



Rhetoric

The Art of Persuasion

Rhetoric

Which of the following slides are trying to persuade you to think or do something?

Thumbs up for persuading.

Thumbs down for NOT persuading.



“Ferentz should have tried to score at the end of the 4th quarter.”



“You’ll shoot your eye out...”

“This won’t hurt a bit.”









Answer? All of Them?

- Whether you sense it or not, argument surrounds you.
- Everything from Politics & Advertising to Books & Personal Relationships all try to persuade.
- Some theorists believe that EVERYTHING is an argument.
 - Do you agree? Is everything trying to persuade you to change what you believe, think, or do?
 - Can you think of examples of things that are NOT an argument?

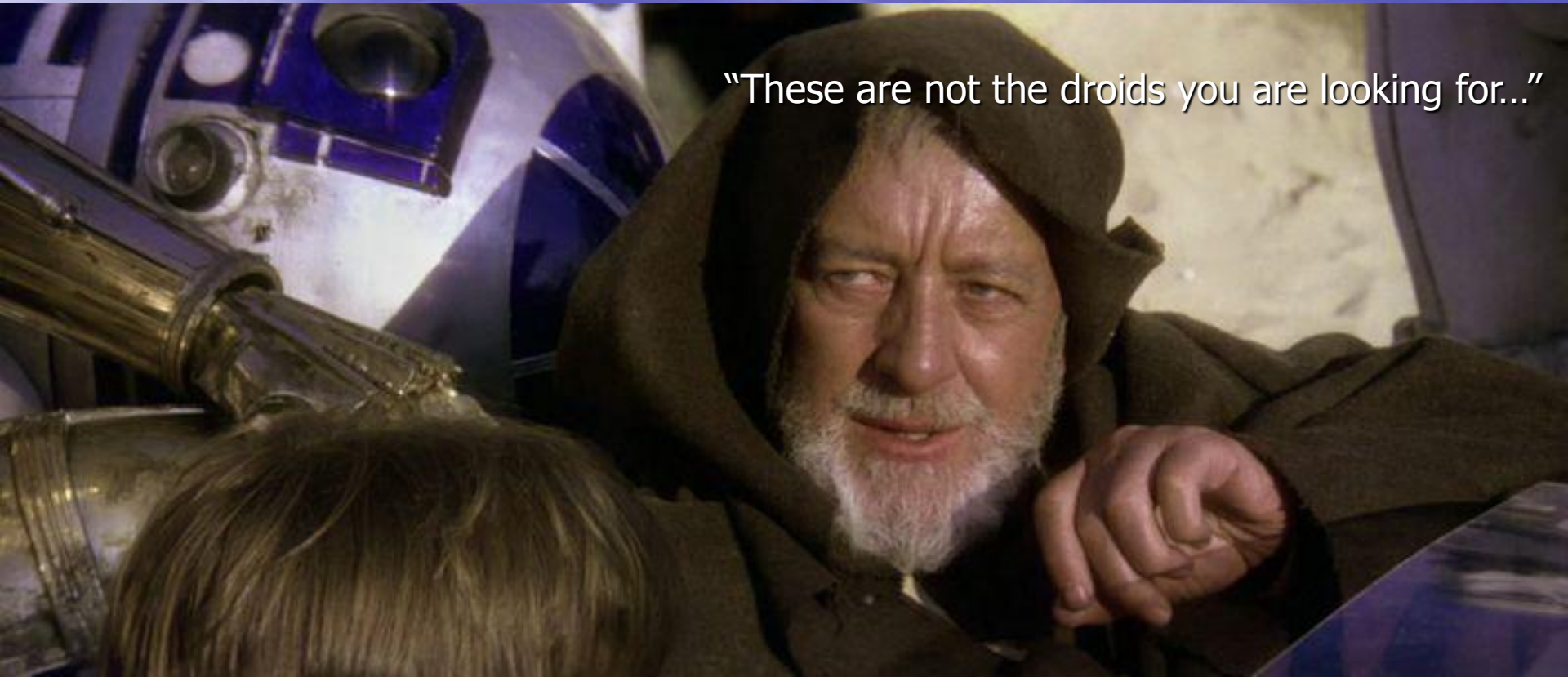
Rhetoric is like... *The Matrix*

- Argument is a real-life matrix that drives our social lives.
- It plays with our emotions, changes your attitude, talks you into a decision, and gets you to buy things.

