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Pick Me! Pick Me!: Using Aristotelian Rhetorical Persuasion and Advertising Appeals for Self-Promotion

Alexander M. Jones

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Abstract

This project combines contemporary and classical rhetorical persuasion and applies them to self-promotion. Aristotle's triad of modes of persuasion, ethos, pathos, and logos, represents classical persuasion. Appeals from advertising, such as humor, fear, music, and *argumentum ad populum*, represent the contemporary, but also are modern extensions of Aristotle's triad. These concepts are then applied in such a way that the reader can see how they could use them to their benefit in influencing others.

PICK ME! PICK ME!:
USING ARISTOTELIAN RHETORICAL PERSUASION AND ADVERTISING APPEALS
FOR SELF-PROMOTION

By:
Alexander M. Jones

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
Requirements of the CSU Honors Program for Honors in the degree of
Bachelor of Arts
In
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Columbus State University

Abstract

Introduction: This project combines contemporary and classical rhetorical persuasion and applies them to self-promotion. Aristotle's triad of modes of persuasion, ethos, pathos, and logos, represents classical persuasion. Appeals from advertising, such as humor, fear, music, and *argumentum ad populum*, represent the contemporary, but also are modern extensions of Aristotle's triad. These concepts are then applied in such a way that the reader can see how they could use them to their benefit in influencing others.

Body: Each concept is defined and shown how it can be used in a spoken communicative way rather than a visual representation. Advertising appeals are typically put into place in commercials to visually show off the positive attributes of a product. For this project's purpose, the reader is the product being shown off and both the Aristotelian modes and advertising appeals showcase how the reader can advertise himself or herself.

Conclusion: To create a better understanding of the concepts outlined, they are then applied to three winners of the elimination-style competition reality show *Survivor*. On this show, contestants must vote out their fellow cast members, but subsequently stay in their good graces because the eliminated contestants get to decide the winner. Richard Hatch, Sandra Diaz-Twine, and Sarah Lacina all used the outlined concepts and create a verifiable example of how the concepts can be successfully used for the reader's benefit.

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historical persuasion – i.e. ethos, pathos, and logos. These classical rhetorical appeals listed above have been around for upwards of 2,000 years since Aristotle initially introduced them ("Welcome to Purdue OWL"). Even now, these serve as a model for historical persuasion. Another component of historical persuasion is key appeals of advertising, such as music, humor, fear, rational, and bandwagon.

Introduction

When the very first group of contestants hit the beach during *Survivor*'s first season in 2000, America knew a cultural phenomenon had been born. America got to see how people reacted to being left on an island with little but each other to survive, all in the quest for a million dollars. Immediately the castaways began talking to each other and developing a plan of attack to make a fire, build a shelter, and even fashion a latrine. One person who had little care about joining in on the discussion was Richard Hatch, a castaway on the island. In fact, while everyone else was getting to know each other and developing priorities, Hatch climbed a tree and took a seat, watching, and evaluating, his fellow castaways. While it may have looked like he was overwhelmed by the reality of his situation and was taking an anti-social approach, Hatch was showcasing his hyper-awareness of the game at hand. He took a moment to understand his audience, so that he could make logical decisions for the next thirty-nine days to earn himself a million dollar check. He immediately puts classical rhetorical persuasion to use.

Intersocial communicative soft skills are arguably craved by game show contestants, employers, and employees alike as much as, if not more, than hard, knowledge-based skills. These skills rely on being able to interact in a profitable way with those around you. Interacting in a profitable way with those around you requires the quintessential Aristotelian elements of rhetorical persuasion – i.e. ethos, pathos, and logos. These classical rational appeals listed above have been around for upwards of 2,000 years since Aristotle initially introduced them (“Welcome to Purdue OWL”). Even now, these serve as a model for rhetorical persuasion. Another component of rhetorical persuasion is key appeals of advertising, such as music, humor, fear, rational, and bandwagon.

Whether in a game show setting for a million dollars, a professional setting for a career, or in a casual setting for developing friendships and general relationships with other people, we consistently ask ourselves, consciously or subconsciously, how to make the other person like us better. In essence, we are showing the best parts of ourselves. We put forth the areas that we want people to notice in the hopes that it will also steer them clear of those unflattering parts. We persuade other people and advertise ourselves through both classical rhetorical appeals and advertising appeals. Essentially, we ask ourselves: How do I make you like me more?

Advertising appeals aim for the same common goal as Aristotelian persuasion, but the ways in which they attempt to persuade tend to be less inherently verbal and more sensory. Advertisements are typically experienced more than they are read. While advertisements do also contain words, and sometimes many words, they rely on what the audience sees, hears, and feels more so than during a conversation. The ways to use these appeals, however, come verbally. Rather than making direct statements to evoke emotion or logic, advertising appeals use implicit statements to be more pointed in their efforts. They say things to make the other person think in a different manner than the way they already do. The two methods, however, are not mutually exclusive. Because of the explicit nature of the Aristotelian modes of persuasion, it is probable that the implicit nature of advertising appeals will fall hand-in-hand with them.

