his brother John were in Washington, D.C., together. John bought a rose and gave it to a woman, calling her "doll." The woman was flattered. When Heinrichs tried to do the same thing, the woman told him to "go to hell." In short, "what works for one can wreak disaster for the other." Therefore, decorum doesn't only mean blending in with the crowd; it means honoring one's own personality.

Another misconception about decorum is that it's "one size fits all"—in other words, the rules of decorum for one person are the same as the rules for anybody else. Heinrichs suggests (through this rather crude example) that the trick of good decorum is finding a middle ground between the audience's culture and one's own personality.

When it comes to dressing with decorum, the best rule of thumb is, "look the way you think your audience will want you to look." It's often useful to dress slightly above one's rank—but not too far above it. One useful tip that Heinrichs uses is to scope out the people in his intended audience who have the fanciest shoes, and then imitate those people's clothing and color patterns.

In addition to being a book about rhetoric, Thank You for Arguing *contains a lot of concrete advice that's seemingly pitched at businessmen and aspiring professionals.*

Decorous persuaders must understand how to imitate an audience's language and adapt to different audiences. It may seem dishonest to adapt one's language for different groups, but persuasion is about "the beliefs and expectations" of an audience. Thus, being true to the audience can be a noble act—one could say that "decorum is the better part of valor."

Again, Heinrichs implicitly tries to defend rhetoric from the allegation that it's an inherently manipulative, insincere art. In fact, he argues, good rhetoric is about reaching an agreement between an audience's desires and one's own—rather than simply lying and pandering to an audience.

CHAPTER 6: MAKE THEM LISTEN: THE LINCOLN GAMBIT

Ethos is important in rhetoric, because it helps an audience remain attentive to a speaker and encourages them to trust the speaker. Aristotle wrote that people should be able to trust a rhetorician's judgment as well as the rhetorician's basic goodness. In other words, it's not enough to make yourself seem likeable—you have to appear trustworthy and reliable. Aristotle lists three qualities of *ethos*: 1) virtue, i.e., sharing the audience's values, 2) practical wisdom, i.e., knowing the right thing to do, and 3) disinterest, i.e., being unbiased.

Likeable people may be good as persuading others, but not necessarily: it's probably better for a rhetorician to exhibit competence, virtue, and disinterest than it is for the rhetorician to only seem likeable in the narrowest sense of the word.

Heinrichs begins with virtue, the first of the three qualities of *ethos*. In rhetorical terms, being virtuous simply means connecting with an audience's values. People have many different ideas of "virtue," which means that what seems ethical to a speaker could actually detract from that speaker's *ethos*. In the book *To Kill a Mockingbird*, the lawyer Atticus Finch is seen as a virtuous person, until it become clear that his values don't coincide with those of his racist town. His virtue is great, but his *rhetorical* virtue, when he speaks to the racist jury, is low. On the other hand, consider Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln opposed slavery, but he was well-known for enjoying "darkie jokes" and even using the n-word. Perhaps Lincoln succeeded as a politician because he adapted his rhetorical virtue to different audiences—a gambit that may seem politically incorrect by 21st century standards, but which also allowed him to fight slavery.

There must be thousand of different definitions of the word "virtue,' each corresponding to a different moral tradition. However, for the purposes of making a speech, "virtue" simply means fitting in with the culture and values of an audience. With his (perhaps overly simplified) example of Lincoln, Heinrichs suggests that it's better to compromise on one's core beliefs in order to get things done than it is to always be consistent and risk getting nothing done. Here, as in the rest of the book, Heinrichs seems more interested in deliberative than demonstrative rhetoric, just as he's more interested in getting things done than in holding fast to one set of values.

Adapting to an audience's notions of virtue can be tricky—sometimes, one must persuade two distinct audiences, each with its own values, at once. When Heinrichs published a college alumni magazine, he never received a raise, even though the magazine was making money. He realized that he was presenting himself to his academic colleagues as a pure businessman, instead of as a defender of academic values. Had Heinrichs strengthened his rhetorical virtue and made himself seem more interested in academia, his bosses might have paid him more.

Heinrichs' personal example emphasizes the point that it's not enough to be logical, and indeed, sometimes it's not enough to get good results. People can intuitively sense when other people don't share their values, and, as Heinrichs' example shows, they sometimes attach more importance to values than competence.

One of the simplest ways to boost one's ethical virtue is to brag about "all the good things you have done." However, getting someone else to brag on one's behalf is often a better technique. Another technique is the "tactical flaw"—i.e., admitting to a flaw that actually shows one's virtue. For example, George Washington apologized for his bad eyesight by saying, "my eyes have grown dim in the service of my country."

While audiences are probably well attuned to bragging, they may be more receptive to false modesty (or humblebragging, as it's sometimes called).

People can also improve their rhetorical virtue by changing their position. Changing positions should be done very sparingly, but it can come in handy at times. Another clever trick for boosting rhetorical virtue is to pretend to choose something when, in fact, you have no choice. For example, Dorothy Jr. once told Heinrichs that she'd chosen not to go to a party because there'd be alcohol, knowing full-well that he wasn't going to let her go, anyway.

Changing one's position can seem weak and opportunistic, so it needs to be done very skillfully (and probably sparingly). The trick of pretending to choose an inevitable choice is useful because it makes the persuader seem to agree with an option the audience already supports.

CHAPTER 7: USE YOUR CRAFT: THE BELUSHI PARADIGM

The second major element of *ethos* is practical wisdom. Consider the famous scene from the movie *Animal House* in which John Belushi's character tries to rouse his fraternity brothers into action with the speech, "When the goin' gets tough … the tough get goin'!" Belushi's speech doesn't go over well—nobody joins him when he races out of the room. The problem is that Belushi's character isn't seen as a trustworthy person. To be a persuasive speaker, one must be seen as a sensible, knowledgeable person.

John Belushi's character in Animal House *is an obnoxious fraternity brother—he's liked by his friends, but few people would trust him to get things done. Heinrichs' point is that there's a major distinction between likability and competence: sometimes, it's better to seem competent than to be well-liked.*

There's a difference between practical wisdom and intelligence. Some people are smart but lack the ability to think flexibly and adapt to new situations. Successful leaders, however, project an image of experience and expertise. They're skillful at bending rules and seeming to take the middle course. For example, many presidents have chosen running mates with more extreme views than their own, allowing them to appear moderate, even if they're not.

Once again, Heinrichs suggests that people intuitively gravitate toward the solutions they perceive as moderate and balanced. This seems debatable, however, especially in light of Heinrichs' later argument that American politics has become more polarized than ever.

Altogether, projecting real-world experience, bending the rules, and appearing moderate can be important persuasive tactics. Heinrichs and his wife have made an effort to *not* treat their two children equally. In doing so, they've often upset their children; however, they've also trained their children to listen more attentively (instead of simply trusting that they'll be treated equally) and trust that their parents will make careful decisions and weigh all the factors, instead of simply enforcing the rules (by treating them equally). In this way, Heinrichs and his wife appear practically wise to their children.

Many parents think they have a moral responsibility to treat their children the same, in the sense that they should give their children the same resources and allow them to do the same things, starting at the same age. The problem with such a mindset, Heinrichs argues, is that it makes children less respectful of their parents' authority: for example, a child who knows that he's going to be allowed to watch PG-13 movies at the age of the ten because his older brother did will probably behave worse than his older brother did, because he won't try to earn the right to watch PG-13 movies. By refusing to treat their children equally, Heinrichs and his wife establish themselves as "deciders" and encourage their children to behave better.

CHAPTER 8: SHOW YOU CARE: QUINTILIAN'S USEFUL DOUBT

The third aspect of *ethos* is "disinterested goodwill," or "caring"—in short, the ability to appear selfless. The Founding Fathers went to elaborate lengths to appear financially disinterested in their own political decisions; a few of them even gave away fortunes to appear virtuous. In the 19th century, many presidents claimed to have been born in log cabins in order to seem rugged and financially disinterested.

Sometimes "disinterested" is used as a synonym for "uninterested"; however, Heinrichs uses it to mean selfless or unbiased. Many politicians (though not all!) pretend to be less financially invested in their own policy decisions than they really are.

A great way to seem disinterested is to pretend to be reluctant about dealing with an issue you're actually eager to address. A teenager who wants to borrow his father's car for a date might pretend to be reluctant to ask to borrow it, claiming that he just wants to protect his date's safety. Another useful technique is to pretend that you're pained by your own choice. A parent who tries to convince her child to eat Brussels sprouts might pretend that she doesn't like them either.

By feigning reluctance or even pain, a talented persuader can make a more nuanced, effective argument: for example, in the case of the parent trying to feed her child, claiming not to like Brussels sprouts builds a connection between the parent and her "audience" (the child) and makes the final point ("eat the Brussels sprouts") more convincing.

If one studies American history, it's easy to see that some presidents have failed to exemplify different kinds of *ethos*. Herbert Hoover failed to exemplify practical wisdom in handling the Depression; Richard Nixon failed to live up to Americans' expectations of virtue. In all, *ethos* is a crucial way for a speaker to persuade an audience to trust him.

Without delving into much detail, Heinrichs establishes the importance of ethos *in American politics: a good president will go to great lengths to seem like an authority on all moral matters.*

Perhaps the best *ethos* trick of all is to seem as if you have no tricks. One of the greatest Roman rhetoricians, Quintilian, noted that the best speeches begin with a speaker feigning helplessness in order to seem trustworthy. Abraham Lincoln was a master of this technique, known as *dubitatio*. His "country bumpkin" act made his opponents underestimate him and his audiences trust him. Sometimes, when making a speech, it's better to begin hesitatingly. When interacting one-on-one with someone, it can be useful to look down right before making a point, thereby making the point seem spontaneous and sincere. These tricks might seem manipulative, and in a way they are. But, Heinrichs concludes, 'rhetorical caring" is "like real caring only better."

Pretending to be humble and candid is a powerful rhetorical trick, and it emphasizes the point that rhetoric is an inherently "tricky," manipulative art—even having no tricks is just a trick! Heinrichs acknowledges that rhetoric is, in fact, manipulative, but given that rhetoric is everywhere in society whether we like it or not, people need to be aware of rhetoric and learn how to use it to their advantage.


CHAPTER 9: CONTROL THE MOOD: THE AQUINAS MANEUVER

Years ago, Heinrichs was at a bank with his three-year-old daughter, when his daughter threw a temper tantrum. Heinrichs responded by telling his child, "That argument won't work, sweetheart. It isn't pathetic enough." His daughter abruptly ended her tantrum. The word "pathetic," as Heinrichs used it, means "emotional." His daughter was trying to use emotion to sway Heinrichs's behavior.

Pathos is perhaps the least respected form of persuasion, but it's probably the most effective, too. Humans may like to believe that they're rational and reasonable, even if, when push comes to shove, they're more strongly motivated by appeals to their senses of sympathy or fear.

Pathos is a powerful rhetorical tool. Sometimes, when a speaker discusses a frightening possibility, the speaker's words alone can make an audience feel frightened, too. One important principle of *pathos* is, "When you want to change someone's mood, tell a story." Single words or ideas rarely have an effect on someone's mood—a cohesive narrative is more effective since it gives the audience a vicarious experience. Stories and jokes are also usually most effective when they're told in the first person.

People intuitively identify with other people's stories when told in the first person; therefore, a great way to build pathos, whether in a big speech or a joke, is to tell lots of good stories.

Another effective technique of *pathos* is self-control. Often, a persuader who seems to be trying to hold back emotion will be more persuasive than one displaying strong emotion. This leads to one of Cicero's key points: "when you argue emotionally, speak simply." The senator Daniel Webster once prosecuted a case in which a captain had been killed in his sleep. Webster delivered his closing argument to the jury as if he could barely conceal his own outrage. The jury agreed to hang the accused, a young farm boy with no previous criminal record.

Strangely, the perceived suppression of emotion can be more powerful than the expression of a strong emotion. This rule is especially common in weepy romantic movies—the characters' inability to weep or express their sadness makes audiences *more likely to cry. The same principle holds true for political speeches like Webster's, emphasizing that politics and entertainment use closely related forms of rhetoric.*

It's often best to wait before deploying *pathos*, particularly when making a speech to a large group of people. It can be disarming to begin with an emotional appeal—it's better to work up to it. Daniel Webster once argued a case before the Supreme Court; at a crucial point in the speech, his voice cracked ever so slightly, triggering the Chief Justice of the court, John Marshall, to weep.

Even though emotions are involuntary and often uncontrollable, emotional appeals *often need to be rehearsed and planned. Thus, Webster's emotional appeal was probably the product of hours of careful preparation, but Marshall's tears were spontaneous.*

Humor is perhaps the most persuasive emotion, in part because people with a good sense of humor are often seen as being able to "stand above petty squabbles." The problem with humor as a persuasive technique, however, is that it doesn't always persuade people to *act*—they laugh, but *do* nothing. Aristotle argued that emotions such as love and compassion are better motivators than humor.

Here, Heinrichs reminds readers of the "Ciceronian" distinction between convincing an audience and getting them to act: humor is convincing, but not a good motivator.

Often, successful speakers appeal to their audiences' tribal instincts by appealing to 1) their patriotism, 2) their anger, or 3) their desire to fit in with a group, or "emulate." The best way to make a crowd angry with someone, Aristotle argued, was to show how that person had ignored and belittled their desires. Aristotle also showed that patriotism could motivate people to act together. Patriotism doesn't have to be about a country; it can appeal to any group with a common bond—for example, a soccer team. Yet it's important to distinguish patriotism from idealism. During the Revolutionary War, few people were genuinely interested in the Founding Fathers' ideals; they mobilized because of their patriotic desires to defend their country from British military aggression. Finally, speakers often use *pathos* to appeal to their audience's desire to emulate others (nowadays, it's rare to think of emulation as an emotion; however, the Greeks believed it was). For example, impressionable children may wish to emulate role models' behavior.

Many of the emotional appeals that Heinrichs discusses in this section revolve around differing conceptions of the group. People want to feel that they belong to a given group; therefore, a good rhetorician can appeal to a big crowd by either criticizing someone the crowd doesn't like or alluding to the crowd's common identity (their patriotism, so to speak). It's worth noting that these kinds of emotional tactics are meant to appeal to people's more basic, "tribal" instincts—not their reason or morality. Thus patriotic appeals like this can easily lead to violent or immoral action.

The appeals to *pathos* that Aristotle discussed have one thing in common: they work best in a group setting. It's also important not to advertise a speech's intended emotion too explicitly—for example, any good comedian knows not to say that the joke they're about to tell is hilarious.