Why Study Rhetoric?

- It's everywhere.
 - Don't think so? Try to go 1 day without persuasion (no advertisements, politics, family/friend squabbles, no cell phone/internet/TV, no manipulation).
- It can help you to become successful.
 - The top professional speakers charge more per person than a Rolling Stones concert.

Why Study Rhetoric?



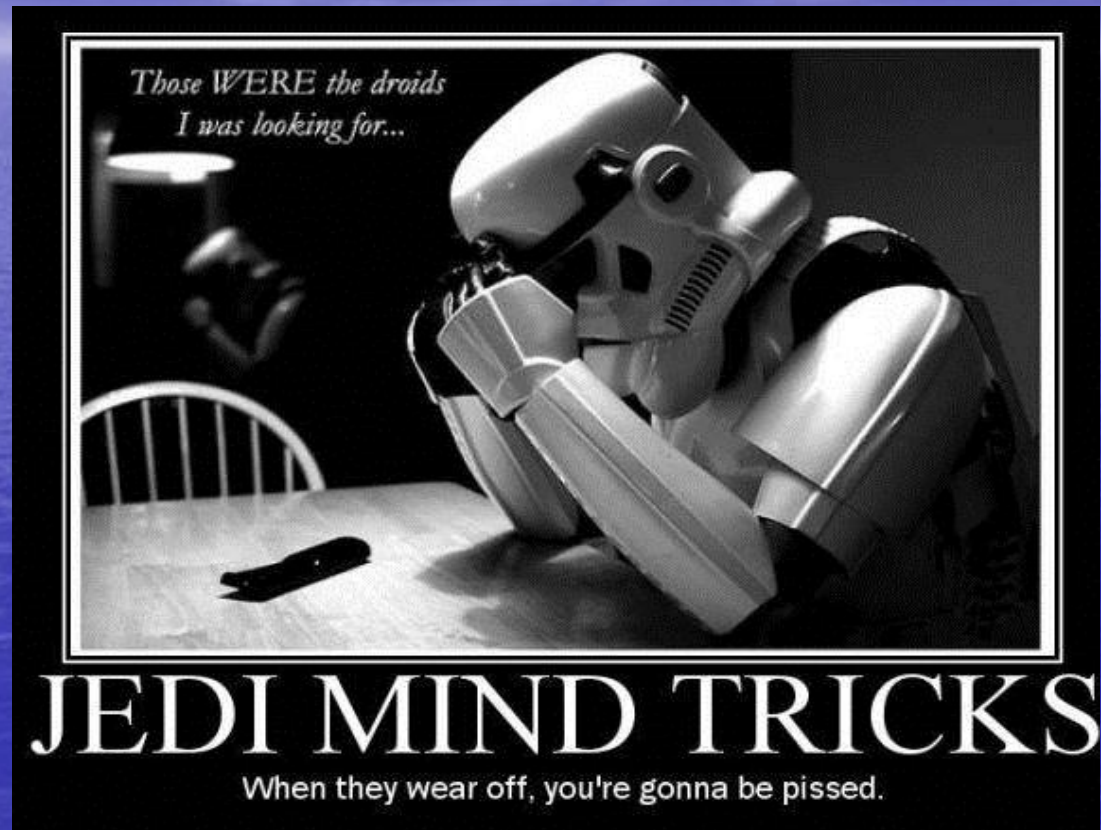
"These are not the droids you are looking for..."

Jedi Mind Tricks!

You can get people to think & do what you want.

Why Study Rhetoric?

You can
also
avoid
being
manipula
ted by
others.



History of Rhetoric

- The ancient Greeks considered rhetoric THE essential skill of leadership- so important that they placed it at the center of education.
- It trained Julius Caesar & Cicero, gave the Bible its finest language, inspired Shakespeare, and was studied by every founding father of America & used as the basic principles for writing the Constitution.