While Aristotle's triad represents classical persuasion and advertising appeals represent contemporary persuasion, the reality is that they are essentially one in the same. While the terminology and method of placing these appeals into commercials may be relatively new, the concepts all stem from Aristotle's ethos, pathos, and logos. The musical, humor, fear, rational, and bandwagon appeals are all extensions of Aristotelian persuasion. For example, *argumentum*

honesty and sincerity are observable and noticed by the addressee (3). The inclusion of a

ad populum is a classical substrategy that involves an argument being accepted because of its popularity, which is altered, through, terminology to become the bandwagon appeal.

You Can Trust Me: Ethos

“Last time I was mean and this time I’m meaner. You know, I’ll lie. I don’t care. But I’ll make up a good lie” was the first confessional from *Survivor: Pearl Islands* winner, and eventual *Survivor: Heroes vs. Villains* winner, Sandra Diaz-Twine during her second season, the aforementioned *Heroes vs. Villains*. In a clip from the game’s beginning, aired while the castaways were still being flown in, Diaz-Twine asserts herself with authority as a returning player. Even though every cast member on this season was a returning player, many did not acknowledge their past behavior earning them the title of hero or villain. Diaz-Twine, on the other hand, began the game with an ethical appeal: telling viewers she was a villain, deserved to be one, and was good at being one.

Ethos is the distinguishing characteristic of a writer. Ethos allows the writer to establish credibility with the audience through the creation of a narrative. This specific element allows the audience to trust that the speaker knows what he or she is talking about. It is the single most important aspect in any act of persuasion. If an audience fails to believe that the speaker understands what he or she is trying to communicate, or persuade them to do, the battle has already been lost. Framing ethos as a narrative allows for more subtlety. At times, too much ethos can come across arrogantly as if the speaker is bragging. Liesbeth Korthals Altes, Professor of General Literature from the University of Groningen in the Netherlands, states, “Good sense includes the idea of knowledge and expertise acquired through experience, (3).” She also states that it is necessary that “the audience’s belief in the speaker’s good character...in particular his honesty and sincerity” are observable and noticed by the addressee (3). The inclusion of a

description of Altes' job title allows for a stronger level of ethos within even this thesis. It exemplifies that Altes knows what she is talking about and the inclusion of scholastic evidence shows a greater understanding about this topic than would be assumed if it were not included.

I'm Getting Emotional: Pathos

As ethos plays up the credibility of the speaker, pathos is the rhetorical appeal that works on the audience's emotions. One of the most emotional moments of any season of *Survivor* is the reward challenge when the reward is love in the form of a loved one visiting the island. Seeing the vulnerability within contestants who are constantly on high alert reminds both the viewers at home and the other castaways that these are real people. Furthermore, the particular family member chosen to be there offers insight to the others about what is important to them. In *Survivor: Game Changers – Mamanuca Islands*, host Jeff Probst told castaways that they would be competing for a barbecue to share with a loved one and eventual winner Sarah Lacina immediately dropped to her knees in tears. When her husband joined her on the island, she ran and embraced him, asking about their young son whom she left to compete on the season. This pathetic appeal showed the other castaways that Lacina had a purpose and vulnerability in playing as hard as she was; she has a family, including a small son, who means the world to her and time spent away from them means nothing if she loses. This moment humanized her in the eyes of viewers and castaways alike.

In order for pathos to have its intended effect, it is necessary that a speaker understand his audience's beliefs as well as the audience's values. Understanding what an audience, or specifically an audience member, holds dear, allows the speaker to better know what type of appeal will elicit the emotions he intends. If not, a speaker runs the risk of eliciting an emotion contrary to the one he wished, having unintended effects brought back upon them. Typically, this

can come in the form of an anecdote to provoke happy or sad feelings within an audience. However, pathos opens up to a broader range of emotions. Paolo Antonetti, Paul Baines, and Lorna Walker, business scholars from the University of Warwick, Cranfield University, and Regent's University, respectively, in the United Kingdom, completed a study on the effectiveness of negative emotional appeals. They found that emotions are not necessarily instinctive reactions, but rather are infused with behavioral patterns that affect the audience down the road. For example, they assert that an antismoking advertisement may cause fear and guilt, so when the opportunity to smoke arises, those feelings of fear and guilt resurface, having a more long-term effect (Antonetti, Baines, and Walker 952).

In today's society, one of the largest platforms on which people can advertise themselves is social media. Though there are exceptions, typically, the people one is connected with on social media are those they are closest to and care about the most. Facebook, in particular, primarily supports pathos. The people with whom one is connected are called "friends." Posts on someone's wall or onto the newsfeed are typically pushing out feelings like happiness, sadness, and anger which are then reinforced through interaction with friends through a "like" or a comment underlining the sentiment already provided by the original poster (Berlanga, García-García, & Victoria 132). Facebook's use of the term "friend" creates a greater sense of pathos within other users. By referring to someone as a friend, it creates a deeper intrinsic connection and a higher propensity for trust because of the perceived relationship.