Pathos is often strongest in a big group because the desire to belong underlies many different kinds of emotion. Refusing to identify a joke as funny is a good example of the distinction between "showing" and "telling." It's better to be funny than to tell other people that something is funny.

Emotional appeals are a form of seduction. Therefore, it's important to recognize the importance of desire in rhetoric. Advertisements regularly use sex appeal to make their products seem more attractive. Heinrichs' wife Dorothy enjoys a BBC mystery show that combines gardening with crime, and refers to it as "flower porn," because of the close-ups of flowers and plants. Shortly afterwards, Heinrichs convinced her to book a vacation to Hawaii by showing her pictures of beautiful Hawaiian flowers, appealing to her love for flowers. Heinrichs used a form of seduction to convince his wife.

Perhaps the most powerful and persuasive emotion of all is desire, whether lust or the more general desire to belong to a group. Advertisers use desire to manipulate their consumers by associating consumers' love for a particular thing (beautiful people, for example), with a particular product.

Appeal to desire is one of the most basic forms of persuasion. One of the businesses for which Heinrichs works as a consultant sells workout programs. The company uses the "appeal to desire" strategy by using ads to associate their product with things for which customers lust: sex, beauty, and, more abstractly, independence and freedom. With the help of rhetoric, businesses or speakers can appeal to their audience's desires, associate their position with those desires, and thereby convince their audience to agree with their position.

Heinrichs often presents himself to the reader as a "common man" with a wife and family. But he's also a highly successful business consultant who uses his rhetorical skills to train businessmen to succeed in their fields—reinforcing the point that people can use rhetoric to succeed in many different fields of human endeavor.

CHAPTER 10: TURN THE VOLUME DOWN: THE SCIENTIST'S LIE

One might assume that scientists never use rhetorical tricks like appeals to emotion. But in fact, the format of scientific studies—written in the passive voice—appeals to emotion. By writing in the passive tense, scientists calm the passions and create the illusion that their findings "just happened." Some advocates of intelligent design use the passive voice to make an emotional appeal: by arguing that atoms and molecules were "designed," creationists cleverly introduce the idea of a divine creator without explicitly naming this creator. The passive voice, in short, encourages passivity—a great *pathos* trick.

Somewhat counterintuitively, the absence of a strong emotion is a kind of emotional appeal, too. Some readers might resent the implicit comparison between the methods favored by scientists and those favored by intelligent design advocates; however, such a comparison fits with Heinrichs's broader point: across many different fields, people use the same rhetorical tricks to make radically different points.

On the most basic level, the brain works in two systems. System One is passive and runs on autopilot. System Two is rational, and applies skepticism to the evidence. When a speaker makes an argument that the audience dislikes, the speaker should try to appeal to the System One in the audience's minds, and try to make the audience passive and accepting. In such a situation, it's important for the speaker to make things very simple. They should also try to make the audience feel powerful, if possible by offering them choices (this technique works well when arguing with someone one-on-one).

Most audiences would like to think the best of themselves: they'd like to believe that they're swayed by measured, rational arguments, not appeals to emotion—but the fact is that audiences are often more swayed by "System Two" approaches, which require them to be passive and not too skeptical. Notice that a good rhetorician can give an audience the illusion of freedom by offering them choices (even when these choices have been engineered to fit with the rhetorician's original point).

Another technique that a rhetorician can use to pacify a hostile audience is humor. Humor can't really be taught, and should be used sparingly (unless you're really funny). However, it's worth understanding different kinds of humor. There's urbane humor, which appeals to an educated crowd and often relies on wordplay. There's wit, which isn't always laugh-out-loud funny, but amuses with its dryness. There's also facetious humor—humor that's meant to make you laugh, nothing more (i.e., most jokes). Finally, there's banter, the style of humor that depends on clever insults and comebacks—for example a "yo mama" competition. Banter exemplifies the importance of concession: one of the best ways to make a snappy comeback is to agree with an opponent's insult and then turn it against them.

As Heinrichs has already said, humor isn't always the best motivator, even if it usually gets a bigger reaction than other kinds of emotional appeals. Humor underscores the importance of concession, because the funniest lines in a debate often begin with an agreement with the opponent.

Another technique to diffuse anger is to set a backfire—in other words, apologize for doing something wrong and exaggerate the audience's own anger. Years ago, when Heinrichs was working for a magazine, he accidentally wrote a story in which he placed Mount St. Helens in Oregon instead of Washington. Instead of waiting for his boss to yell at him, Heinrichs went to see his boss and said he had "very bad news." His boss replied, "Don't be so hard on yourself. These things happen." Backfires should be used carefully, however—"tell someone to kick your ass, and the danger is that they might comply."

Setting a backfire is another great example of the power of concession. The apologizer, in this case Heinrichs himself, preempts an opponent's scolding by scolding himself even more harshly; in doing so, Heinrichs makes it unlikely that his boss will scold him at all. Heinrichs concedes to his own mistake—a gambit which pays off big.

CHAPTER 11: GAIN THE HIGH GROUND: ARISTOTLE'S FAVORITE TOPIC

One of the most common rhetorical problems is an inability to sympathize with the audience's point of view. People often make speeches that persuade *them* of their own point, but which don't exemplify the audience's values. A good rhetorician will make an argument in terms of what's good for the audience, not the rhetorician.

Rhetoricians need to stay apprised of their audiences: they need to learn what kinds of values, words, and mannerisms their audiences expect. Otherwise, they run the risk of persuading themselves, but nobody else.

When making an argument, you must persuade the audience that what you're advocating is advantageous to them. But it can be difficult to do so: your audience could "stonewall" and refuse to budge. This is a problem of *logos*: the audience has made up its mind and won't rethink the issue. For example, Heinrichs' sister in law, Annie, tried to persuade a friend, Kathy, to vote Democratic—but Kathy refused, on the grounds that the Republicans wouldn't raise taxes, and the Democrats would. Nothing Annie said could sway Kathy.

Most stonewalling begins with demonstrative rhetoric: people refuse to budge when they feel that a persuader is making an appeal that goes against their core beliefs. However, Heinrichs will show how Annie can sway her friend Kathy by ignoring deliberative rhetoric and instead trying to appeal to Kathy's decision-making process, situated in the future tense.

Before an argument, it's important to find words and phrases that reflect the audience's core values—in a word, "commonplaces." Commonplaces can be useful rhetorical devices—for example, when a politician says, "All men are created equal," he can get the audience on his side without going to the trouble of defining what he means by "created" and "equal." Filmmakers love using visual commonplaces—for example, when a character in a film has a scruffy face and a glass of whiskey, that means he's probably an alcoholic. Crafty politicians have manipulated commonplaces to persuade their constituents: for example, the No Child Left Behind Act uses the commonplace that all children should get a shot at a future to persuade people to support a specific educational agenda. Heinrichs argues that Republicans have proven to be better at manipulating commonplaces than Democrats.

Commonplaces can be very useful rhetorical devices, because they compress a lot of meaning and complicated ideas into just a few seconds of material. The strength of commonplaces, however, is also a danger: politicians can immerse themselves in commonplaces even if they're not really members of the group from which the commonplaces originate. In this way, a politician can use commonplaces to manipulate an audience into thinking that there's more of a connection between the politician and the audience than there really is.

It's important for a rhetorician to adapt to an audience's commonplaces. When Annie was trying to persuade Kathy to raise taxes, she could have agreed with Kathy's complaints about the Democrats and taxes, identifying her audience's commonplace. Then, she could have argued that the Republicans would raise taxes too, and perhaps convinced Annie to at least read some articles about politics.

Annie moves the argument forward to by conceding Kathy's point about the Democrats; however, instead of stopping there, she makes a closely related point (both Republicans and Democrats will raise taxes) which, because she agreed with Kathy, Kathy will find much harder to rebut.

It's possible to get a reading on American politics simply by looking at the most popular commonplaces. After 9/11, for instance, there was a lot of talk about security and safety, and the election revolved around the saying, "don't switch horses in midstream." One could argue that "when commonplaces clash, arguments begin."

Political commonplaces compress a lot of culture into a few short words, meaning that they offer up a brief history of American politics. Commonplaces may leave out a lot of details, but they're a great entryway into a deeper argument.

CHAPTER 12: PERSUADE ON YOUR TERMS: WHAT "IS" IS

Heinrichs can no longer beat his son George in arm wrestling. However, Heinrichs could beat George even after George became stronger than he, because he knew the right kind of grip. In arguments, definitions are like the "grip" in an arm wrestle—by defining ideas in the right way, one gains an advantage in the ensuing argument.

Definitions can help rhetoricians get the debate off to an excellent start: they can define terms in such a way that they can't possibly lose the debate!

Ancient rhetoricians listed several approaches to argument. First, one should cite facts to bolster one's point. If the facts didn't prove the point, however, one could redefine the terms instead. If redefining terms didn't work, one could still accept one's opponent's facts and terms and just argue that the opponent's arguments weren't as important as they seemed to be. Finally, one could claim that the argument was irrelevant. In short, the ancients laid out four strategies of descending importance: fact, definition, quality, and relevance. Each strategy is a fallback for the one before it (for example, relevance is the weakest strategy, since it risks seeming petty).

Traditionally, the best way to argue is to make a case backed up with evidence; however, if this doesn't work well, one can always revert to another form of arguing. Arguing for irrelevance isn't always useful, because the best the persuader can do is hope for a draw. However, it's sometimes the best option, particularly if the opponent's arguments really are irrelevant.

Often, the best way to define a term is to *re*-define it. By proposing your own definition, even if you agree with your opponent's definition, you'll seem agreeable while "cutting the legs out" from under your opponent's argument. There are other times, however, when it can be useful to accept an opponent's definition—a form of concession that allows you to turn your opponent's arguments against him in an elegant way. For example, when someone tries to insult you for being an "egghead," it might be funny and argumentatively advantageous to agree with your opponent. When using definitions offensively (e.g., accusing someone else of being an egghead) it's important not to overextend by providing too much of a definition, because doing so runs the risk of giving your opponent ammunition that they can turn against you. For example, if you were to accuse someone of being an egghead, "using fancy jargon to show someone how educated you are," your opponent could agree that he's educated and say, "If you're insecure about your own lack of knowledge, don't attack me."

Sometimes, it's a good idea to disagree with an opponent's definition, even if one actually agrees with it. On other occasions, however, it can be useful to agree with a definition—conceding the point in such a way that one gains an advantage in the argument. One common problem with defining terms is concision: the best definition is often short and to the point (because a longer definition runs the risk of seeming unfair and, even worse, gives the opponent more ammunition).

So far, Heinrichs has been talking about defining specific terms. Now, it's time to talk about defining an entire concept. In the 1980s, for example, Republicans skillfully shifted the debate surrounding welfare by repeatedly referring to people as "welfare cheats," until the term was inseparable from the concept of welfare itself. When using a term to define a big concept, it's helpful to use a system of opposites. Heinrichs was recently involved in consulting for a publishing company, and wanted to convince an airline's in-flight magazine that his firm would be the best company for the job. Knowing that his rivals had pitched a serious, professional magazine, he pitched a fun, lighthearted magazine, implicitly labeling his rivals' pitch dull.

In many ways, the recent political debates between Republicans and Democrats boil down to a debate between competing sets of terms. Regardless of what one thinks of conservatism itself, conservative politicians have done a phenomenal job of controlling political debates by using the right terms—the notion of welfare cheats, for example, redefined the entire conversation about welfare in a way that gave the Republican party a tremendous advantage.

When defining terms or ideas, it's useful to use commonplace words—buzzwords that create a clear idea for the audience. Sometimes, businesses or political focus groups spend millions of dollars trying to identify commonplace words. Contemporary examples of commonplace words include "paradigm," "team," "traumatized," and "aggressive." Using these words can be extremely effective with a big audience.

Definitions should use commonplace words so that they're memorable for a large group of people. Defining a term or idea in the most advantageous way is a multi-million dollar industry: the stakes are so enormous that politicians and businesspeople are willing to pay top dollar to ensure that average people remember their words.

There are two sides to every issue, and therefore, two sets of commonplace words. Take the topic of abortion: one side emphasizes phrases like "the right to live," while the other side speaks about "the right to choose." Consultants are paid to determine how best to "frame" a political issue—i.e., which commonplace words to use. For example, in the case of abortion, pro-life consultants created a language of "life" around the issue, while pro-choice consultants successfully framed the debate as a debate about government intrusion in people's personal lives. In many ways, pro-life consultants did a better job than their opponents: they framed their side in positive terms, and found a way to incorporate the most basic commonplace of all: life. Pro-lifers scored a series of major victories in the late 1990s when they began focusing on opposing late-term abortions, to which a greater portion of the public was opposed. By seeming to offer a more moderate position on abortion (while actually preserving the same beliefs), pro-lifers built a broader coalition of support for their cause.

Heinrichs evaluates the "argument" between abortion terms on both the Democratic and the Republican side of the debate. Setting aside his own personal beliefs, Heinrichs finds that Republicans have done a much better job of defining their side in a productive manner: the right to life is perhaps the most basic, relatable way to frame the conservative platform on abortion. Furthermore, notice that pro-lifers succeeded in the 1990s by making an effort to seem more moderate. This upholds Aristotle's idea about people instinctively favoring the moderate, "mean" course of action. By making an effort to seem more relatable (i.e., by discussing abortion cases in which a larger portion of the population would be likely to agree with them), pro-life activists won a major victory.

After choosing commonplaces and defining the issue advantageously, the persuader must choose the proper tense for the debate. Commonplaces refer to values, expressed in the present tense; however, persuaders need to point these ideas toward the future, where deliberative rhetoric occurs. In doing so, persuaders naturally gravitate toward the middle. For example, a pro-life advocate might argue that abortion is always wrong; however, when he shifts his rhetoric to the future, he might be forced to concede that, under some circumstances, abortion is acceptable. But of course, Heinrichs concludes, many pro-life advocates "stick to their guns. And remain unpersuasive."

Again Heinrichs draws a sharp distinction between debates about values and debates about choices. In practice, one could argue, it's almost impossible to separate these two forms of rhetoric, since debates about what to do are almost always grounded in a discussion of what to believe. However, a good rhetorician can push the debate further into the realm of the deliberative, even if it's impossible to omit demonstrative rhetoric altogether.