Definition of Rhetoric

- Rhetoric is argument & argument is not the same as fighting.
- When you **fight** you “win” by dominating your opponent.
- When you **argue** you “win” by getting them to join your side.
- Rhetoric means arguing without anger.

Concordia discors
Harmony in discord ~Horace

The Goal of Argument

- The point of rhetoric is to reach CONSENSUS.
- **Consensus** is more than agreement or compromise, it is a shared faith in a choice- the decision or action you want.



Control the Tense

- All issues of persuasion break down into just 3 categories:
 - **Blame:** *Past*- Did OJ kill his wife? Whose fault is the recession? (*Whodunit?*)
 - **Values:** *Present*- Should abortion be legal? Should Brad&Jen split up? (*What's morally right?*)
 - **Choice:** *Future*- Should we build a wall in Texas? Shall we dance? (*To do it or not to do it?*)

Control the Tense- Future

- You should try to stay within Future/Choice Tense.
 - “What should we do about it?” is rhetorical WD-40. The past and present can help you make a point, but any argument involving a decision eventually has to turn to the future.

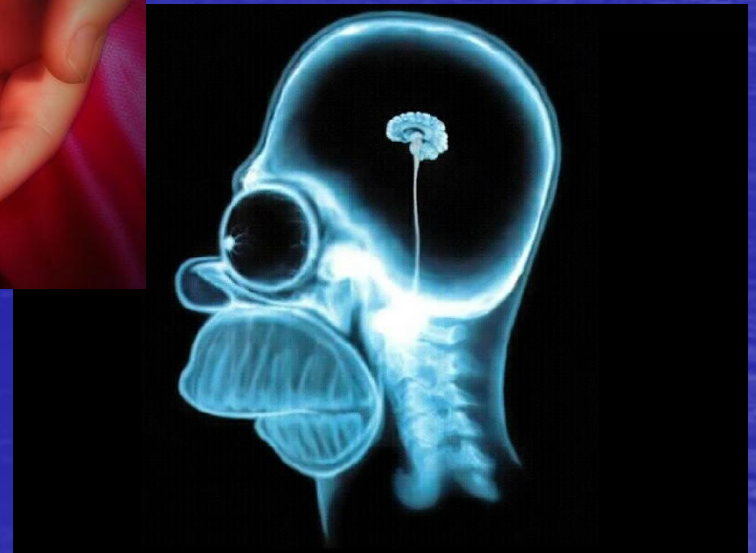
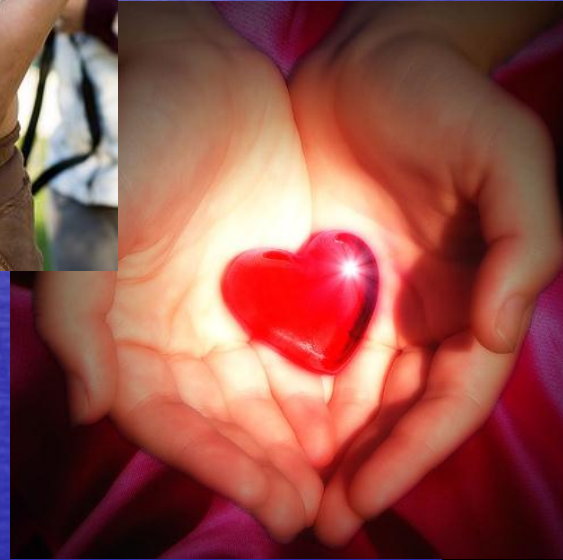


Example:

Marge: “Homer, I don’t want you driving around in a car you built yourself.”

Homer: “You can sit there complaining, or you can knit me some seat belts.”

Ethos, Pathos, & Logos



Ethos

- If you need computer advice...



OR



Ethos= Argument through Character

- **Definition of Ethos:** Using your reputation or someone else's reputation as the basis for argument.
- **Summary:** Looking & Sounding like you know your topic and understand your audience.



Ethos- Argument through Character

- **Decorum**: Your ability to fit in with the audience's expectations of a trustworthy leader.
 - **Code Grooming**: Using language unique to the audience.
 - **Identity Strategy**: Getting an audience to identify with an action- to see the choice as one that helps define them as a group.