That Makes Sense: Logos

During *Survivor Game Changers – Mamanuca Islands*, Sarah Lacina used a perceived friendship to deceive an ally, Sierra Dawn Thomas, in a way that was logical for Lacina, but not Thomas. On the first day of the game Thomas received a secret Legacy Advantage. This

advantage served as a hidden immunity idol which she could play before the votes were read at Tribal Council when there were either thirteen or six castaways remaining in the game. However, if she was voted out before playing it, she had to will it to someone still in the game. Thomas made the mistake of telling her close ally Lacina about the advantage and that should anything happen to her, Lacina would be the recipient. Logically, Lacina voted her out immediately. While Jeff Probst was snuffing Thomas' torch, Lacina feigned shock to keep Thomas from realizing she had turned on her and still gift her the Legacy Advantage. Thomas did give Lacina the Legacy Advantage, which she played at Tribal Council with six castaways remaining, a Tribal Council where she received a plurality of the votes, saving herself. Thus, her logic to obtain a game-changing advantage ultimately saved her from elimination and allowed her the opportunity to win.

Logos is the final mode of rhetorical persuasion put forth by Aristotle and is used more subconsciously than ethos and pathos are. It focuses on making a logical argument to persuade an audience. Logos is important to ascertain that an argument makes sense. Sometimes, we work through why an argument makes sense in our minds without realizing we are making it make sense. Typically, we are cognizant of when we are making ourselves look more credible and evoking emotion in others. Persuasion fails if the speaker is unsuccessful in his or her attempt to formulate his or her argument in such a logical way that the audience is capable of understanding. This returns to the point of a speaker understanding his audience. A logical argument when making an attempt to persuade an undergraduate college student will undoubtedly be formatted differently, especially concerning word choice, than when attempting to persuade a PhD level professor. It also works in the same vein as the rational advertising appeal by putting forth the product or service being advertised as the rational choice.

Oftentimes, the rational choice is presented as such through deductive reasoning. One of the common methods of looking at deductive reasoning is a syllogism. If done correctly, a syllogism can perfectly lay out the logic behind a decision and why it makes sense. A syllogism makes two claims that summarize an argument, the major premise and the minor premise, followed by a conclusion: "If A, then B. If B, then C. Therefore, if A, then C." The first statement, involving A and B, is the major premise. This statement includes the overarching term the argument is being made for. The minor premise includes the specific thing the argument is made for. An example of a syllogism would be as follows: Birds have two legs and two wings. A dove is a bird. Therefore, a dove has two legs and two wings. It takes two statements that are accepted as true by all parties involved and bridges the gap between the starting point and the conclusion attempting to be reached in the argument.

Don't Break Out into Song: The Musical Appeal

During her time on *Survivor: Pearl Islands*, Sandra Diaz-Twine was easily agitated, but was able to turn a conversation into something memorable to further herself. In one instance, Diaz-Twine was upset that her ally Rupert Boneham was voted out and decided that she would hide the bucket of fish he caught, deeming those who voted him out unworthy of eating his fish. Therefore, she decided that she would get up first in the morning and hide the fish so only those they chose could partake in eating it. However, her plan changed when the bucket was heavier than she realized and she tripped and dropped it. However, she started a heated argument with known troublemaker Jon "Jonny Fairplay" Dalton to keep the others from pointing the finger at her as the one who dumped the fish. In this situation, she was able to create an argument more memorable than the dumping of the fish to remove the target from herself and place it on someone else.

A musical appeal is a difficult appeal to execute and insert in a conversational situation. An audience may not stick around long enough to be persuaded if a speaker burst into song. The musical appeal, though, is very effective at gaining the attention of someone who was not previously listening. Music also plays into the emotion of the audience. Depending on the type of music accompanying an advertisement, specific emotions or memories with emotions attached can be elicited. Sad songs, like in the commercials for the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), create sympathy for what is being advertised within the audience.

While specific songs are not necessarily effective during a spoken conversation with another person, tone falls under the umbrella of the musical appeal. Intonation has a large effect on how someone receives what is said. It goes back to the old adage that "It's not what you say, it's how you say it." Two statements can have different meanings dependent upon where within the sentence the emphasis is placed. One vein in which topics can have starkly different meanings depending on both intonation and audience is popular culture due to differing opinions.

The musical appeal plays heavily on popular culture topics. While it is intended to appeal to viewers through song, its core centers around its ability to capture and contain attention. Even for songs, this will mean that they are songs currently in the ear of the public. The same concepts can then be applied to conversation topics. Topics heavily in the public's eye can also grab attention. Everyone has an opinion and oftentimes others like to hear that it lines up with their own. Even in situations not involving an opinion, conversing over a topic someone cares about draws him or her in. The quickest way to have no lasting effect on someone is to lose their attention by talking about something they have little to no care for.

Several professors from the University of Salento in Italy conducted a study on how the ending of background music in commercials affects recall of the advertised brand (Guido et al. 504). The same study can be applied to ending a background conversation serving as a substitute for music. Overall, they found that if the song ends normally, the branded product can be recalled 82% of the time, if the song fades out there is recognition 66% of the time, but if there is a truncated ending, the percentage drops to 48% (Guido et al. 510). In relation to a popular culture conversation, these results would correlate with a normal end to a completed conversation, a continuation strictly to fill in the blank space at the end of a conversation when it is really over, but does not end, and the conversation dropping off without the completion of a thought, respectively. The thought must be completed in order for recall to take place. It is pertinent that the "music" presented is relevant to the audience, otherwise the risk of a truncated ending increases because of their lack of attentiveness.