CHAPTER 13: CONTROL THE ARGUMENT: HOMER SIMPSON'S CANONS OF LOGIC

So far, Heinrichs has been talking about how to get the audience to think of the speaker in a favorable light. Now, it's time to discuss how to use *logos* to persuade an audience. Perhaps the most challenging aspect of arguing is not knowing enough about an issue to win. But as important as a command of the facts is, it's not the be-all, end-all. *Logos* allows the skilled persuader to skip the facts and focus on rational strategy and definition. *Logos* is also invaluable for refuting an opponent's argument when you lack a command of the facts: even if you don't know everything, you'll be able to recognize your opponent's logical fallacies.

Although logos *could be the most obvious part of an argument, Heinrichs doesn't discuss it until after discussing* ethos *and* pathos *at great length. In doing so, he emphasizes that logic isn't the be-all, end-all of debate. However, he also makes it clear that good rhetoricians must have at least a basic command of logic; indeed, a good rhetorician can often do more in an argument with the rules of* logos *than with the facts themselves—even if they don't know all the facts, they can spot logical errors.*

As it's taught in universities, formal logic is probably too rigorous and mathematical to be of much help in day-to-day conversation, and in fact, some arguments that would be considered fallacious in a university classroom are rhetorically acceptable. Indeed, there's an important difference between logic and *logos* (which simply means, "word" in Greek). *Logos* allows the persuader to use facts as well as values and attitudes to make a convincing case.

Logic and logos *aren't the same at all:* logos *is often more concerned with enlisting logic in order to make a strong point. A completely rational persuader who doesn't draw on values and attitudes will never be as successful as a rhetorician who employs* logos *in all its forms.*

To understand rhetorical logic, Heinrichs looks at the syllogism, a logical technique that's more or less useless in daily conversation. An example: "All men are mortal; Socrates is a man; therefore, Socrates is mortal." Sometimes, businesses and marketers use more complicated syllogisms to determine the total available market for a product. For example, if a company determines that lots of people aged twenty-five to forty read a magazine, and if the magazine's ads sell cars, then a car company might want to advertise in the magazine. Ads sometimes use fallacious syllogisms; for example, the implicit message of many car commercials is, "Babes go for people who drive our car; therefore, if you go for babes, you should buy our car."

Understanding syllogisms might seem altogether irrelevant to most people's day-to-day lives, but in fact, syllogisms lie at the heart of modern advertising. Without identifying the different groups that comprise a potential market, businesses would have no way of knowing how to sell their product. At the simplest level, syllogisms are a way of studying the relationship between different overlapping groups, and advertising itself could be considered the study of different groups (namely, buyers).

Logical formulations that use the structure of the syllogism fall into the category of *deductive logic*, beginning with a premise, applied to a specific case, in order to reach a conclusion. Another kind of logic is *inductive* logic, which begins with specific cases and then uses those cases to prove a premise or conclusion. For example, an inductive logician might observe that all humans born more than 150 years ago are dead, and conclude that all humans are mortal. The fictional character Sherlock Holmes was a master of deductive logic: he used his vast knowledge of premises to draw surprising, unexpected conclusions about specific people.

Deductive and inductive logic aren't the only two schools of logic, but they're the two that Heinrichs finds most relevant to the art of rhetoric. Interestingly, some philosophers, such as Karl Popper, have argued that induction is technically never possible—in other words, any inductive conclusion about a given group is a logical fallacy. For the purposes of rhetoric, however, Heinrich treats deduction and induction as valid intellectual maneuvers.

In a deliberative argument, the conclusion is a choice about how to behave. Many deliberative arguments use inductive logic. For example, a toothpaste ad that says, "nine out of ten doctors recommend" it is encouraging the viewer to make an induction about the product's quality. Deliberate arguments might also use deductive logic, offering a premise in support of a specific conclusion.

Commercials tend to use forms of inductive logic or deductive logic to sway their viewers; however, many of these methods of persuasion commit logical fallacies, as Heinrichs will discuss in the following chapter.

Sometimes, it can be difficult to tell the difference between an argument's conclusion and its proof. A persuader's conclusion doesn't always follow from their proof and premises. Once, Heinrichs had an exchange with someone who followed his blog about teaching intelligent design in schools. Heinrichs claimed that schools shouldn't be required to teach both creationism and biology in science classes, while the follower argued that teachers should teach both theories as scientific hypotheses. Heinrichs responded by pointing out that intelligent design advocates refuse to name the designer of the universe. Therefore, there are two possibilities: 1) intelligent design advocates believe that some events have no cause, or 2) intelligent design advocates believe that a supernatural being created the universe. If 1), then intelligent design isn't logical, and if 2), it's not scientific; in either case, it shouldn't be taught in science courses.

The proof of a logical argument either stems from studying examples (inductive logic) or studying the relationship between multiple groups (deductive logic). Here, Heinrichs employs both inductive and deductive logic in order to show that intelligent design shouldn't be taught in high school science classrooms (deductively, he defines a category, science, and then shows how intelligent design fails to fall into that category; inductively, he lists a series of possibilities about intelligent design and shows how they point to the same conclusion—intelligent design shouldn't be taught in schools).

Heinrichs returns to Annie, who was trying to convince Kathy to consider voting Democratic (Kathy insisted that the Democrats would raise taxes). Annie could use induction, arguing that, since she lives in a Republican state where the taxes are high, and since Congress continues borrowing money, it's likely that Congress will continue raising taxes. Therefore, she could say, both Democrats and Republicans will raise taxes—and it makes more sense to vote for the party that's honest than the one that lies about taxes.

Inductive logic would suggest that both the Democrats and the Republicans will raise taxes, even if the Republicans aren't saying that they will. From here, Annie can use an appeal to Kathy's shared moral values to suggest to Kathy that she should vote for the more honest party.

Often, the strongest arguments combine induction and deduction. A persuader can make use of the facts, but can also strengthen their point with comparisons, or even tell a story. When trying to convince a friend to play poker instead of going to a concert, you could employ all three approaches. You could remind him that he likes cigars and home cooking (facts). You could also tell him that the opera won't allow him to drink beer, while playing poker will (comparison), or you could tell him about another friend who died at the opera (story). All three approaches could work. Heinrichs concludes by encouraging readers to scope out their significant others' commonplaces, and try to persuade their significant others with facts, comparisons, and stories.

Induction and deduction can be powerful bases for an argument, especially if they're bolstered with stories, facts, and comparisons. Logos *may not be the be-all, end-all of arguing, but it's an important aspect of a good argument.*

CHAPTER 14: SPOT FALLACIES: THE SEVEN DEADLY LOGICAL SINS

Imagine that somebody tells you, "Elephants are animals. You're an animal. That makes you an elephant." It would be easy to tell that this statement is a fallacy—nobody would fall for it. In this chapter, Heinrichs will discuss seven of the most common logical fallacies, the "seven logical sins."

It's important to know how to recognize logical fallacies. A person who is able to do so can call out an opponent even if he or she doesn't know all the specific facts of the argument.

When trying to determine if a statement is logically fallacious or not, you should ask three questions: 1) Does the proof hold up? 2) Am I given the right number of choices? and 3) Does the proof lead to the conclusion? (And you might ask a fourth question, "Who cares?") If you feel that you sometimes fall for logical fallacies, then you can use these questions to improve your awareness and protect yourself from persuaders, and the "beautiful variety of ways that people cheat, lie, and steal."

The key to spotting logical fallacies is to compare a statement's logical steps with the logical steps of a good deductive or inductive argument. Too often, logical fallacies arise because people draw improper conclusions from the evidence, or reduce the evidence to a smaller number of options than are really available.

The first deadly sin is the false comparison. Consider the common food label, "Made with all natural ingredients." Consumers assume that, since some natural ingredients are healthy, and since a food is made with natural ingredients, then the food must be healthy. But, of course, not all natural things are good. The gist of this logical fallacy is the false assumption that all members of a given group (such as the group of all ingredients that are natural) share a specific trait (being good) when, in fact, many of them don't.

The underlying problem with the false comparison logical fallacy is a failure of deductive logic: by assuming that all natural things are good, the speaker makes a deductive error, founded on a bad definition of a category.

Another kind of false comparison is the appeal to popularity. Imagine a child asking her parents to drive her to school by claiming that all her friends' parents drive them to school. This is a false comparison because it uses bad inductive logic to assume that all parents drive their children to school. Or imagine a parent trying to convince her child not to do something by asking, "If everybody jumped off a cliff, would you do it, too?" This is another kind of false comparison, the *reductio ad absurdum*, in which one sidesteps an example by comparing it with an absurdity (everyone jumping off a bridge).

Appeals to popularity exemplify an error in inductive logic because they generalize from irrelevant examples: just because other kids' parents drive them to school doesn't mean that all parents should drive their children to school, too.

Another false comparison is the fallacy of antecedent, assuming that, because something worked in the past, it will continue to work in the future (e.g., "I don't have to slow down. I haven't had an accident yet"). There's also the false analogy—for example, "I'm a successful businessman. Elect me mayor and I'll run a successful city." Finally, there's the unit fallacy, in which people mistake one unit for another—for example, some companies trick consumers by selling detergent in a large box, leading consumers to assume that it's a better deal than buying a small box (i.e., confusing the size of the box with the price per unit).

The other forms of logical fallacies that Heinrichs discusses here exemplify other errors in the structure of deductive or inductive logic; in particular, they draw the wrong inductive conclusions from limited evidence, or evidence that has been presented in such a way to suggest inaccurate conclusions.

The second logical sin is the bad example. Often, people generalize from a small amount of evidence—for example, if a company hires someone from Yale, and that employee does well, they might be irrationally eager to hire another Yale graduate.

The bad example is another illustration of poor inductive logic, in which the persuader generalizes from limited evidence, perhaps cherry-picking the examples that support their case.

The third logical sin is ignorance as proof. Or, as the former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld put it, "absence of evidence is not evidence of absence." A doctor might tell his patient, "You're in perfect health. The lab tests are negative." And yet, it's entirely possible that something *is* wrong with the patient—just something that the doctor hasn't tested for.

Ignorance as proof is an especially rich topic, and readers who want to learn more about it would do well to consult Nassim Taleb's book The Black Swan, *or the philosophical writings of Karl Popper.*

The fourth logical sin is the tautology, or repeating a premise: i.e., "You can trust our candidate because he's an honest man." Another term for tautology is "begging the question" (although many people incorrectly use "begs the question" as if it means "leads us to ask …").

Tautology is a particularly well-known form of logical fallacy, because it imitates the basic structure of logic (if x, then y) but has no genuine logical content.

The fifth logical sin is the false choice. The essence of this fallacy is that it limits the choices available to the audience. One version of this fallacy is the "many questions" fallacy, commonly used by pollsters (e.g., a pollster asking, "Do you support government financed abortions and a woman's right to choose?" The fallacy is to assume that voters have to choose between government-financed abortions and being pro-life.) A similar fallacy is the false dilemma—reducing the audience's choices to two when there are actually many. There's also the complex cause, in which the persuader isolates one cause for an event when there are many. For example, a lawyer might try to sue a motorcycle helmet company because his client got into an accident while drinking, speeding, and texting—in other words, reducing the accident to only one cause, the malfunctioning helmet.

Offering up a false choice involves engineering the available options in such a way that the audience isn't aware of some, or most, options. For example, politicians might boil down all choices to two dichotomous options, when there are actually many other options that don't fall into either category. The complex cause fallacy is beloved of lawyers and "ambulance chasers"—by reducing the many causes of an injury to one or two causes, a savvy lawyer has an easier time suing on behalf of an injured client.

The sixth logical sin is the red herring, named after the escaped prisoners who used pungent herring to throw dogs off their scent. Another trendy name for this logical fallacy is the Chewbacca defense, a reference to a famous episode of the TV show *South Park*. In the episode, Johnnie Cochran acquits his client by making an argument about Chewbacca that has nothing to do with his case—a satire of the "glove doesn't fit" argument that Cochran made during the O.J. Simpson trial. In short, the red herring fallacy involves making an irrelevant point that distracts the audience. A related fallacy is the straw man tactic, which involves ignoring one's opponent's arguments and attacking a different, more easily refuted argument instead.

Red herring arguments are premised on a "gap" between evidence and conclusion: the conclusion has nothing to do with the evidence, just as Chewbacca has nothing to do with Johnnie Cochran's client in the South Park *episode.*

The final logical sin is the wrong ending—extrapolating a false conclusion from the evidence. One version of this fallacy is the slippery slope—suggesting that, if people take a certain action, it will trigger something horrible (for example, politicians are fond of saying that if the government bans assault rifles, then soon we'll live under a dictatorship). Perhaps the most common wrong ending fallacy is the *post hoc ergo propter hoc* fallacy—assuming that event A causes event A, simply because A happens before B (for example, a religious fanatic claiming that a hurricane wiped out a city to punish the city for legalizing gay marriage).

These logical fallacies are similar to the bad example, except that instead of using bad evidence, they draw improper conclusions from good, reasonable evidence, often by assuming the most extreme conclusion available. The wrong ending fallacy emphasizes the common feature of all logical fallacies: the disconnect between premises and conclusions. By staying aware of this gap, audiences can catch fallacious reasoning and resist being swayed by it.

CHAPTER 15: CALL A FOUL: NIXON'S TRICK

When Heinrichs was in junior high, he and his friends would banter and try to gross each other out. Without knowing it, they were behaving like the ancient Sophists, who used sleazy rhetorical tactics to win arguments, essentially turning their arguments into fights. In rhetoric, however, it's important to recognize the difference between logic and *logos*. Sometimes, it can be useful to commit mild logical fallacies in order to emphasize one's point.

In this chapter, Heinrichs emphasizes the difference between strictly logical arguments and arguments which incorporate logos. *Remember what Heinrichs said in the previous chapter: some commonly accepted rhetorical maneuvers are actually logically fallacious.*

If deliberative argument has one rule, it is this: "Never argue the inarguable." In other words, a good rhetorician doesn't try to block the argument and prevent both sides from reaching a satisfactory conclusion. In a way, rhetoric is like a game of no-rules soccer, where there's no referee and no bounds. Technically, you can say and do whatever you want in this game of soccer; however, it's in everybody's best interests to agree on a few basic things: not to fight, not to distract from the game, etc. The same is true of rhetoric: arguments *should* include some ad hominem attacks, some intense emotions, etc., but it's better for everyone when people stick to a few basic rules and don't argue the inarguable. Heinrichs will discuss what constitutes "the inarguable" in this chapter.