Black- BUT:
MnM reveals that he
Went to a RICH prep
School.



White- BUT:
Similar Clothing
Uses same Words

The Ethos of MnM in "8 Mile"

Ethos- Argument through Character

- **Decorum**: Your ability to fit in with the audience's expectations of a trustworthy leader.
 - **Code Grooming**: Using language unique to the audience.
 - **Identity Strategy**: Getting an audience to identify with an action- to see the choice as one that helps define them as a group.

Ethos- Argument through Character

- **Practical Wisdom:** (Phronesis)
Rhetorical street savvy.
 - Showing off experience
 - Appearing to take the middle course

Ethos- Argument through Character

If I was giving a speech on Barack Obama...

I seem to take the middle course.

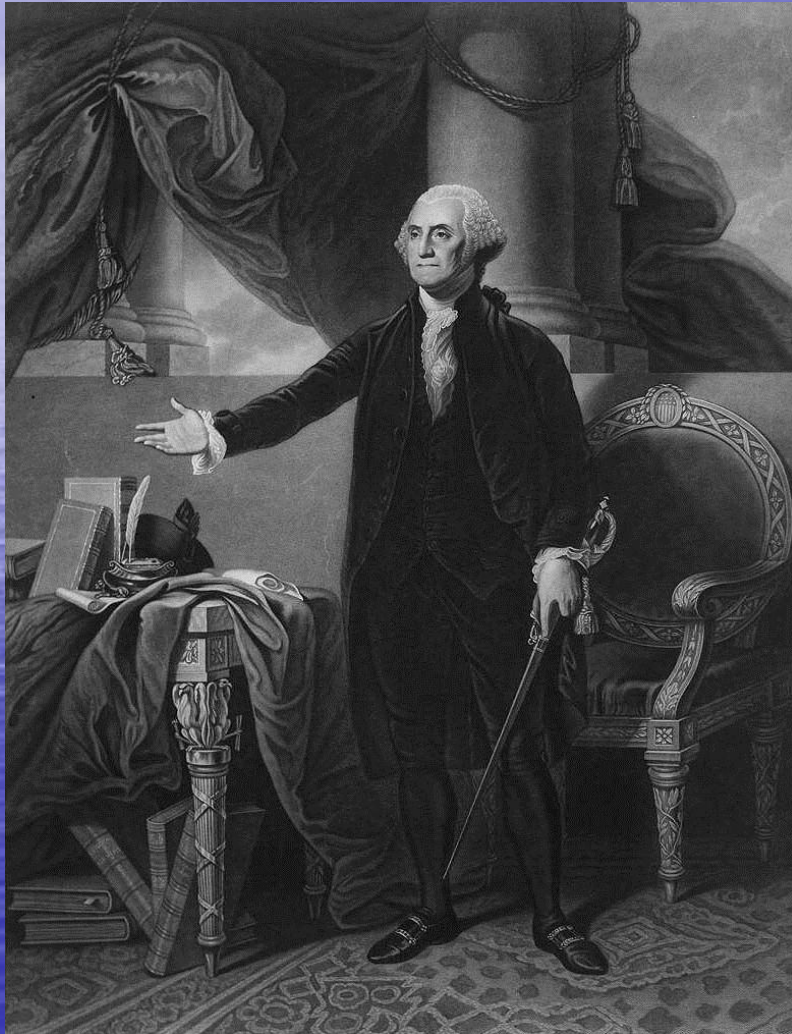
- Crazy little conservative



Ethos- Argument through Character

- **Virtue**: The appearance of living up to your audience's values.
 - Values depend on your audience: Stockholders value money, kids value toys, hunters value independence.
 - Witness Bragging: Someone else says you're awesome (preferably not your mom).
 - Tactical Flaw: A defect or mistake, intentionally revealed, that shows your rhetorical virtue.

Ethos in History



Example of a Tactical Flaw:

Late in Revolutionary War.

Washington's officers threaten mutiny if they don't get paid.

He took out an IOU & fumbled with his spectacles saying,

"Forgive me, gentlemen, for my eyes have grown dim in service to my country."