While this may seem an extraneous element to add to an argument on the surface level, the important thing to remember is that the audience needs to remember what you want them to. Otherwise, an argument has little to no effect because it lacks a lasting change. For example, Sandra Diaz-Twine spilled all of the fish, but what she got the other castaways to remember is that Jonny Fairplay is a known troublemaker. This verbal confrontation moved the target from her as Rupert Boneham's remaining ally and placed it onto Fairplay creating more distrust in him. Diaz-Twine wanted her fellow castaways to remember his behavior over hers and made sure they would.

That's Too Funny: The Humor Appeal

Another advertising appeal that plays on audience's emotions is the humor appeal. During an immunity challenge towards the end of *Survivor: Borneo*, Richard Hatch used humor

to endear himself to his fellow castaways. The challenge simply had them balance on a beam in the middle of the ocean. To pass the time, Hatch, rather obnoxiously, sang "99 bottles of beer on the wall," in the hopes that it would cost someone their concentration and fall off of the beam. Ironically, he was the second person to fall. He then proceeded to give a comical play-by-play alongside his ally Rudy Boesch. This allowed Hatch to lower the villainous persona he had come to earn with those outside his alliance for playing the game "unethically." Using humor allowed them to see him in a different light, ultimately lowering their walls and allowing them to see him as a person rather than a player.

Appealing to an audience's sense of humor is a good way to relieve pressure and break down any walls between the speaker and the audience. However, humor can also be treacherous if misused. If the speaker is appealing to a large crowd or does not fully understand his or her audience, then humor can hurt as much as it can help. Different people have different senses of humor. One person may find something funny that another person finds offensive. Therefore, when a humor appeal is used, a speaker must fully understand his or her audience. Hye Jin Yoon and Spencer F. Tinkham, scholars from Southern Methodist University and University of Georgia, respectively, assert that humor begins with "arousal/tension... amidst a play manipulation, followed by a mechanism that allows one to reduce the tension and enjoy the arousal" (Yoon and Tinkham 31). While humor may be a tough appeal to use, if done right it can yield great results by making a speaker memorable. The humor, though, must add to the persuasion as a whole rather than having an audience remember only the humor, not what is being advertised.

There is a certain type of humor, however, that is received better than others. Martin Eisend, Julia Plagemann, and Julia Sollwedel, German experts in the field of international

marketing, conducted a study on whether or not there was a correlation between stereotyping and humorous advertisements (Eisend, Plagemann, & Sollwedel 256). The stereotypes audiences are more familiar with, such as racial and political stereotypes, are going to be the ones that people are more likely to inherently notice in any advertisement, verbal or visual. The stereotypes that do not conform to conventional standards are less likely to go noticed and affect the advertisement and brand as a whole. Overall, Eisend, Plagemann, and Sollwedel found that “stereotyping can lead to negative reactions of consumers toward advertisers. However, advertising effectiveness is not necessarily reduced by stereotyping if this stereotyping is used in combination with humor” (Eisend et al. 269). More specifically, they found that humor can positively influence attitudes toward a brand, particularly if nontraditional stereotypes are used, humor in advertisements with any stereotypes have stronger effects on female audience members, and nontraditional stereotyped advertisements are more credible than common stereotyped advertisements (Eisend et al. 268). All of this is not to say that using stereotypes to your advantage is ethical, but when approaching them, using humor is more likely to leave a positive impact on yourself.

You’re Scaring Me: The Fear Appeal

Fear can be as effective and dangerous a tool as humor. All throughout *Survivor: Heroes vs. Villains*, Sandra Diaz-Twine had a bitter rivalry with Russell Hantz. When Hantz won the Final Immunity Challenge, he essentially held all of the power to decide who would and would not join him in the final three and face the jury. Hantz told Diaz-Twine that he planned on taking her because he felt she had no chance at winning. He thought she would earn the vote of her former ally Courtney Yates, but no others, thus making her the best candidate to join him. Diaz-Twine played into his fear of not having her in the final three by telling him she was fine being

the runner-up and getting the one hundred thousand dollars that goes along with it. She needed him to pick her, so she made sure that she told him all of the things he needed to hear to scare him into not letting her go.

If a speaker does not put forth enough fear, it is pointless, but if a speaker puts forth too much fear, he runs the risk of scaring off his audience. Too much of a fear appeal can make an advertisement also seem like a threat and the audience will not respond in the desired way. Most likely, the audience will reject the advertisement rather than accept for fear of missing out. Finding the right balance of the amount of fear to include is pertinent. This specific appeal is used many times to advocate preventive medical care. Anjala Selena Krishen and My Bui, scholars from University of Nevada and Loyola Marymount University, respectively, assert that fear-based advertisements primarily attempt to persuade consumers to avoid a feared-self (Krishen and Bui 535). This means that fear-based advertisements from a single speaker would persuade the audience that they are worse off without them, making the audience fear what their life would be like without the speaker.