When he says that people shouldn't argue the inarguable, Heinrichs means that people shouldn't stop the debate dead in its tracks whenever somebody commits a logical fallacy. Instead, good debaters know how to exploit their opponents' logical fallacies, even while moving the debate forward. Heinrichs isn't saying that "anything goes" in a debate; rather, he's suggesting that good debaters shouldn't limit themselves to the strictly logical, and should be able to continue debating instead of appealing to some logical authority whenever anybody commits a fallacy.

In an argument, arguing the inarguable makes the conversation stop or turn into a fight. Consider a politician who claims (speaking about involvement in a war), "If we pull out now, our soldiers will have died in vain." This is a logical fallacy for sure: the wrong ending fallacy. If you were debating against this politician, one could call him out for committing a logical fallacy, which might make you seem cold and heartless. Or one could turn the politician's words against him and say, "By successfully ending the war, we'll be *honoring* our dead soldiers." In short, one should fight back against the politician using his fallacy against him, instead of explicitly identifying the fallacy.

When it comes to responding to logical fallacies, Heinrichs argues for a method that continues the debate instead of shutting it down. A savvy rhetorician would be able to call out a politician for making a logically fallacious statement without relying strictly upon the rules of logic—in other words, a good rhetorician could use emotional appeals and appeals to character, as well as logic, to convince an audience not to agree with the politician.

Take the 1988 presidential elections, during which the Democratic candidate Michael Dukakis was asked if he'd support the death penalty for someone who killed Dukakis's own wife. Dukakis simply replied, "No, I don't." His reply was overly logical, seemingly confirming suspicions that he was unemotional. But should Dukakis have called out his questioner for creating a logical fallacy? Absolutely not; instead, he should have gotten "strategically angry," calling a foul by asking the questioner to apologize to him. Then, having gained the moral high ground, he could have talked about his reasons for opposing the death penalty.

Dukakis's response illustrates the limitations of purely logical argumentation. Dukakis's reply was perfectly logical, but it didn't emphasize his character or make use of emotional rhetoric; as a result, Dukakis looked inhuman and emotionless. A better rhetorician would have called out the questioner for asking an inappropriate question (an appeal to character) and appealed to emotion by showing outrage over the question.

Take another example: a politician who opposes reforming social security and accuses his opponents of "attacking our senior citizens." The problem here is that the politician is focusing on the present tense when he should be talking about the future. Instead, he could make a more productive argument about how people should "bear the burden of the federal deficit" together, moving the conversation forward. It's important to situate the debate in the right tense, usually the future tense. When someone situates the debate in the present tense, you can try to move things forward by asking, "What are we going to do?", returning the discussion to the future.

Echoing some of his earlier examples, Heinrichs suggests that one of the major problems with American politics is that politicians prefer to fall back on the same tiresome deliberative rhetoric. A much more productive, illuminating way to talk about politics would be to frame the conversation in the future tense, bringing in the language of actions and choices. The resulting discussion would not only be more interesting from a rhetorical standpoint, but more likely to result in concrete political actions.

Another argumentative foul is sticking to the "right way" and the "wrong way" instead of having a productive conversation. Heinrichs often argued with his wife about her fondness for serving canned peaches at Christmas, even though nobody in the family, his wife included, liked them. Dorothy insisted that she served peaches because they were traditional—in other words, canned peaches were the "right way" to celebrate Christmas. Arguing for the "right way" is a rhetorical foul because it precludes any further discussion; therefore, one should find a way of calling foul. (In Heinrichs' case, however, he just ate the peaches silently; next year, to his surprise, Dorothy served peach pie instead.)

Sometimes it's impossible to get other people to argue about certain points; however, the people who are most stubborn about their beliefs are often the same people who like to argue the most! In such a situation, Heinrichs recommends calling out such people for their refusal to argue the case honestly and completely. However, there are plenty of situations where it's not prudent to call out an opponent for refusing to budge—for example, in the case of Heinrichs's wife's Christmas tradition.

Another rhetorical foul is arguing simply to humiliate the opponent, rather than to move the discussion forward. There's also innuendo, a kind of insulting, humiliating hint. Sometimes, people use threats in their arguments, which the Romans called "*argumentum ad baculum* ("argument by the stick"). Most basically of all, there's the foul of utter stupidity—an opponent who fails to recognize his own logical fallacies. When confronted with rhetorical fouls like this, people should call out their opponents, albeit in a subtle, strategic way.

Heinrichs concludes by emphasizing that, just as there's a right way and a wrong way to argue, there's a right way and a wrong way to call out one's opponents for arguing improperly. A skillful rhetorician can call out an opponent for improper argumentation while still moving the debate forward.

CHAPTER 16: KNOW WHOM TO TRUST: PERSUASION DETECTORS

When Heinrichs was a child, his mother bought his father a pool table for Father's Day. Heinrichs' father was baffled—he'd never played pool or expressed any interest in the game. Later, Heinrichs realized that the salesman who'd sold his mother the table must have been a good rhetorician. In this chapter, Heinrichs will explain how to detect the *ethos* tools of persuasion: disinterest, virtue, and practical wisdom.

Persuading someone to buy something is one of the most common ways to use rhetoric. Good salesmen can use verbal trickery to convince customers to spend their money on products that they don't necessarily need.

In the *ethos* of rhetoric, one must begin with what the audience needs. When Heinrichs' mother bought the pool table from the salesman, for example, the salesman made her feel comfortable right away. He acted like he and Heinrichs' mother were partners, trying to figure out what to get Heinrichs' father; furthermore, he recognized what Heinrichs' mother's needs were—feeling satisfied with her gift for her husband. One way to avoid *ethos* trickery is to look out for disconnects in an argument. What Heinrichs' mother wanted was very different from what her husband wanted, and also different from what the salesman wanted. The salesman tried to gloss over these disconnects and pretend that his interests were aligned with his customer's. In doing so, he implicitly conveyed financial disinterest. When evaluating an argument, it's worth emulating the Romans and asking, *Cui bono*? or "who benefits?"

The purpose of emphasizing one's ethos *is to connect with an audience—to persuade them that the persuader's interests and the audience's are one and the same. A good salesman, like any skilled rhetorician, knows some tricks for convincing a customer that the salesman is interested in helping the customer, not making money. However, by understanding the rhetorical principles underlying sales techniques (such as the* Cui Bono *principle), readers of Heinrichs' book can train themselves to see through a salesperson's tricks.*

Let's imagine Heinrichs' mother talking to the salesman again. The salesman asks to show her "something," but instead of playing along, Heinrichs' mother asks, "who's it for?" and then, "If I look at it, will you take me to the shirt department?" By keeping in mind that the salesman's interests aren't her own, she avoids buying an expensive pool table.

As in the previous chapters, Heinrichs shows how to resist rhetorical techniques without grinding the conversation to a halt. By remaining pleasant and subtly deflecting, Heinrichs' mother can continue the conversation without any real awkwardness.

The second aspect of *ethos* is virtue. Aristotle defined virtue as "a state of character, concerned with choice, lying in the mean." In effect, Aristotle was saying that virtue is a rhetorical image that a speaker projects to the audience (a state of character), revolving around convincing the audience to do or choose something, and it usually involves convincing people to choose a moderate option (lying in the mean).

Note that Aristotle distinguishes between the appearance of virtue and the real thing—a good rhetorician need only project *virtue, not live a consistently virtuous life. Aristotle also emphasizes once more the importance of balance and moderation (the "mean").*

When testing someone's rhetorical virtue, it's important to ask if they're offering the "sweet spot" between extremes or not. Honest salesmen will most likely ask customers for a price range, and try to find something in the middle of that range. But sometimes when numbers aren't involved, it's difficult to tell if the salesman is describing a mean or not (especially because salesmen are talented at making extreme choices *seem* moderate). One good test is to ask the persuader what they think of a moderate course—if they describe that course as extreme, they're probably extremists themselves. For example, parents who describe the conventional wisdom about childrearing as "abusive" or "cruel" probably have some extreme views. Or consider the politicians who characterize their opponents as extremists—a liberal who thinks that Christians who demand prayer in schools want to impose their religion on others is probably an extremist himself.

Heinrichs appears to be assuming that moderation usually signifies the most honest and rhetorically (and logically) sound argument. However, there would seem to be many situations in which people with extreme views really are right, and moderate people aren't (for example, everybody should have "extreme" views about murder, slavery, or rape—everyone should be emphatically against these things). But regardless of the correctness of an extreme position, Heinrichs' "extremism test" can still be useful, though maybe not in all the situations he proposes.

Aristotle famously said, "There is virtue in moderation." However, in modern times, moderate people are often criticized for being extreme—an accusation that says more about the accuser than about them. Whenever someone accuses another person of being an extremist, Heinrichs recommends a "prefab reply"—"I know reasonable people who hold that opinion. So who's the extremist?"

Heinrichs suggests that perhaps good rhetoric can help society "reclaim the middle" and cut through some of extremists' more frustrating claims—in particular, the claim that their views aren't extreme at all.

CHAPTER 17: FIND THE SWEET SPOT: MORE PERSUASION DETECTORS

In the last chapter, Heinrichs talked about Aristotle's definition of virtue: a state of character, concerned with choice, lying in the mean. Much like virtue, practical wisdom (*phronesis* in Greek) is about the appearance of moderation. There are two convenient ways of testing for *phronesis*. First, pay attention to whether the persuader uses phrases like "that depends," which qualify their judgments. Second, look out for personal experiences and anecdotes. A persuader with practical wisdom will be able to relate their audience's experiences to their own. Furthermore, someone with practical wisdom will be able to understand the audience's core needs—often before they know what it is. Dr. Greg House from *House* is a great example of a fictional character with high practical wisdom—he can tell what his patients need before they know.

Building on the argument he made in the previous chapter, Heinrichs here characterizes practical wisdom as an inherently moderate quality. People with lots of practical wisdom are good at getting things done—as a result, they need to be good at making compromises, bringing people together, and generally splitting the difference. Furthermore, practically wise people have enough worldly intelligence to recognize people's problems early on, before these problems become too severe to fix.

Ethos can be used to evaluate other people. Imagine, for instance, that you're evaluating candidates for a job. A candidate should seem disinterested (i.e., she talks about helping the company, not helping herself), virtuous (moderate in her beliefs), and practically wise (experienced with the business and capable of adapting to new circumstances). Or imagine that you're trying to determine if you're romantically compatible with someone else. Lovers should be disinterested, in the sense that they're willing to set aside their own happiness for that of a partner. They should share the same values. Finally, lovers should be good at adapting to each other's problems and moods (i.e., they should have practical wisdom).

In this passage, Heinrichs suggests that ethos *is more than just a convenient façade for a good rhetorician: people can use rhetorical techniques to evaluate other people's core character—not just the way they seem from day to day. Furthermore, the passage reinforces the point that rhetoric has many different applications in contemporary life: everything from the professional work place to the home. People need to get along with each other, and doing so involves working together, making compromises, and evaluating each other's feelings and needs.*

To name one example of practical wisdom in love, Heinrichs recalls suggesting, almost in passing, that Dorothy should quit her job. Even though Dorothy earned more money than Heinrichs, she decided to take his advice. This exchange was a success and a failure of practical wisdom. On one hand, Heinrichs and his wife adapted to their situation; on the other hand, they didn't really consider their options carefully, even though one of the hallmarks of practical wisdom is the ability to weigh both sides.

As Heinrichs's personal anecdote shows, there's no guarantee that people who recognize the importance of practical wisdom will, in fact, be practically wise in their personal lives. However, it's worth trying.

CHAPTER 18: GET INSTANT CLEVERNESS: MONTY PYTHON'S TREASURY OF WIT

Everybody is familiar with the frustration of thinking up a great comeback but being too late to use it. With the help of rhetoric, however, people can use "prefab wit" and "systematic thinking" to make sure that they always have a good comeback in mind.

Wittiness can't be taught; however, it's possible to learn the basic structure of a witty saying and, in the process, learn how to seem *wittier.*

In ancient Greece, rhetoricians had to learn about figures, also known as "schemes"—i.e., basic structures and patterns for language. Most people still learn some of these schemes, thousands of years later—analogy, metaphor, oxymoron, the rhetorical question, etc. One figure, or scheme, that many people don't realize is a figure at all is dialogue, or *dialogismus*, the technique of repeating a conversation for rhetorical effect. Another is the speak-around, or *periphrasis*, the technique of substituting a description for a proper name. When Prince Charles called a Chinese politician an "appalling old wax works," he was using *periphrasis*.

Most people use schemes without really thinking about it—speaking in non-literal terms is a basic part of most people's lives. But perhaps readers can become more proficient at using schemes to appear witty by first learning about these schemes.

There are three classes of figures: figures of speech, figures of thought, and tropes. To begin with figures of speech, one of the most common is *anaphora*, or repeating a word or phrase at the beginning of a longer phrase. The King James Bible makes beautiful use of *anaphora* ("And God …"). Another common figure of speech is *diazeugma*, which means applying multiple verbs to the same noun (sports announcers do this all the time: "he shoots … misses ... shoots again!") The idiom—a group of words combined to make a single meaning—is a common figure of speech (referring to someone in trouble as being "in a pickle" involves speaking idiomatically).

Heinrichs gives various figures of speech and examples of them, as he continues to add terms to the rhetorician's arsenal. Again—even if people use figures of speech without knowing about them, it could be helpful to learn their names and understand their origins.

There are also figures of thought—tactics for using *logos* and *pathos*. Throughout this book, Heinrichs has discussed many figures of thought—conceding a point, revealing an attractive flaw, etc. Another example would be using a self-answering question (*a la* the protester who shouts, "What do we want? Freedom!"). Finally, a trope consists of an image or concept that has been swapped for another. Metaphor is a kind of trope, as is irony, because it swaps real meaning and apparent meaning. Synecdoche is a trope in which a single thing represents many things (e.g., "the White House" can refer to the American executive government). Metonymy is a kind of trope in which a characteristic represents the whole (e.g., calling a red-haired person "red").

Figures of thought differ from figures of speech insofar as figures of thought represent a different way of conceptualizing *a thing, not just phrasing that thing. However, there's a lot of overlap between figures of speech and figures of thought (for instance, Prince Charles's phrase, "appalling old waxworks" could well be considered a metaphor, not just* periphrasis*). Many people confuse synecdoche and metonymy; while they're closely related, synecdoche involves treating a literal part of a thing as representative of the thing itself.*

One useful rhetorical tactic is to take advantage of an opponent's idioms. In a humorous novel by P. G. Wodehouse, a character says, "She looks as if she was poured into her bathing suit," to which the other character replies, 'Yes, and forgot to say 'when.'" Oscar Wilde was a master of twisting idioms humorously, for example: "One must have a heart of stone to read the death of little Nell without laughing." While few people can be as witty as Wilde or Wodehouse, one easy way to manipulate an opponent's idioms is to take them literally. If an opponent says, "Let's not pour the baby out with the bathwater," you could say, "Let's just pull the plug."