They burst into tears & swore their allegiance.

Ethos- Argument through Character

- **Disinterest**: An apparent willingness to sacrifice your own interests for the greater good.
 - Reluctant Conclusion: Appearing to have reached your conclusion only because of its overwhelming rightness.
 - Personal Sacrifice: Claiming that the choice will help your audience more than it will help you.
 - Dubitatio: Seeming doubtful of your own rhetorical skill.

Lie Detector

Techniques for Judging Credibility

- *Dodged Question*: Ask who benefits from the choice. If you don't get a straight answer, don't trust that person's disinterest.
- *"That Depends" Filter*: Instead of a one-size-fits-all choice, the persuader offers a solution tailored to you.
- *"Sussing" Ability*: The persuader cuts to the chase of an issue.
- *Extremes*: How does the persuader describe the opposing argument? How close is his middle-of-the-road to yours? (An extremist will describe a moderate choice as extreme.)

Pathos: Which is more persuasive?

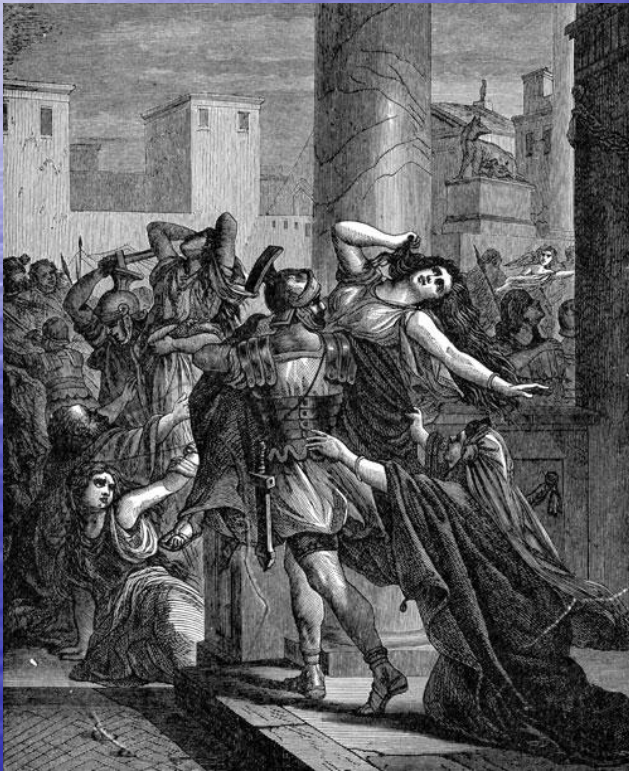
- Up to 400,000 people have been killed in the Genocide in Darfur.

OR



Pathos- Argument through Emotion

- Aristotle said that emotion trumps logic.



Example:

A beautiful woman was charged with prostitution. She did it.

When it was clear the trial was going badly, the Roman orator took her to the middle of the Roman Forum and ripped off all of her clothes.

Guess what happened?

Emotion trumped logic and the (all-male) jury acquitted her.

Pathos- Argument through Emotion

- Aristotle said that logic alone will rarely get people to do anything. They have to DESIRE the act.
- Pathos is seducing others to desire the act.
- Seduction seems manipulative because it is.
- But manipulation/seduction is better than fighting which is what we usually mistake as argument.

Pathos- Argument through Emotion

- Emotional Argument or “seduction” is everywhere.
- Harper’s Magazine showed how the Food Network uses techniques identical to that of the porn industry- overmiked sound, very little plot, good-looking characters, lavish close-ups of firm flesh and flowing juices.



- Emeril Lagasse: “In go the bananas. Oh, yeah, babe. Get `em happy right now.”

Pathos- Argument through Emotion

- The most effective rhetoric disguises itself.
 - Example: Product placement in movies (Converse sneakers in "I Robot")
 - Example: Guerilla Marketing



Pathos- Argument through Emotion

- If you want to change someone's mood, tell a specific & vivid story.
- Hold emotions in check.
 - Control your volume (scary parent mode)
 - Speak simply. Less evokes more.
 - Struggle to hold back emotions. And let them build gradually (or get gradually more quiet).