There are two studies that have fashioned models for defining these fear-based reactions an audience might have. The Extended Parallel Process Model claims that behavior is changed based off of perceived threats, but only when said threat has adequate efficacy. The Extended Parallel Process Model, proposed by Kim Witte, a professor of speech communication at Texas A & M, explains why certain appeals to fear fail, reincorporates fear as a variable in ways different to those in the first group, and specifies the relationship between threat level and levels of efficacy (Witte 329-330). She asserts that "Fear is a negatively-valenced emotion, accompanied by a high level of arousal, and is elicited by a threat that is perceived to be significant and personally relevant" (Witte 331). These are the kinds of fear appeals that do not

fail as easily as other fear appeals Witte has researched. The key to making a fear appeal that is in the speaker's benefit is to make the appeal personally relevant. The intention is not to scare someone into agreeing with you, rather the intention is to make someone agree with you out of the fear of unintended consequences if they do not. Making an appeal that is personally relevant plays specifically into the fears of individuals. The likelihood that a fear appeal is effective is greater when that appeal is specific to a person. Different things scare different people into motivation, which brings back Witte's theory of the relationship between threat level and level of efficacy. In order for a fear appeal to be efficacious, the threat level must be in tune with the individual.

The Stage Model of Processing Fear-Arousing Communications looks at cognitive processes underlying fear-induced persuasion and asserts that vulnerability and fear manipulations have differential effects on attitude (de Hoog, Stroebe, & de Wit 258). Promoting oneself is essentially manipulating the person to whom they are promoting themselves. For that reason, it is important to understand the effect that manipulating someone with their fears is dangerous. Inherently, no one likes to be afraid of anything; admitting fear projects weakness, which people do not like to show. While the intention is to have them fear what would happen without accepting your side of an argument, you are still uncomfortably pointing them to a weakness within themselves, even if only subconsciously. De Hoog and her colleagues, all of whom are German professors, emphasize this by saying, "When individuals do not feel vulnerable at this particular point in time, but a risk is depicted as severe, they are also assumed to invest effort in processing the contents of a communication, because it is useful to be well informed about a serious risk, even if the danger is not imminent" (de Hoog, et al. 261). There are consequences of every action and it is important to be cognizant of them.

Let's Jump on the Bandwagon: The Bandwagon Appeal

While the fear appeal focuses on the fear the audience has of not having the speaker, *argumentum ad populum* describes an argument that is made by validating the point through the popularity of said point. From the viewpoint of a viewer, voting out Sarah Lacina at the final four of *Survivor: Game Changers – Mamanuca Islands* was the best choice for the other castaways. Former NFL player Brad Culpepper won the Final Immunity Challenge. Due to his close friendship with Troy “Troyzan” Robertson, Culpepper’s choices to take to the final three were Lacina and Tai Trang, who made little impact on the season, except to Culpepper. Throughout the game, Trang flipped from working with Culpepper to not and vice versa several times. For this reason, Culpepper did not want Trang in the final three over Lacina who firmly planted herself. Her popularity with her fellow castaways blinded them to her dominant gameplay and made them want to keep her around.

In a more modern, colloquial term, this could be called the bandwagon appeal. This appeal also plays on the audience’s desire to have the speaker around. This appeal, though, argues the presence of the speaker for popularity and to be liked. This appeal plays up the positive parts of the speaker so that the audience sees what having the speaker on their side would be like in direct opposition to the potential future presented through the fear appeal. This also directly correlates with understanding who the audience is through their psychographics. A speaker must know where the audience places their value in order to push those things with the bandwagon appeal. If a speaker does not understand his audience, he can inadequately make use of the bandwagon appeal by pushing things the audience does not care for towards them.

An easy way to see the introduction of the bandwagon appeal as a mainstay into the current society in which we live is the push for health foods. In recent years, the mark of

exercising and eating healthier foods is extremely blatant. With the increase in popularity of health foods, more people latch on because of said popularity. With mainstream media glamorizing health foods, it becomes a bigger part of our society, making more people want to feel a part of something bigger and joining the health food trend. Though published in 1987, a study on health claims in food advertising is just as relevant as it was, perhaps even more so given the increase in popularity in health foods over recent years. In their study they said that “In the competitive market, a product’s meaningful attributes must be communicated effectively, and changing societal interests have led to an evolution in which attributes are considered meaningful” (Lord, Eastlack, & Stanton 9-10). If attributes are not adequately communicated, then it is less likely that anyone will latch onto the idea because they do not fully understand. If the narrative is not correctly communicated and ethos not correctly established, your audience will not see the value in sticking with your argument. Rather than boarding the bandwagon, they will retreat and firmly place themselves against your argument.

Conceptual Examples

All of the classical and contemporary rhetorical concepts and ideas discussed thus far can be seen in public practice on reality television. Reality television has long fought rumors of its lack of authenticity. These concepts are applicable because, despite authenticity rumors, cast members on these shows are real people applying concepts to get both other cast members and members of the viewing audience to like them in their pursuit of success.

One arena in which rumors of authenticity seem to be less dignified are in the subgenre of reality television that is branded as elimination-style, competition reality television. This subgenre includes shows like *Survivor*, *Big Brother*, *The Amazing Race*, *The Challenge*, *Fear Factor*, *The Biggest Loser*, *The Apprentice*, and the list continues on. One common thread

between all of these shows is contestants competing against one another to win a prize, all the while being whittled down one by one until a victor emerges amongst them. In most cases, these eliminations come by proxy from other contestants, either by a vote of disapproval or by the surviving contestants outperforming the eliminated contestant in a competition faced before them.