A lot of the best humor is based on defying an audience's expectations. Therefore, it makes a certain amount of sense that twisting idioms and clichés is a surefire way to generate some laughs—the audience is so familiar with the cliché that it appreciates a speaker who can reframe the cliché in an amusing way. Treating idioms literally is also a good way to gain the upper hand in a debate, largely because doing so surprises an opponent and may make them lose control of the debate.

Another time-honored technique for seeming witty is to transform an idiom by switching around the words. Oscar Wilde said, "Work is the curse of the drinking classes." One of the most elegant ways to switch words is chiasmus, which Heinrichs discussed in an earlier chapter. In a debate, one might say, "It's not a question of whether we're cheating the government. It's whether the government is cheating us"—an elegant way to twist an opponent's arguments.

Switching around the words in an idiom is amusing for the same reason that taking an idiom literally is amusing—doing so defies the audience's expectations. Chiasmus is one of the most popular rhetorical techniques—audiences often find it satisfying and memorable to hear a phrase switched around.

It might be difficult to improvise chiasmus, but you can still enliven your conversations by adding puns to chiasmus. If you're throwing a party for a friend, and happen upon a photograph of him swimming in a pool at the age of two, buck naked, you could write a card that asks, "What kind of party suits Bob's birthday? The kind where he wears his birthday suit." Heinrichs admits that this isn't the snappiest pun, or chiasmus, but adds, "Think you can do it better? Okay, but you'd better do it well."

Heinrichs's example of adding puns to chiasmus doesn't seem especially witty, and he even admits as much. Indeed, many of Heinrichs's examples of rhetorical concepts are a little disappointing. However, by providing a lackluster example of a witty saying, Heinrich perhaps makes himself seem less intimidating and more "normal," and encourages his readers to develop their own humorous sayings instead of just copying his.

In rhetoric, one of the most useful figures of thought is *dialysis*, the weight of two arguments side by side (e.g., when George W. Bush said, "You're either with us, or you're with the terrorists," he was using *dialysis*). *Dialysis* is useful because it offers a succinct comparison between the options. Another figure of thought is *epergesis*, the technique of correcting one's speech for rhetorical effect. One might say to a drunken friend, "I've never been so embarrassed as I was last night. Actually, I *have* been that embarrassed—the last time went to a party together."

Dialysis *(not to be mistaken for the medical treatment) is a good example of a logical fallacy that can also be a useful rhetorical device: in reality, there are few choices that boil down to two dichotomous options, but it can be useful to pretend that only these two choices exist. Heinrichs's discussion of* Epergesis *reminds readers that some of the most impressive rhetorical maneuvers are designed to seem unrehearsed, emphasizing the speaker's improvised, off-the-cuff wit.*


The *litotes* is another useful figure of thought; it consists of ironic understatement (e.g., when O. J. Simpson was asked why he was making an appearance at a comic book convention, he ironically replied, "I'm not doing this for my health"). Like many figures of thought, *litotes* can change the mood of conversation; it tends to make the speaker sound reasonable, especially since hyperbole has become very common. Another figure of thought, climax, or *anadiplosis*, has the opposite effect: by linking many clauses together, with the last part of each clause the first part of the next clause, a shrewd speaker can build excitement (e.g., the proverb, "for want of a nail the shoe was lost; for want of a shoe the horse was lost; and for want of a horse the rider was lost").

Litotes *is a useful rhetorical figures of thought in part because it enlists the audience's participation—to "get" the joke, the audience has to understand that the speaker is using ironic understatement. Like many other figures of thought,* litotes *can have a discernible impact on an audience's mood, reminding readers that one of the core goals of rhetoric is controlling the emotional reaction of one's audience.*

Now that Heinrichs has talked about legitimate figures and schemes, he'll talk about breaking the rules. There's a technique that Heinrichs calls "verbing" or neologizing, which involves making up new words. Over time, words tend to enter the language because they're used in a certain way, whether grammarians approve or not. "Contact" and "impact" are often used as verbs, even though they were considered nouns for most of the 20th century.

Too often, books on language and rhetoric portray language as a static concept—something which never changes, or which changes very, very slowly. In reality, language is constantly changing—people use new words until those words eventually become commonly accepted. Ultimately, people—not grammarians—decide what is and isn't acceptable.

There's also a name for the technique of stripping a word of all meaning: *parelcon* (words and phrases like "you know" and "um" are good examples of *parelcon*). The word "like" has become one of the most common kinds of *parelcon*. The popularity of "like," and "you know," which was more common thirty or forty years ago, says a lot about our society. Just as Heinrichs' generation was uncertain about its ability to communicate (hence "you know"), the current generation seems reluctant to commit to any definite position (hence "like").

Here Heinrichs raises the interesting point that one can study a culture by looking at its "filler words"—so that, paradoxically, words that mean nothing actually mean a great deal. However, "like" was also popular with Beatniks and Hippies in the fifties and sixties, somewhat complicating Heinrichs's point about millennials' indecisiveness.

CHAPTER 19: SPEAK YOUR AUDIENCE'S LANGUAGE: THE RHETORICAL APE

Heinrichs has already talked about *ethos*, the argument by character. Now, it's time to talk about the "black arts of *ethos*," the strategies that a persuader can manipulate to gain an audience's admiration.

A persuader's job is to impress an audience, and sometimes doing so requires some dishonesty—seeming to be one thing but actually being something quite different.

Demonstrative rhetoric brings out tribal instincts in people, and the universal fear of being an outsider. It also brings people together by giving them a common identity, whether in a beautiful love letter or a great speech. One of the most basic ways of asserting one's membership in a group is to use the group's words. Therefore, rhetoricians learn about code grooming: the art of using insider language to get audiences to identify with them. In spite of his reputation for being a poor speaker, George W. Bush was a master of code grooming; for example, when speaking to Christian groups, he repeated the word "believe" again and again. Bush's "genius" was that he used code grooming without saying anything in particular, so that audience focused on his trigger words, and little else. When he spoke to Christians, the words that really stuck with his audience were "I believe."

As Heinrichs discussed previously, one of the most basic principles of rhetoric is that people like to fit in with a group. Therefore, a good rhetorician who's speaking before a large crowd needs to understand how to 1) show some kind of affiliation with the crowd and, at the same time, 2) unite the crowd around a specific culture. For example, George W. Bush emphasized Christian buzzwords when speaking before right-wing Christians, thereby drawing his audience together as one and, implicitly, establishing Bush as the leader of the group and an important moral authority.

Heinrichs isn't saying that people should speak like George W. Bush—indeed, Bush himself probably wasn't trying to "speak like Bush." Nevertheless, readers can learn a lot about rhetoric by studying Bush's words. Bush used a technique that Heinrichs dubs "reverse words"—repeating "words that mean the opposite of what hurts your case." For example, when Bush described the Iraq invasion, he said, "It was not a peaceful welcome." In this way, he framed the unsuccessful invasion in positive language (welcome), and added an incidental "not," which didn't interfere with people's positive associations with "welcome."

Heinrichs isn't being entirely serous when he says that Bush was a great rhetorician (he was known for his many verbal flubs). Nevertheless, readers do *have a lot to learn from Bush: the fact that somebody with verbal skills as poor as Bush's could be such a successful orator confirms that (contrary to what most people would like to believe) repetition, code sourcing, and cheesy emotional appeals are often more effective than polished, intelligent speeches.*

Code grooming is a powerful technique because it gets the audience on the persuader's side right away. Rhetoric is a kind of "social glue," and the right words can build a good relationship between the persuader and the audience.

Rhetoric is more than just a way for a speaker to persuade an audience; it's a way for the speaker to bring their audience together by reminding them of their common culture and identity. A rhetorician can manipulate a group's identity for selfish ends or for a more noble purpose.

CHAPTER 20: MAKE THEM IDENTIFY WITH YOUR CHOICE

In this chapter, Heinrichs will talk about the identity strategy—building a connection with an audience. When an audience identifies with a speaker's character, they have an easier time agreeing with whatever choices the speaker makes.

It's often a good idea for a rhetorician to emphasize some kind of connection with their audience (an idea that Heinrichs addressed in the previous chapter, too).

There are times when establishing an identity is the "sole purpose of an argument." Most of the time people don't get to make full, well thought-out arguments, because they don't have enough time and because they're interrupted by other things. Consider a couple that's arguing about going to visit the wife's elderly relatives in another state. The husband could make a convincing case that 1) traveling on the day before Thanksgiving will be hard, 2) the food will be bad at her parents' house, and 3) he wants to have some peace and quiet with his family. But even if the husband won this argument, his victory would be short-lived. He'd loosen family ties and might even alienate his wife. Therefore, the husband needs to win the argument while also convincing his wife that not visiting her parents is "good for everybody." This may seem devious; however, readers need to be aware of the identity strategy to that they can recognize it in their own lives, and learn how to resist it.

First, it's suggested that a strictly logical argument, explicitly advertised as an argument, might not be the most effective way to convince one's spouse to stay home for Thanksgiving. Great rhetoricians can win an argument without even letting on that they're arguing in the first place. Second, Heinrichs admits upfront that he's describing a somewhat devious, manipulative process. Such behavior could be considered disrespectful or condescending, since it implies that the audience is gullible and not worth being treated honestly. But while rhetoric can certainly be used to manipulate, it can also serve a higher moral purpose; to bring people together and encourage them to put aside their differences and move forward.

To begin with, *logos* can be a distraction in the identity strategy; sometimes, it's better to fall back on identification language and other techniques of *ethos* and *pathos*. Imagine the couple arguing about Thanksgiving. Instead of making a logical case for staying at home, the husband could make a joke about the wife's mother (an impression, say) that gets the wife laughing, and reminds her that he's on her side. Then, the husband could say, "You really want to go, don't you?" Having slightly guilt-tripped his wife, and therefore established a moral high ground, he could say, "You know I love your mother. I'll support you in whatever decision you make." Notice how the husband used code words like "support" and "love," and pressures his wife to make a choice. It's then more likely that the husband will avoid a Thanksgiving visit to his in-laws, and he'll do so without alienating his wife.

Instead of using logos, *the hypothetical husband has more luck with* pathos *and* ethos*—underscoring that logic by itself isn't always enough to win an argument. By establishing a strong bond between himself and his wife, the husband has an easier time convincing her that he really does have her best interests at heart—and, therefore, an easier time pressuring her into staying home for Thanksgiving. Heinrichs' underlying assumption seems to be that it's easier for the husband to go to elaborate rhetorical lengths to trick his wife than to just be upfront with her—an assumption that many people, married or otherwise, would be inclined to disagree with.*

Code grooming has a dark side: language is about excluding people, not just including them. A person's vocabulary defines their "tribe"—their family, class, nationality, etc., while excluding them from other tribes. Irony is a great way to use language to emphasize tribal lines. When someone says something ironic, other people in the tribe will get the irony; outsiders won't. Heinrichs remembers seeing the movie *Adaptation* with his daughter—in one scene, a character says something so sappy that it's clearly meant ironically. But someone else in the theater began crying and nodding at the line—at which point Heinrichs and his daughter laughed. They cemented their own father-daughter bond by getting the irony, and laughing at those who didn't.

Much of the art of rhetoric revolves around building a connection between different people—and, at the same time, excluding certain groups of people. As every third grader knows, one of the strongest ways to make a group of friends is to exclude other students. By laughing at the excluded people, a group reminds itself of its common cultural bond, whatever that bond might consist of. And this concept has much more sinister applications as well, of course, resulting in racism, prejudice, and violence.

Code grooming has become a major part of advertising: once businesses recognize their clients' tastes and preferences, they can predict their clients' behavior very accurately. With each demographic comes a different set of code language, which shows up in ad copy. It's important for people to be conscious of the words that make them feel good about themselves so that they can recognize these words' influence.

Advertisers understand the importance of specific trigger words: some words have such a strong emotional association that simply seeing the word will put audiences in a certain state of mind. By recognizing which words have the strongest effect, readers can train themselves to resist such manipulative techniques.

CHAPTER 21: LEAD YOUR TRIBE: MANDELA'S HALO

In this chapter, Heinrichs will discuss how rhetoricians use the identity strategy to encourage an audience to agree with them. He'll also talk about how to use the identity strategy to associate the audience's identity with a symbol. For the purposes of this chapter, he'll refer to such a symbol as a "halo."

Good rhetoricians recognize the importance of symbols and strong images; indeed, some of the most effective speeches in history revolve around a strong symbol, or "halo," as Heinrichs calls it.

Before Heinrichs move forward, he reviews the meaning of *ethos*. Consider three people: a heart surgeon, Mother Teresa, and Nelson Mandela. Which trait of *ethos* best defines each of these three people? Practical wisdom is probably the most applicable term for the surgeon, since he knows how to use his training to save lives. Mother Teresa would probably be most strongly associated with disinterest, since she was selfless in her devotion to the poor. Virtue applies to Mandela, since he embodies the ideals of his nation. Heinrichs argues that Mandela—and all great leaders—can lead the masses and change history to a degree that people like Mother Teresa and the heart surgeon cannot. Leaders lead by upholding people's values, and by appealing to these values in strategic ways.

While it's debatable whether practical wisdom, virtue, or disinterest is the most important aspect of character, virtue is surely the most important component of ethos *when it comes to leadership. Leaders don't just instruct other people what to do; they embody certain values and attitudes. For example, American presidents aren't just evaluated on the merits of their policies; they're judged for their character, because—for better or worse—leaders need to have good character (or at least the appearance of good character) in order to lead effectively.*

The importance of identity strategy was apparent to all in the 2012 presidential election, in which Barack Obama defeated Mitt Romney. There's a rule of thumb that Americans will elect whichever candidate they'd rather have a beer with—i.e., whichever candidate seems more easy-going and relatable. But in the case of the 2012 election, neither candidate was seen as relatable. Both parties spent millions to make their opposing candidates seem out of touch with America—and, in many ways, the Democrats won by making Romney seem out of touch.