Pathos- Argument through Emotion

- Humor is very persuasive because it improves your Ethos & calms people, but it doesn't get them to act.
- The most useful emotions arouse TRIBAL instincts- exploiting insecurities about where they stand & how much they belong to a group. Anger, Patriotism, and Emulation get people to act.
 - Anger: Gets fast action. Show your opponent dissing your audience.
 - Patriotism: Any group loyalty (not just country). Show a rival groups success.
 - Emulation: Role Models. Compare what you want to a role model your audience already admires.



LOGIC

Sometimes sounds kind of bitchy.

Logos- Logic

- Definition: Logos is argument by logic.
- People like to think that all argument should be nothing but logic; said that when it comes to political speech needs emotional character as well.

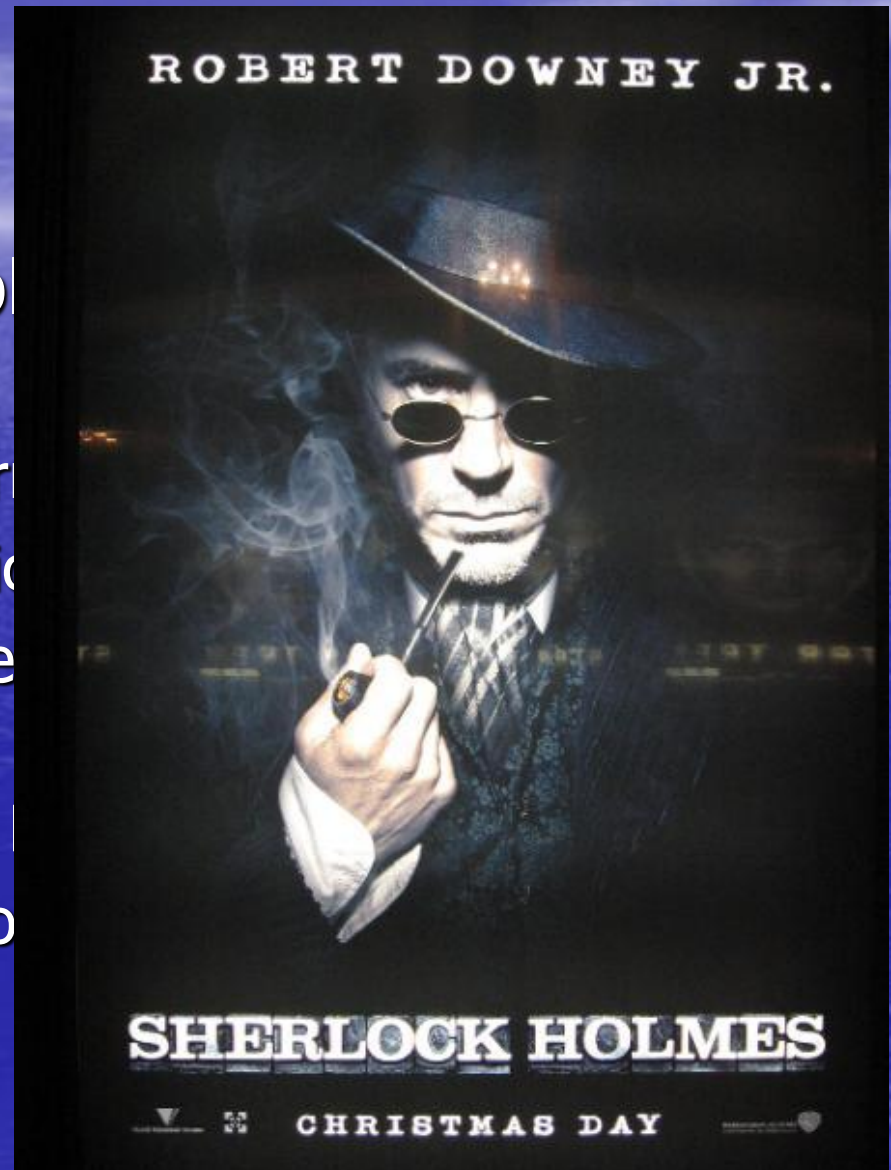


Logos- Logic

- ***Enthymeme***: We should (choice), because (commonplace).
- ***Commonplace***: Any cliché, belief, or value that can serve as your audience's boiled-down public opinion. It's the starting point of your argument.