In some cases, the previously eliminated contestants, sometimes known as the jury, determine the winner of these competitions. Arguably, the most notable of these types of competitions is *Survivor*. On this show, the seven to ten contestants eliminated prior to the final two or three, depending on the iteration, comprise the jury and decide who, out of the final two or three, deserve to be crowned the winner.

These juries can vote in any way they so choose. They can reward masterful gameplay by voting for the person who controlled more of the game than the others. They can reward likability by voting for their favorite person out of those remaining. They can even vote out of bitterness and emotion by voting for the person who angered them the least. This is not a far-fetched idea given that in order to make it to the end of the game, they must have voted to eliminate the people whose vote they are now trying to win.

Given that *Survivor* requires contestants to eliminate each other via a vote, but require these same contestants to not burn their bridges in eliminating their competitors, contestants who have won are prime examples of the concepts outlined in the previous section. These three people have been able to turn on their alliances and friends, yet be likable enough that their peers picked them over someone else. Each of them played the game differently, albeit with the same intentions, utilizing different appeals at different times to help them look favorable to each of their juries.

How *Survivor* Works

Survivor is generally seen as the catalyst for the rapid creation of elimination-style, competition reality television. Since 2000, *Survivor* has taken sixteen to twenty strangers and placed them in a remote outdoor location, typically an island, with only meager supplies. In most iterations of the show, contestants, dubbed castaways, are given a bag of rice, a machete, and, if they are lucky, a flint with which they can make fire. Host Jeff Probst has even stated that, unless they win a reward, the castaways survive on about one hundred calories a day. Once the castaways have been dropped off, they remain cut off from civilization for thirty-nine days and every three days must vote to extinguish the flame of someone's torch, which symbolizes their life within the game. The only way to get more food or supplies is to win a reward challenge. The only way to stay safe from the vote is to win an immunity challenge.

The castaways begin the game in teams, called tribes, in which they live, survive, compete, and vote. The tribe that loses the immunity challenge heads to Tribal Council where they cast their votes for one of their own. At a certain but ever-changing point, the tribes become merged into one and immunity challenges become individual, everyone votes every time, and the jury begins to form. This way everyone must have a hand in eliminating the jurors in their quest to make it to the end.

Over thirty-four seasons of *Survivor*, thirty-three people have claimed the title of Sole Survivor. Richard Hatch was winner of the inaugural season of *Survivor* in Borneo. Sarah Lacina was crowned the winner of the most recent season, at the time of this writing, subtitled *Survivor: Game Changers – Mamanuca Islands*, which pitted twenty returning players against each other to see who truly was a game changer. The self-proclaimed "Queen of *Survivor*" is Sandra Diaz-

Twine. Diaz-Twine is the only person to win two seasons of *Survivor*, *Survivor: Pearl Islands* and *Survivor: Heroes vs. Villains*, earning herself her self-imposed reign as queen.

Richard Hatch – *Survivor: Borneo*

The inaugural winner of *Survivor*, Richard Hatch, understood he was playing a game and to win he needed to approach every aspect with logic and ration, logos. When *Survivor* premiered in 2000, audiences were fascinated with the concept of putting a cross-section of America together on an island to survive. Perhaps one of the oddest choices was the thirty-nine year old, nudist, homosexual man, Richard Hatch. In the first season, the castaways placed more emphasis on their actual survival than strategy. Richard managed to create the first-ever alliance, much to the chagrin of the castaways not included. Thus, he became the villain.

He used his logic in order to get people to trust him. When the tribes merged and the first vote was 4-1-1-1-1-1, someone had to have planned something rather than voting for who they felt contributed least, as was the plan. The castaways not in the apparent alliance felt that Hatch, the obvious leader, was acting unethically and chose to continue voting how they saw fit, which was not necessarily together. Their distaste for coming together to vote to get themselves further in the game allowed Hatch and his alliance to steamroll their way to the final four.

Throughout the game, Hatch had cultivated a relationship with each of his alliance members, so that when they reached the final four, two of them thought they had the best relationship with him, the fourth was beginning to catch onto his wicked ways, but she was now in the minority. This allowed Hatch to decide who he wanted to eliminate without fear that he would be on the receiving end of a torch snuffing. Hatch had so much trust in his alliance members, that in the final immunity challenge of the season, he dropped out knowing that either of the two remaining castaways would eliminate the other one should they win immunity.

While Hatch was not well-liked amongst his fellow castaways, his logical manner was rewarded. In addition to Hatch's logic that got him to the end of the game and garnered him favor, it helped his case that his opponent, Kelly Wiglesworth, was liked less than he was for her disloyalty. Hatch won in a 4-3 jury vote.

Hatch's use of logos allowed him to remain rational. While his tribemates were focused on survival, he was focused on winning a game they were all playing. He was able to rationalize deductively by thinking further in the game than those around him. He was able to think through the unintended consequences of his actions before he made them, allowing him the foresight to choose which move would have the least consequences for him and make that move over the others.