Politicians spend millions of dollars trying to appear as likable and "down to earth" as possible, despite the irony of this very fact. It might seem odd to characterize a presidential election as a battle between different "image campaigns," rather than between different political ideologies or policies, but image often plays a more decisive role in an election than the issues do.

Why is it so important to identify with our leaders? A few reasons: 1) "Our leaders embody our best selves"—in other words, a leader's duty is to uphold values with their very character and behavior; 2) "Identity motivates," meaning that people are most likely to listen to leaders with whom they identify closely; 3) "We feel best when we live up to our values," in the sense that a leader reminds us of what's important in life, and what we should all be striving for.

Just as pure logic isn't enough to win an argument, pure competence is rarely enough to make a great leader. Leaders have a much tougher job than they seem to; they need to do their jobs while also uniting their followers together and exemplifying the same strong moral values in their day-to-day lives.

During his time as a consultant, Heinrichs developed a strategy for creating a halo—a "powerful image tied to the audience's best sense of self." Creating a halo involves three steps: 1) Defining the issue in the simplest terms. This can be more challenging than one might think; however, a rhetorician needs to recognize what their audience is interested in, and what issues it cares about. 2) Finding common values. Usually, a rhetorician can identify common values using commonplace words and phrases. 3) Symbolizing the values. This is the most challenging step, and it involves developing powerful symbols for the values represented in commonplaces. An American flag is a great example of a powerful halo.

A halo is a very specific kind of symbol whose purpose is to condense a complex idea to a simple, memorable image. Halos appeal to the basic human desire for simplicity; they should be as concise and clear as possible. Halos also appeal to an audience by encapsulating values that the audience is already likely to support. Halos are an important part of politics, since certain beloved objects and symbols represent an entire moral or political tradition.

Once, Heinrichs consulted for the military vaccination program, MILVAX. His job was to develop a campaign that would encourage soldiers to accept a vaccine, even though it would leave a permanent scar. Heinrichs developed a halo—the scar itself—in order to symbolize strength and honor. MILVAX started an online campaign in which soldiers displayed their scars. Heinrichs has also used the halo method for an ad campaign designed to encourage middle-class British women to drink less. Heinrichs and his colleagues developed the halo of the "floor monkey"—the "dehumanized, stupid, embarrassed" girl who drinks so much she can't stand anymore.

With the help of a powerful halo, advertisers and rhetoricians can "reframe" an issue, glamorizing what audiences might otherwise find unglamorous (such as a scar). Halos are also useful because they can encapsulate a host of strong negative associations without being too off-putting; for example, the "floor monkey" makes a strong negative point, but in a euphemistic way that avoids confronting its own sexist and dehumanizing aspects.

Halos are everywhere in politics. Figures like "Joe the Plumber" and "welfare mothers" are halos, designed to convey a specific political point. In Heinrichs' own life, he once tried to convince his son George to ski instead of playing hockey. In retrospect, Heinrichs thinks, he could have used the halo of the bench to convince George that he'd have more fun, and see more action, as a skier. But interestingly, George chose to ski anyway—perhaps because he identified with the values of ski culture. George's decision is a good reminder that demonstrative rhetoric isn't "all about glorious speechmaking. It's also about tribes."

Again Heinrichs chooses a counterintuitive personal example to make his point—instead of giving an example of how he used a halo successfully, he gives an example of how he failed to use a halo to convince his son of something. In doing so, Heinrichs emphasizes the point that not all rhetorical maneuvers work well; sometimes, audiences can't be swayed by persuasive rhetoric of any kind.

CHAPTER 22: AVOID APOLOGIZING: APPLE'S FALL

In this chapter, Heinrichs will discuss how people should act when they're in the wrong, and argue that there are times when people should apologize, and times when they shouldn't.

In a sense, an apology is a kind of argument; therefore, readers could learn a lot about apologizing by studying the art of rhetoric.

Years ago, Heinrichs made a mistake: he accidentally put Mount St. Helens in the wrong state in a magazine story. He apologized to his boss, and then offered to send a small **plastic volcano** to the governor of Washington, thanking her for letting Oregon "borrow" Mount St. Helens. A few weeks later, Heinrichs got a nice note back from the governor, with a photograph of her holding up the magazine and the plastic volcano. A few months later, when Mount St. Helens exploded, Heinrichs's boss sent him to do a cover story on the eruption.

Heinrichs already discusses this blunder in a previous chapter; here, however, he shows how he was able to finesse his error into a victory—by building up a solid relationship with the governor, he put himself in a good position when the time came to cover the Mount Saint Helens eruption.

As Heinrichs' behavior with to the governor shows, there are a few steps to apologizing: 1) Set your goals (in Heinrichs' case, protecting his job); 2) Be first with the news (e.g., breaking the news to his boss, not the other way around); 3) Switch to the future (e.g., proposing the **plastic volcano** backup plan to his boss) ; 4) Enhance your *ethos* (in this case, Heinrichs using the apology to make himself seem mature and even to build a connection with the Washington governor).

Apologies incorporate many of the rhetorical lessons that Heinrichs has been discussing: the difference between deliberative and demonstrative rhetoric, the importance of establishing one's practical wisdom and general character, controlling the timing and rhythm of the conversation, etc. Everyone has to apologize sooner or later, but few people know how to do it correctly.

Another important aspect of apologizing is adaptation. Once, Heinrichs gave a presentation for which the videos weren't playing properly, so he got people in the audience to act out the content that was supposed to be shown in the videos. In doing so, he convinced his audience that, even if he wasn't the most tech-savvy person, he knew how to think on his feet. An apology is also an opportunity to show disinterest. When Southwest Airlines accidentally overbooked its flights, it sent emails stressing that it was making its mistake the number-one priority, emphasizing its commitment to its customers. Another important fact about apologizing: anger comes from belittlement. Too often, people try to apologize by acting as if their mistake wasn't a big deal and, by extension, as if their audience's problems don't matter. This can backfire and make the audience feel belittled and angry.

As with the Mount Saint Helens story, Heinrichs is able to here convert his defeat into a victory; he makes himself seem like a quick, savvy thinker, even if his audience doesn't think much of his technological skills. As with most other forms of persuasion, apologizing hinges on establishing a strong connection between the persuader and the audience; i.e., convincing the audience that the persuader is invested in their happiness and well-being. It would be a big mistake to "apologize" by minimizing the error, because doing so runs the risk of belittling the audience, too.

Sometimes, the best way to apologize is to not apologize at all. The problem with apologies is that they involve the speaker belittling themselves without necessarily "enlarging" their audience—i.e., failing to make the audience feel any less angry. In the case of Heinrichs' "apology" to his boss, Heinrichs wasn't truly apologizing at all—he was emphasizing his own high standards for success. A plan for fixing the situation, emphasizing the speaker's talent, will often be more effective than a heartfelt apology.

Most people are taught that apologies are inherently good and polite. Heinrichs, however, maintains that some apologies aren't particularly "good" at all, in the sense that they accomplish nothing and just create more resentment. In a way, Heinrichs' distaste for apologizing reinforces his preference for deliberative rhetoric over demonstrative and forensic rhetoric—he'd rather talk about concrete solutions than wallow in values or blame.

Consider the 2012 NFL incident during which referees demanded more money. Instead of negotiating, the NFL fired all its referees and brought in replacements, who then proceeded to do a poor job of calling the games. The head of the NFL, Roger Goodell, re-hired all referees, and said that he looked forward to "having the finest officials in sports back on the field." Although Goodell was widely criticized for not apologizing, Heinrichs argues that he did his job well by focusing on the goal—keeping his job and preserving the institution of the NFL. On the other hand, too many people praised Tim Cook for apologizing when the iPhone 5 was shown to have a bad map app. Instead of praising Apple's usual high standards, promising that his employees were working hard to fix the error, and showing off his engineers' practical wisdom, Cook just emphasized that he and his team were "extremely sorry." People praised Cook for his humility, and contrasted his manner with that of the famously arrogant and single-minded Steve Jobs. However, it's important to keep in mind that Cook's apology didn't stop Apple stock prices from falling, and may have contributed to the plunge.

Heinrichs offers two more examples to support his argument: Goodell's poorly received non-apology to his referees, and Tim Cooks' apology on behalf of Apple. Because Heinrichs chooses these examples to argue that apologies aren't always effective, his point gets a little muddled. For example, he suggests that Cook's apology was a failure, suggesting that it may have contributed to the plummeting value of Apple stocks. However, Heinrichs has no proof that Cook's apology had anything to do with Apple's plummeting stocks (indeed, his argument seems a little like a post hoc ergo propter hoc *logical fallacy!). In general, Heinrichs has no concrete proof either that Goodell's non-apology was successful or that Cook's apology was unsuccessful, arguably making his argument less convincing than it could be.*

Heinrichs recalls Dorothy Jr. as a young girl. Dorothy Jr. refused to apologize when she did anything wrong, so Heinrichs hit upon the idea of teaching his daughter to "make good," rather than to apologize. Heinrichs maintains that learning such a skill is far more valuable than learning how to apologize: making good involves a concrete solution to a problem, while apologizing just involves reliving the original problem. One might object that apologizing is a moral good; in response, Heinrichs insists that using rhetoric is a far better way to solve the problem.

The crux of Heinrichs' point is that apologies illogically dwell on the past or get bogged down in a discussion of values; it's always more productive to move past blame and discuss concrete solutions to the problem. Apologizing may or may not be the "right" thing to do; however, discussing solutions will always be the more effective *thing to do.*

CHAPTER 23: SEIZE THE OCCASION: STALIN'S TIMING SECRET

Years ago, Heinrichs' mother played a prank on his father. She convinced him to go to a party dressed in a bathing suit, fins, and a snorkel. The prank wasn't too clever, but Heinrichs' mother played pranks so rarely that her husband trusted her. Her prank illustrates the Greek concept of *kairos*—the perfect instant in which to persuade. *Kairos* is an important concept in many professions—over the course of their careers, people learn to recognize the right time for action.

One of the most important aspects of practical wisdom, one could argue, is the ability to recognize the right time for action. Rhetoricians must learn how to read their audiences and determine exactly when they are ready to hear an important point, or when it will be most effective.

Josef Stalin was one of history's greatest masters of *kairos*. As a young man, he would remain silent during meetings, and then weigh in at the very end, effectively settling whatever argument his peers had been having. He did this so skillfully and so frequently that he trained his peers to think of him as the "decider" of all disputes.

As Heinrichs has said again and again in this book, there's no rule stating that rhetoric has *to be a force for good; totalitarian dictators like Josef Stalin can also use the techniques he discusses to manipulate people.*

"When an audience's mood or beliefs are on the move," Heinrichs argues, "you have a persuasive moment." There are occasional moments of uncertainty or doubt during any speech, when the audience begins to question some of its assumptions. For example, say that a group of college administrators are trying to decide what foods to serve in the dining halls. Some of the professors turn the meeting into an argument about cultural sensitivity. Here, a good rhetorician might wait for the other members to argue more and more, until, exhausted, they reach a lull in the discussion. At this point, the rhetorician can say something like, "Here's what I'm hearing," thereby giving themselves control over the situation. Now, it's easier for the rhetorician to sway the group, using *logos*, *ethos*, and *pathos*.

One common theme in this chapter is the importance of waiting. Good rhetoricians know not to make their most convincing points too early on; instead, they wait for the perfect moment, when their audience is most receptive to them. Heinrichs's description of kairos *emphasizes the idea that good, well thought-out ideas aren't always enough for persuasion: persuasive entails a host of presentational techniques, wrapping a good argument in a form tailor-made for a specific audience and situation.*

Another way to measure the *kairos* is to frame that moment in terms of *pathos*, not *logos* (i.e., the mood of the room, not the structure of the arguments). Imagine that Heinrichs wants an iPad. Instead of broaching the subject while his wife is doing the bills, he waits for *kairos*. He fixes her a nice meal and then makes his iPad "pitch." When he makes his pitch, he's sure to focus on the future tense, rather than focusing on the present-tense details (such as the bills).

Heinrichs waits until his wife is in the right mood to listen to a "pitch" for an iPad; in other words, the moment when she's feeling generous, mellow, and receptive to new ideas. By waiting for the perfect moment, Heinrichs maximizes his persuasiveness.

Some of the greatest rhetoricians can turn their *ethos* liabilities into major assets. For instance, after being arrested and imprisoned, Martin Luther King, Jr. was able to turn jail into a sign of his martyr status. Similarly, after being elected president in 1992, Bill Clinton made a speech to Democrats in New Hampshire—a state where he'd been defeated in the primaries—and praised them for their loyalty. In both cases, Clinton and King were able to spot the perfect *kairos*—the time to turn a defeat into a victory.

Clinton and King's rhetorical maneuvers could be interpreted as good examples of recognizing kairos*: both King and Clinton knew that the tides had turned suddenly, and that the public was now ready to listen to an original, charismatic leader. Heinrichs' idea here also echoes the concept of a "tipping point," most often associated with the books of Malcolm Gladwell.*

CHAPTER 24: USE THE RIGHT MEDIUM: THE JUMBOTRON BLUNDER

It's never a good idea to propose to a woman at a baseball game via JumboTron, Heinrichs says. If your lover is unsure, you could become embarrassed in front of tens of thousands of fans. In short, the JumboTron is the wrong *medium* for a proposal. In this chapter, Heinrichs will talk about how to find the perfect medium—print, face-to-face conversation, a big speech, etc.—for different rhetorical maneuvers.

A good rhetorician must determine the right medium, not just the right time, to deliver a certain message. (And indeed, most people do intuitively understand which media favor which messages—for example, most people know that it's a bad idea to break up with someone over text).

When considering the proper medium, persuaders should consider a few factors: 1) Timing, in other words, how long the message will last, how fast a response the audience expects, and other related questions; 2) What combination of *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos* would persuade best, since different media favor different combinations; 3) What gestures will enhance the argument. By "gestures," Heinrichs means any behavior, literal or not, that improve one's rhetoric (like a smile or a handshake).

Heinrichs' method for evaluating different forms of communication emphasizes the permanence, emotional characteristics, and immediacy of a medium. Some media allow the audience to see the persuader's appearance; others don't. Some media transmit messages that last forever; others don't. With these kinds of concerns come important choices about what content would play best via each medium.

Different media persuade in different ways, because the senses work in different ways. Sound, at least a spoken voice, is the most rational sense (although when the sound is music, *pathos* becomes more important). Smell is the most "pathetic" sense, and sight is often pathetic, too, since people tend to believe what they see, and what they believe determines what they feel. Touch and taste are pathetic, as well. (One could argue that reading text counts as using sight, but Heinrichs replies that reading is actually more focused on sound, since readers "receive voices, not mere type.")