Logos- Logic

- **DEDUCTION:** Applying logic to a particular matter.
 - Premise A: Unicorn
 - Premise B: All unicorns
 - Conclusion C: They have horns.
 - Not Valid: A + B
 - Not Sound: A or B



Logos- Logic

- **INDUCTION:** Argument by example. It starts with the specific and moves to the general.

– "I t

– Fac
of e



..”

kinds

Logos- Logic

- **CONCESSION:** Using your opponent's own argument to your advantage. You're right...
- Practical Example: When someone expresses doubt about your idea answer with "Okay, let's tweak it." Then focus the argument on revising your idea as if the group has already accepted it. You conceded your opponent's doubt, but still win the day.

Logos- Logic



- ***Framing Strategy:***
 - Find the audience's commonplaces.
 - Define the issue broadly, appealing to the values of the widest audience.
 - Deal with the specific problem or choice, using the future tense.
- ***Definition Strategy:*** Controlling the language used in an argument.
- ***Term Change:*** Inserting your own language in place of your opponents.
- ***Redefinition:*** Accepting your opponent's terms while changing their connotation.

Logos- Logic

- **RHETORICAL FOULS:** Mistakes or intentional offenses that stop an argument dead or make it fail to reach consensus.
 - Switching Tenses Away From the Future: It's fine to use the past or present, but deliberative argument depends on eventually discussing the future.
 - Inflexible Insistence on the Rules: Using the voice of God, sticking to your guns, refusing to hear the other side.
 - Humiliation: An argument that sets out only to debase someone, not to make a choice.
 - Innuendo: A form of irony used to debase someone. It often plants an idea in the audience's head by denying it.
 - Threatening: Rhetoricians call this argumentum ad baculum- argument by the stick. It denies the audience a choice.
 - Nasty Language or Signs
 - Utter Stupidity.

Logos- Logic

- **LOGICAL FALLACIES:** A wrong or misleading argument.
 - It's important to detect them, just as you should spot any kind of persuasive tactic used against you.
 - Another reason to understand fallacious logic: you may want to use it yourself.

Logos- Logic

- ***Bad Proof:*** The argument's commonplace or principle is unacceptable, or the examples are bad.
 - *False Comparison:* Two things are similar, so they must be the same.
 - *All Natural Fallacy (Fallacy of Association):* Natural ingredients are good for you, so anything called "natural" is healthful.
 - *Appeal to Popularity:* Other kids get to do it, so why don't I?
 - *Hasty Generalization:* Uses too few examples and interprets them too broadly.
 - *Misinterpreting the Evidence:* Takes the exception and claims it proves the rule.
 - *Unit Fallacy:* Does weird math, often confusing the part for the whole.
 - *Fallacy of Ignorance:* Claims that if something has not been proven, it must be false.

Logos- Logic

- ***Bad Conclusion:*** We're given too many choices, or not enough, or the conclusion is irrelevant to the argument.
 - *Many Questions:* Squashes two or more issues into a single one.
 - *False Dilemma:* Offers the audience two choices when more actually exist.
 - *Fallacy of Antecedent:* Assumes that this moment is identical to past, similar moments.
 - *Red Herring:* Introduces an irrelevant issue to distract or confuse the audience.
 - *Straw Man:* Sets up a different issue that's easier to argue.

Logos- Logic

- ***Disconnect Between Proof and Conclusion:***
The proof stands up all right, but it fails to lead to the conclusion.
 - *Tautology*: A logical redundancy; the proof and the conclusion are the same thing.
 - *Reductio ad absurdum*: Takes the opponent's choice and reduces it to absurdity.
 - *Slippery Slope*: Predicts a series of dire events stemming from one choice.
 - *Post hoc ergo propter hoc (The Chanticleer Fallacy)*: Assumes that if one thing follows another, the first thing caused the second one.

Review

- What are the 3 basic types of Rhetoric?
- Why should we study Rhetoric?
- Give an example of a place in which we find Rhetoric.