Sandra Diaz-Twine – *Survivor: Pearl Islands* and *Survivor: Heroes vs. Villains*

To win twice, it takes more than a playing logically and strategically; it takes knowing how to talk to people with the musical appeal and have them recognize the ethos within the speaker. By the time Diaz-Twine appeared in her first season of *Survivor*, Hatch's alliance strategy was commonplace and so Diaz-Twine coined her, now famous, anyone-but-me strategy. She laid low and managed to cause some drama, but made sure it never came back on her. Whenever her tribe had to attend Tribal Council, she was open about saying she would vote for anyone, ally or not, as long as it was not her. This allowed everyone to see Diaz-Twine as a number to vote with them. Combined with her non-threatening demeanor, this allowed everyone to want to keep Diaz-Twine around.

She began to work in the background of placating people who were seen as outsiders, not threats. This gave her control over an alliance, but allowed her to keep her strategy of voting anyone out the majority wanted to vote out. She kept previously eliminated Lil Morris, who

returned to the game due to a twist, with her to the end and earned herself the title of Sole Survivor in a 6-1 vote after being deemed a better option than someone who did not do much, was slightly annoying, and had already been voted out once.

Diaz-Twine's antagonistic nature in *Survivor: Pearl Islands*, however, earned her a spot on the Villains tribe on the all-star season, *Survivor: Heroes vs. Villains*. She again laid low and kept up her anyone-but-me strategy. As one of four previous winners cast on this season, she needed to downplay herself to remove the target from her back. She was able to downplay herself so much that she was again viewed as someone who was not a threat. She was able to get on people's good sides just before they were voted out, earning herself favor on the jury. She was able to reach the end with fellow villains Russell Hantz and Parvati Shallow, the two people the jury was most bitter against for outwardly voting them out. Because Diaz-Twine was on everyone's good sides, she became the only person to win the game twice in a 6-3-0 vote over Shallow and Hantz, respectively.

Diaz-Twine used her abilities to speak and only lost the game once, during her third run in *Survivor: Game Changers—Mamanuca Islands*. She was very open about her abilities to easily, guiltlessly, and effectively lie, but her demeanor is ultimately what kept her off of her enemies' radars. Despite her aptitude for lying, other castaways trusted her on a personal level. Diaz-Twine used the music appeal, not by singing, but by connecting. She was able to make personal connections with people during each of her first two runs on *Survivor*. Being the villain she is, Diaz-Twine was able to exploit those connections. In making connections with others she was able to obtain information on each of them, which she was then able to connect to someone else through her knowledge of the real world. In this way, she would be able to predict who would clash with each other, shifting the target onto them and off of her.

As previously mentioned, only four of the twenty cast members on *Survivor: Heroes vs. Villains* had previously won the game, one of whom was Sandra Diaz-Twine. This allowed her to employ her ethos as someone who knew what it took to not only make it to the end of the game, as eight of the remaining sixteen castaways had, but to make it to the end and win. As the least threatening of these four winners on paper, Diaz-Twine again was able to build connections that she was able to exploit to get further in the game. Staying true to her strategy, she remained willing to take the back seat, but as a former winner, she was able to navigate allies more easily. Her credibility made others talk to her enough so that she could use her musical communicative appeal because they thought that the jury would not award someone their second win while they could not clench their first. Employing her ethos made her seem more like a coach and less like a competitor to her fellow castaways.

Sarah Lacina – *Survivor: Game Changers–Mamanuca Islands*

In her first season, *Survivor: Cagayan*, Lacina had herself planted firmly between the two opposing alliances entering the merge. She was the swing vote and seemingly had her choice on who to vote out and which alliance to join and thereby give the majority to. However, sometimes the person in the middle of the road gets run over. Both alliances grew tired of Lacina acting like the queen of the island and voted her out instead. Multiple times on the show, she voiced concerns over being able to strip away her police officer personality and lie and deceive her fellow castaways.

Going into her second season, *Survivor: Game Changers–Mamanuca Islands*, she knew she would be competing against seasoned veterans of the game. So, she stated on the show she got permission from her family and friends to act more like the criminals she arrests. Lacina lied to her fellow castaways more willingly and easily. However, Lacina found herself in a similar

position to her first season bouncing between alliances, but this time she had good enough relationships with people on either side that they kept her around until she took home the million-dollar prize on day 39 in a 7-3-0 vote over the disliked ex-NFL player Brad Culpepper and Troy "Troyzan" Robertson, who was perceived to have not done much throughout the season.

Like Richard Hatch, Lacina played the game methodically for fear of letting herself and her family down a second time. Unlike Hatch, though, that fear drove her to play her best, most logical game. She combined logos with the fear appeal, but rather than employing the fear appeal on her fellow castaways, she employed it on herself to a lesser extent. She was motivated to play dangerously and in a way that the jury would reward her hard work because she was afraid of coming so close to winning, but not being able to do. She felt that if she came close but lost, spending so much time away from her newborn son would have been for nothing.