Heinrichs makes some bold claims in this section, none of which he supports with very much evidence. However, there have at least been studies about smell being the most emotional sense, insofar as smells can trigger strong emotional or nostalgic associations to a degree that the other four senses usually can't. Heinrichs' other explanations seem debatable, though.

Now Heinrichs will talk about different media and how they favor different senses and different kinds of timing. Email favors the *logos* side of rhetoric, and makes it difficult to express emotion. It's also important to consider the timing of an email: once the email is in an audience's inbox, it can stay there forever. If you send an angry message, your audience might not read it for days, by which point both of you might have calmed down, and the initial *pathos* of the email will be irrelevant. Now compare email to texting. They're very similar, but texting is instantaneous and ephemeral. Because texting involves words, there's little space for *pathos*, but in part because of its brevity, texting favors appeals to *ethos* more than *logos*. Like all good appeals to *ethos*, texting is all about code grooming and inside talk.

As a result of their various physical and temporal constraints, different forms of communication favor different kinds of messages. A message that is only heard once, for just a few seconds, will be less logos-centric than a message that stays forever, and which requires a lot of time to read. Heinrichs' discussion of code sourcing echoes his points from earlier chapters: code sourcing emphasizes the beliefs and culture of a given group, and implicitly excludes people who don't belong to the group.

In general, the instantaneousness of Internet communication makes the Internet better suited for *pathos* and *ethos* than *logos*—perhaps explaining why the Internet hasn't been a "great cauldron of democracy." Above all, people use the Internet to attract like-minded people, not to persuade through deliberative rhetoric. This is especially true of Twitter—its shortness limits *logos* and emphasizes *pathos* and *ethos*.

One implication of Heinrichs' argument in this section is that communication has lately become less focused on logic and rational argument, and more focused on irrational, emotional. and character-based appeals (since contemporary forms of communication are quicker and more ephemeral than their printed predecessors). Such an argument supports Heinrichs' general point about the decline of rhetoric in modern society.

Phone calls are probably the most *logos*-centric form of communication, because, without eye contact or face-to-face gesturing, people are forced to rely on appeals to reason. This might seem a little surprising, since 1) phone companies advertise their products with highly pathetic ads, and 2) teenage lovers will still call each other on the phone to express their passion. Regarding 1), ad agencies have no choice but to use *pathos* to sell their product—appeals to logic and *logos* wouldn't work. Regarding 2), it's interesting that when young lovers talk over the phone, they pause far more than they speak. Furthermore, it's interesting that nowadays, young lovers often prefer to Skype or video chat, rather than talk over the phone. Perhaps this suggests that phone calls really *are* rational, provided that the call is used to communicate words, not just passionate pauses.

Heinrichs maintains that phone calls are more logos-based than other forms of communication; however, he also allows that there are certain kinds of phone calls that favor a more pathetic, emotional form of communication—namely, the kind of phone call, beloved of teenaged couples, in which neither caller talks very much. This might suggest that, although different media favor different forms of rhetoric, it's certainly possible to transmit the same message across a variety of different media.

The old-fashioned newspaper op-ed might seem like a purely rational medium, but it's not. Often, the op-ed will make appeals to the author's authority and reputation; one could even argue that the author is more important than the logic behind the essay itself. In all, it's important to keep in mind that "the senses and their persuasive appeals" point toward different forms of communication.

Heinrichs ends with a nuanced take on different forms of communication: the op-ed isn't purely logical, authoritative, or pathetic in its rhetorical styles. Each form of communication can transmit thoughts, emotions, and appeals to character, but it's still important to be aware of which media favor which forms of rhetoric.

CHAPTER 25: GIVE A PERSUASIVE TALK: THE OLDEST INVENTION

So far, Heinrichs has been talking about the basics of offense and defense. Now it's time to talk about Cicero's five canons of persuasion: "invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery." There's a deliberate order to these canons: the persuader must first invent what they'd like to say, then decide how to arrange their speech, then think about how to spice up the speech stylistically, then memorize the speech, then deliver it to an audience.

Cicero's theories of rhetoric are very important to Heinrichs; they help him structure his explanations of the art of rhetoric, and here they help him structure the speech itself.

Imagine that Heinrichs is trying to propose a noise ordinance in order to ban leaf-blowers from town. The town hall is giving him fifteen minutes to state his case. His first task is invention—and, notably, this doesn't mean writing a speech. First, he tries to decide what his goals are, and what he wants his audience to do. In this case, his goal is to change his town's mind about noise ordinances. Doing so will involve deliberative rhetoric, the language of future choices. Heinrichs will make an effort not to blame anyone for the noise (that would be forensic rhetoric).

Heinrichs's speech will be about leaf blowers, but at a more basic level, it's about a language of personal freedom. In order to persuade as many people as possible, Heinrichs finds a clever way to relate one specific topic—leaf blowing machines—back to a core value that people in the community will be likely to support: freedom.

Another important aspect of invention is imagining what one's opponents will say. Heinrichs guesses that his opponents will stress the importance of freedom and rights (i.e., the right to use a leaf blower). Heinrichs also brainstorms his audience's values, noting that, historically, his town has been proud of being a quiet, rural place, and that it's also proud of being an individualistic place. Heinrichs determines that he'll emphasize rights in his speech, thereby taking the rhetorical wind out of his opponent's sails. He'll argue that noise is preventing people from enjoying their own property.

Heinrichs establishes a firm connection between his own values and the townspeople's, while also preempting his opponent's argument in order to strengthen his own. Judging by the length of this passage and the previous one, planning is the longest and most detailed part of the rhetorical process— rhetoricians can't deliver good speeches unless they first decide which core ideas to express.

The next step is arrangement. Traditionally, rhetoricians have suggested that a persuader begin with *ethos*, then *logos*, and then finish with *pathos*. Cicero further suggested that a speaker begin with a brief, *ethos*-laden introduction, laying out the issue and the importance of certain values, followed by a narration, a statement of the facts. Next, Cicero suggested, a speaker should emphasize their differences with an opponent—where they agree and disagree—and then offer a *logos*-heavy proof (i.e., the actual argument). Finally, Cicero suggested that a speaker offer a refutation of the opponent's arguments, and then conclude by restating their strongest points, emphasizing *pathos*.

As Heinrichs has shown in previous chapters, there is a proper time at which to unleash a certain argument; as a general rule, it's better to leave pathetic arguments for the end of a speech. Cicero placed logos *at the center of his speeches, suggesting that he believed* logos *to be the most important, "meatiest" part of an oration. Nevertheless, Cicero recognized the importance of* ethos *and* pathos, *too—for this reason, he encouraged speakers to begin by stressing their good character.*

In Heinrichs' case, he has an *ethos* problem: he wasn't born in New England, meaning that many townspeople will think of him as an upstart or a newcomer. He decides not to talk about himself too much, and to dress the way that most people in his audience dress. For the division, he'll list some possible solutions to the problem, and stress that although he and his opponent agree about the increasing noise levels, they disagree about whether noise interferes with personal freedom. The division will help boost Heinrichs's *ethos* by making him seem like a passionate defender of rural New England values.

Heinrichs's careful planning sums up the points he made earlier in the book: a good speaker should emphasize character without trying to blend in with the audience too much. Instead of trying to mimic his fellow townspeople's voices and mannerisms, Heinrichs will convey his connection with his audience through the content of his speech—by celebrating personal freedom and the quiet beauty of the New England community.

Heinrichs plans to argue that noise interferes with his town's "quiet, rural character." He'll anticipate his opponent's argument by stressing that this is a debate about rights—the right to enjoy one's property in peace and quiet. He'll conclude by talking about what makes his town unique—its beauty and peacefulness. In doing so, Heinrichs will appeal to his audience's sense of *pathos* without being too sappy.

Heinrichs's planning exemplifies the importance of balancing different rhetorical styles. If Heinrichs used a purely pathetic argument, he'd alienate his audience and risk seemingly overly manipulative. By balancing pathos, ethos, *and* logos, *Heinrichs will come across as more nuanced, natural, and persuasive.*

The next step is to decide what style to use. The key to style is proper language—words that the audience will understand and respect. It's also important to be clear and concise, so that the audience can understand his argument. Heinrichs will also aim for vividness, or *enargeia* in Greek: he'll use vivid examples, and try to tell a story to illustrate his points. He'll aim for decorum in order to fit in with his audience, talking about the same places and things that most people in his community talk about. Finally, Heinrichs will ornament his speech with rhetorical devices and figures of speech: perhaps he'll say, "we can control the noise, or we can let the noise control us."

Heinrichs's discussion of style alludes to many of the points he made earlier in Thank You for Arguing*: people respond to vivid, first-personal examples, especially when the persuader tries to build a sense of connection with the audience, and uses clear, memorable figures of speech that the audience can remember very easily.*

The next step is memory. Ancient rhetoricians developed many techniques for memorizing a speech. One of the most famous was the "memory house." Rhetoricians imagined elaborate buildings, full of mental images, each one corresponding to a different space in the memory house. By memorizing the different spaces in this fictional dwelling, they learned to memorize their speeches, too. Heinrichs probably won't use any complex memorization techniques for a fifteen-minute speech, but memory houses were particularly important for ancient rhetoricians, since they had to speak for hours at a time.

"Memory" is the briefest part of the five-step process as Heinrichs describes it in this chapter; however, for lengthy speeches (especially those delivered before the age of the teleprompter!) memorization was obviously of great importance.

The next and final step is delivery. Its not enough to write and prepare a great speech—one must deliver it with energy and gusto. Ideally, a good speaker's voice will have volume (the ability to project), stability (the ability to make long speeches), and flexibility (the ability to change one's tone of voice for different occasions). Heinrichs will use a softer tone at the beginning of his speech, and slow down when he emphasizes idyllic woodland imagery. Then, he'll be able to build to a loud, pathetic finish. Heinrichs is nervous as he walks to the town hall to deliver his speech. He remembers that Cicero, the greatest orator in history, once got so nervous for a speech that he ran away—reminding future generations of orators that stage fright happens "to the best of us."

Heinrichs emphasizes the importance of controlling one's tone and volume, but he also reminds his readers that they shouldn't be too intimidated by the prospect of having to make a speech, since even Cicero, the greatest orator in history, sometimes got stage fright. Crucial to successful rhetoric is the ability to relax and summon the courage to actually speak. By using humorous examples and examples from his own life, Heinrichs has tried to make rhetoric seem as fun and unintimidating as possible, encouraging his readers to get over any confusion or stage fright and give rhetoric a try.

CHAPTER 26: CAPTURE YOUR AUDIENCE: THE OBAMA IDENTITY

On July 27, 2004, a man named Barack Obama gave a speech at the Democratic National Convention that changed history. At the time, Obama was a little-known politician, with an out-of-print book and an unsuccessful Senate bid. But his speech made him a "political rock star"—just four years later, he was elected president. In this chapter, Heinrichs will discuss the structure of Obama's speech, and why it's a masterpiece of rhetoric.

Obama is often regarded as a great orator—even by some people who disagree with his politics. He's often likened to great rhetoricians of the past, such as Lincoln, King, and Franklin Roosevelt. Therefore, it's worthwhile to study Obama's speeches in order to get a sense for what great contemporary rhetoric sounds like.

Obama's speech is a classically structured piece of rhetoric. He begins with an introduction in which he establishes his *ethos* by modestly claiming, "My presence on this stage is pretty unlikely." Then, he narrates the story of his parents, emphasizing his connection with the American dream and further boosting his *ethos*. Then Obama moves on to the division, emphasizing the differences between Republicans and Democrats with a single sentence, "We have work to do" (suggesting that George W. Bush, the current president, has been a disaster). Next comes the proof: Obama catalogues the signs of the work that lies ahead of the country (violations of civil liberties, oil companies being too big, an unjust war). For the refutation, Obama criticizes the "spin masters" who seek to divide America, and emphasizes the unity in America today. To conclude, Obama throws his support to the Democratic candidate, John Kerry, emphasizing that Kerry will bring the country together. Kerry didn't win the election, but Obama's speech helped him get elected four years later.

Heinrichs admires Obama's rhetoric in part because it perfectly exemplifies the rules of classical rhetoric as articulated by Cicero and Aristotle. Obama's speech at the Democratic National Convention is often regarded as one of the most successful of modern times, since it almost singlehandedly launched Obama to national recognition and made him a bona fide *political celebrity. It's especially interesting that Obama rose to national recognition after speaking at the DNC, since many DNC speakers have been criticized for talking about themselves too excessively when they're supposed to be praising the Democrats' presidential candidate. Obama succeeds in expressing his support for John Kerry while simultaneously emphasizing his own* ethos *and connecting with the values and desires of the American people in general.*

Obama's first inaugural address was another masterpiece of rhetoric. He used demonstrative rhetoric to unite his audience, alluding to a common foe—the people who supposedly want to destroy American values. He also found a clever way to turn a problem—the horrible economy—into strong rhetoric about identity, insisting that his constituents' grandchildren would look back on them as a great, proud generation.

In the early stages of his presidency, Obama emphasized the demonstrative, rather than the deliberative—in other words, he emphasizes American values and beliefs rather than the precise choices that lay ahead. In doing so, Obama created a strong implicit connection between himself and the American people, emphasizing his values and disinterest.

In other speeches, Obama has used other notable rhetorical techniques. At the 2008 Democratic National Convention, he admonished his audience by flattering it, saying, "America, we are better than these last eight years." He used imagery that felt almost cinematic to enthrall his audience, describing how a labor movement demonstration had been broken up by police gunfire. Obama also uses balancing figures to make complex concepts seem very simple. In 2008, after coming under fire for his connections to a controversial reverend, Jeremiah Wright, Obama took a big risk by arguing that Wright's extremism was a reflection of the complicated story of race. He uses *antithesis*, the pairing of opposites, to talk about the pros and cons, the "kindness and cruelty" both of Wright's persona and of "the black experience in America."

At the time of this book's writing, Obama was still a newly inaugurated president; indeed, some people have complained that the quality of Obama's orations noticeable decreased as his presidency went on. However, Heinrichs' examples of Obama's rhetorical skill remind readers that Obama rose to power by using the art of rhetoric, using his rhetorical prowess to inspire voters and weather controversies. In particular, Obama used rhetorical techniques like antithesis *to avoid a major scandal when his opponents connected him to Jeremiah Wright.*

Another rhetorical strategy that Obama uses frequently is connecting unlike things through alliteration (e.g., "This is the price and the promise of citizenship"). He often stresses an idea by saying that he has "one word, just one word," and then introducing an emotionally charged word or phrase, such as "tomorrow." In his 2008 presidential campaign, Obama was a master of channeling the *ethos* of great historical figures, such as Martin Luther King Jr. He made speeches that imitated King's fondness for *symploce*, the rhetorical technique of repeating the beginning and end of successive clauses. Then, in one of his first speeches as president, Obama channeled another famous American, John F. Kennedy, by talking about duty to one's country. In doing so, Obama focused his country's attention on the future, moving from demonstrative to deliberative rhetoric.

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about Obama's rhetoric is the diversity of rhetorical devices that he uses consistently; Heinrichs lists many different examples of figures of speech and thought in Obama's speeches. While it's probably still too early to say what Obama's legacy will be, it's hard to dispute that he rose to power thanks in large part to his inspiring rhetoric, which showed a sophisticated understanding of many of the points that Thank You for Arguing *discusses.*

CHAPTER 27: USE THE RIGHT TOOLS: THE BRAD PITT FACTOR

In this chapter, Heinrichs will discuss a few situations in order to illustrate how to choose the right rhetorical tools. Learning to choose the right rhetorical tools is a little like learning how to ski—at first, it's difficult to remember the different lessons and tips all at once. While it takes a long time to master the art of rhetoric, there are a few aspects of rhetoric that one should always keep in mind when hearing or making a persuasive speech. One should consider the goals of the speech, the *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos* of the speech, and whether the persuader does a good job of harnessing *kairos*—i.e., speaking with the right timing and using the right medium.

Having laid out the groundwork for good rhetoric, Heinrichs will now show readers how to use their lessons in everyday settings. The examples that Heinrichs uses in this chapter are meant to illustrate one of the book's most important points: rhetoric can benefit the reader in a variety of respects—there's a lot more to rhetoric than making a speech before a big crowd, and in fact, most applications of rhetoric are far more casual.

Imagine that your superior at work quits, and you're trying to make a bid for their old job. First, consider the goal: persuading the boss to give you a job, which will require deliberative rhetoric. Next, ask yourself which Aristotelian appeal you should emphasize in your pitch. *Pathos* usually doesn't work well in an office setting, since it's too intense. *Logos* could be helpful, but you're probably best off using an appeal to *ethos*, emphasizing your disinterest, your strong values, and your practical wisdom.

Heinrichs takes the reader through the planning stage of persuasion: before making one's actual pitch to the boss, one must first plan the rhetorical structure of the pitch, determining both the proper tense and the content of the pitch. For a pitch about getting promoted, ethos *could be the most important rhetorical form, since bosses often promote people whom they admire and respect.*

If you're trying to convince your boss to promote you, you could write a detailed strategy memo, proving your practical wisdom. It would be a good idea to send in the memo quickly, taking advantage of *kairos* and showing that you're punctual and responsible. You could also emphasize your decorum by dressing well, and emphasize a common identity between yourself and your boss (often, bosses like employees who remind them of themselves).

Heinrichs gives some important advice for readers who might be trying to get a promotion at work. While none of this advice seems groundbreaking (in fact, most of it just seems like common sense), Heinrichs's most valuable insight may be the importance of careful planning: even if demonstrating one's practical wisdom might sound like common sense, it can be helpful to take a moment to plan one's pitch to the boss, and to be aware of the right rhetorical approach.

Next, imagine that your strategy of emphasizing *ethos* works, and your boss calls you in for an interview. Here, you should emphasize your practical wisdom, your values (which should align with the company's values), and your disinterest (your loyalty to the boss and to the company). It would be a good idea to emphasize your talents by telling personal stories about your abilities. Finally, you could close by emphasizing your sincerity and your "heart"—some bosses might find such a pathetic display cheesy, but most will probably appreciate it.

Heinrichs gives other useful pieces of advice for an interview—again, much of this advice is just common sense, and readily available to people who haven't studied rhetoric. However, being aware of the art of rhetoric could help an interviewee formulate their answers in an especially coherent, pleasing way, and articulate their virtues more clearly and impressively.

Another example: imagine that you're trying to convince your book club to read a certain book next month—*Thank You For Arguing*. Instead of arguing forcefully for the book, you could try the "reluctant conclusion" strategy, emphasizing that you, too, had doubts about this book. You could emphasize the author's practical wisdom—his experience as a consultant for other companies. Finally, you could emphasize the connection between the values the book imparts, such as education and social skills, and the values your book club celebrates. In this way, you'd be making an *ethos*-heavy pitch for the book.

Heinrichs writes about a character who pitches Heinrichs' own book to a book club (a pretty sneaky way to encourage readers to tell their friends about Thank You for Arguing, *huh?). The pitch exemplifies many of the techniques that Heinrichs has discussed throughout the book, in particular, emphasizing* ethos *and practical wisdom.*

For the next example, imagine that you're raising money for a chain of bed-and-breakfasts by presenting to a venture capital firm. After your presentation, one of the partners questions the notion of standardizing bed-and-breakfasts. Instead of making a snappy joke or debating the terminology—both of which would lack decorum—you could use code language, such as "mature industry" and "ROI" (return on investment) to show off your familiarity with the venture capital culture.

Although it's always tempting to give a snappy comeback when somebody asks a rude question, it's often smarter in the long term to give a measured, moderate-sounding answer that concedes some of the questioner's points in order to take control over the conversation.

When in doubt, it's always best to concede an opponent's points. Doing so buys you some extra time to think of a response, and, even if you can't think of a clever response, allows you to switch the tense to the future. A clever concession "redefines the issue without appearing to." For example, while arguing about the legitimacy of the welfare system, a politician could refute an opponent who claims, "welfare mothers are lazy" by conceding the point and saying, "I'm sure there are lazy people on welfare." In doing so, the politician could switch to a future tense and emphasize the long-term economic benefits of reforming welfare.

As before, Heinrichs shows that it's possible to win an argument without seeming to have an argument in the first place. Concessions seem *to agree with the "opponent," but actually reframe the discussion in a subtle way that gives one more power or the appearance of a moral high ground.*

Consider another politican example: a local candidate who's been accused of wearing a marijuana-themed t-shirt, suggesting that he used drugs as an adolescent. A few potential responses: 1) deny it, 2) minimize it, (i.e., "I smoked, but I didn't inhale"), or 3) go on the offensive. Options 2) and 3) risk making the candidate seem like a liar or a slippery politician. By using option 1), on the other hand, the candidate could reframe the debate and switch to the future tense, scolding his opponent for focusing on the past instead of talking about how to improve the community in the future. Any concession that changes the debate from past tense to future tense will often win an audience.

Often, politicians spend lots of time and money trying to figure out the best way to handle a scandal. Heinrichs suggests that, rather than depending so exclusively on polls and test groups, politicians could benefit from the art of rhetoric. The politician in his hypothetical example could save a lot of research poll money by deciding to shift the debate from the present to the future tense, reframing the debate in a productive way.

CHAPTER 28: RUN AN AGREEABLE COUNTRY: RHETORIC'S REVIVAL

Years ago, Heinrichs visited the Italian Riviera and ate dinner with two locals, Gianni and Carlo. Gianni went on a **drunken rant** about how Americans are fat because they drink too much water, and then began arguing the point with Heinrichs. He wasn't really trying to persuade, and didn't even believe what he was saying—and yet, his rhetorical performance was a "bonding experience" for Heinrichs. These days, it's rare for Americans to argue—in fact, in America "only the rude, the insane, and politicians disagree." Rhetoric has largely gone out of fashion, partly because classical education faded away in the 19th century. In this final chapter, Heinrichs will show that rhetoric "could help lead us out of our political mess" and that rhetoric has always played a critical role in the functioning of a successful democracy.

The decline of rhetoric is particularly noticeable in the United States—Heinrichs suggests that Europeans may be less squeamish about getting into passionate arguments, and even treat arguing as a fun or edifying experience (as with Gianni's rant), rather than just a form of fighting. In writing a book about the beauty and subtlety of rhetoric, Heinrichs hopes to complicate the all-too common assumption that arguing is impolite, uncivilized, or otherwise improper, and show that arguing, if done correctly, is the height of sophistication, and a much-needed antidote for political squabbles.

Heinrichs likes to relate everything back to the history of rhetoric—a habit which his family finds highly annoying. However, in the case of American history, his habit is justified. Most of the key figures in the American Revolution had been trained in the art of rhetoric. The Founders idolized the Greeks and Romans—among the Founders, praising an orator as a "modern Cicero" was the highest compliment. Furthermore, one of the most popular plays in early Revolutionary society was *Cato*, in which the ancient Roman Cato declares "give me liberty or give me death"—a line that the Founding Father Patrick Henry later used in his own speeches.

There was a time when Americans—or rather, American colonial elites—were well versed in the art of rhetoric. They loved to debate and orate, and considered the ability to use rhetoric to one's advantage a sign of maturity and intelligence. While it's well-known that the Founding Fathers idolized the ancient Greeks and Romans, most history classes only stress the influence of the ancients on American governmental organization, omitting a discussion of rhetoric.

The Founders idolized the ancient Greeks and Romans, but they were also haunted by their mistakes. In particular, the Founders tried to understand why democracy failed in Athens, and why it destroyed the Roman Republic. They believed that factionalism— i.e., conflicts between different groups—bred chaos. So the Founders instituted a system of checks and balances designed to prevent any one faction from becoming too powerful. In the Founders' system of democracy, a "chosen body of citizens"—citizens who'd been trained in rhetoric—would be responsible for translating public opinion into government policy. Rhetorically gifted citizens were everywhere in early America—in fact, early Harvard and Columbia graduates were required to read Ciceronian orations.

Many of the Founding Fathers, especially James Madison and Benjamin Franklin, argued that democracy could only work if the different sectors of the population (factions) cooperated with the help of a stable government. Thus, the purpose of the American federal government, as the Founding Fathers understood it, was to mitigate conflicts and foster compromises between the factions—a difficult task for which rhetoric in general and deliberative rhetoric in particular was needed. Rhetoric, one could say, is the art of reaching a skillful agreement between two sides—such a task is essential to the functioning of a democracy.

Perhaps the biggest surprise of early American society was that the "chosen body of citizens," whose stated duty was to oppose factionalism, became the enablers and creators of new factions—namely, political parties. Early parties, such as the Federalists and the Democratic Republicans, claimed to oppose factions, but in fact created a schism in American politics, launching a series of personal attacks and a general "collapse of civility," and of rhetoric.

The Founding Fathers didn't predict the rise of political parties: they thought that politicians would help end factionalism, rather than perpetuating it. Because of the Founders' error in judgment, Heinrichs suggests, American politics became increasingly corrupt and polarized, and rhetoric—the art of reducing polarization—began to die out.

In modern times, the schism in American politics probably isn't as severe as it has been in the past (during the Civil War, for example). Nevertheless, American politics has become more and more "tribal," to the point where people vote for their party no matter who the candidate is. The tribalism of American politics has destroyed deliberative debate as a means of enacting change. Too often, disagreements become mired in demonstrative rhetoric and the clash between different values. The problem with purely demonstrative arguing is that it's polarizing. For example, when Democrats declared global warming a "moral issue," Republicans began denying that climate change of any kind was occurring.

There's no doubt that American politics has become increasingly polarized in the last twenty or thirty years—there hasn't been a landslide presidential election since the 1980s, and Republican and Democratic voters rarely cross their party lines. In the ten years since Heinrichs published his book, American politics has become even more *polarized than it was in the mid-2000s. As Heinrichs sees it, the error of contemporary politicians is to focus too exclusively on values and make concrete solutions secondary to these values. In doing so, politicians further polarize the conversation and pressure other politicians, and voters, to take sides with their party.*

Aristotle argued that virtue is "a matter of character, concerned with choice, lying in a mean." As values become more polarized, the concept of "lying in a mean" has become rare in American politics. The cure for polarization and tribalism must be deliberative rhetoric, bringing extremes into a "moderate orbit." Heinrichs argues that America must revive rhetoric and teach its citizens to think in terms of moderation and future-tense decisions. Even now, AP English courses are emphasizing rhetoric, and teachers are including rhetoric in their curricula. If people learned to think and speak rhetorically, then politicians will speak more intelligently and make more of an effort to seem disinterested. People everywhere would "actually start talking—and listening—to one another."

Deliberative rhetoric, by its very nature, encourages two opposing sides to reach a reasonable compromise. This compromise is by no means morally right; however, regardless of its morality, it moves things forward by giving both sides some (though not all) of what they want. In the end, Thank You for Arguing *suggests that progress and cooperation may be more important than stubborn fealty to one's moral values: if all Americans were well-versed in the art of the rhetoric, then perhaps politicians would be more willing to compromise and reach across the aisle.*

Heinrichs encourages his readers to "foster the great rhetorical revival." When talking politics, they should use rhetorical techniques, but also focus on the future and use the language of decisions. Parents should talk to their kids' teachers about adding rhetoric to the curriculum. As a father, Heinrichs has always encouraged his children to use rhetoric. In doing so, he helped his children see through advertising techniques and become more interested in politics and the news. To this day, Heinrichs's children's arguing drives him crazy—but it also makes him proud.

Heinrichs ends his book with a strong rhetorical flourish. He reiterates some of his most important themes—in particular, the importance of studying and practicing rhetoric in 21st century America. He reminds readers of his own good character—the way he supports and encourages his children. Finally, he appeals to the reader's sense of pathos *by bring up his pride in his child. All in all, Heinrichs doesn't just discuss rhetorical techniques in* Thank You for Arguing*—he uses them to make an entertaining and persuasive argument for the continued relevance and moral importance of rhetoric.*

HOW TO CITE

To cite this LitChart:

MLA

Arn, Jackson. "*Thank You for Arguing*." *LitCharts*. LitCharts LLC, 2 May 2017. Web. 21 Apr 2020.

CHICAGO MANUAL

Arn, Jackson. "*Thank You for Arguing*." LitCharts LLC, May 2, 2017. Retrieved April 21, 2020. https://www.litcharts.com/lit/thank-you-for-arguing.

To cite any of the quotes from *Thank You for Arguing* covered in the Quotes section of this LitChart:

MLA

Heinrichs, Jay. Thank You for Arguing. Three Rivers Press. 2013.

CHICAGO MANUAL

Heinrichs, Jay. Thank You for Arguing. New York: Three Rivers Press. 2013.