During an extra scene that had been cut, but released by CBS after the episode aired, Lacina is seen talking with Troyzan Robertson about their plans to vote out Tai Trang one step short of the final three. She asks Robertson what happens if Trang wins immunity because she knows that Trang would take Robertson and herself to the final three. Because there is still a vote, however, this would require Robertson to vote out his close ally, and personal friend, Brad Culpepper. When Lacina senses Robertson's reluctance to vote out Culpepper, she begins to cry and tell him that she needs the money and he does not because he played in the NFL. She tells Robertson that she cannot have more children because she cannot afford to and that it is hard for her to accept that her life must change because of Robertson's friendship. In this scene, Lacina is effectively combining pathos, the bandwagon appeal, and the musical appeal. Ultimately, Culpepper and Robertson decided to keep Lacina and this scene could have had something to do

with that decision. She used her popularity with someone to know exactly what would push him to keep her. Because Lacina was popular with Robertson, he accepted what she told him and allowed it to affect him.

Conclusion

The ways in which we communicate with each other are typically genuine enough to form real connections with each other. However, there are times when, in order to get where we want to be or where we need to be, we have to be a little *Survivor*-like. Ethos, pathos, logos, music, fear, humor, and the bandwagon are all valuable tools we can keep in our communicative toolbox to use when needed. The most important part of using any of them, however, is understanding your audience to know when and which one is most appropriate.

Aristotle's modes of rhetorical persuasion allow us a glimpse into the foundation of persuasion for the last 2,000 years ("Welcome to the Purdue OWL"). Ethos, pathos, and logos serve as the base model for persuasion, both consciously and subconsciously. At times, we may not realize these are concepts we are using because they are ingrained in our minds. Their basic nature allows for more continual use. The more use they receive, the more natural their use becomes. Many arguments use one, if not all, of these concepts because their use comes naturally. Making an argument without first establishing credibility, using logic, or playing to the audience's emotions is almost impossible to do. It is for this reason that we know that consciously using these tools to our advantage can allow us to better promote ourselves.

While Aristotle's concepts come more naturally, appeals made through advertising represent a more contemporary, conscious approach to rhetorical persuasion. The concepts of ethos, pathos, and logos are rather generalized in comparison to appeals of advertising. Advertising appeals tend to be more pointed than their Aristotelian counterparts. The music,

humor, fear, rational, and bandwagon appeals focus more on specific topics rather than general concepts like playing to someone's emotions. For example, the bandwagon appeal coincides with the Latin term *argumentum ad populum*. This specifically targets the popularity of the argument being made rather than focusing on how the argument makes the audience feel, as pathos would. The only appeal from advertising that is addressed that aligns directly with Aristotle's classical modes is the rational appeal. This appeal looks at the rationality of and behind the argument being made, which is not dissimilar to logos, which considers the logic of and behind the argument being made.

Using case studies to exemplify these concepts allows for a firsthand look at how they can be put into practice. While most of us will likely never be stranded on an island in a quest for a million dollars, seeing how someone was able to employ these appeals when the stakes were so high gives an idea of how we can use them when the stakes are of a comparable size for ourselves. These case studies show real people creating and exploiting real relationships. While exploiting relationships sounds inherently negative, a speaker must know their audience in order to effectively promote themselves to said audience. Not knowing who makes up an audience, not knowing what characteristics make up those audience members, or not choosing the correct appeal with which to persuade creates a fatal flaw dooming your argument to fail before it even begins. With that being said, I only have one question left for you to ask yourself: Did I make you like me?

Further Research

Narratology is the study of how narratives and their structures affect perception. When promoting ourselves, it is necessary to think about how and in what order you present yourself. Essentially you are creating a narrative and must think about how the story is being told. The

way it is told makes just as much difference as the information being relayed. Ethos is all about establishing credibility, but credibility can easily be undermined or heightened by the narrative in which it is presented. Altes also asserts that “to concentrate on ethos indeed brings out fundamental but contradictory presuppositions and aims in the heterogeneous bulk of work that falls under the label of narratology” (Altes 89). By this, she is saying that narratives are each different; no one is ever the same, so focusing in on ethos, makes it a little trickier. While necessary, establishing credibility can become more homogeneous. People typically define themselves with similar facts about education, job title, experience, etc. However, this creates a problem when telling a narrative about yourself if all narratives begin the same, they lose the power to catch attention. To grab attention with credibility, it is imperative to look at what makes you different in your authority or how some positive difference within yourself can be spun to elicit credibility.

While narratology is specifically applicable to ethical appeals, it can also be applied to the argument as a whole. In looking at the examples of Richard Hatch, Sandra Diaz-Twine, and Sarah Lacina, it is important to remember that what is being shown to the audiences is first filtered through editors. While each aspect of their gameplay discussed was an accurate portrayal of things they did, other things they did during filming have also been cut out. In this way, the editor exemplifies their own narratology. They need to make the show look good by having the reason someone won be understood at the end, so as not to betray viewers into rooting with certainty for someone only to watch them lose, but also not allow the winner to be obvious throughout the whole season. For example, in the beginning of *Survivor: Game Changers – Mamanuca Islands*, Lacina was not seen as prominently as a decision maker as she was at the end. The editors wanted the audience to keep her on their radars while watching the show, but

not overtly see her as the winner the whole time, thus eliminating the mystery of whether a fan favorite will be voted out. With further time, this research can be extending to look at using these principles to look out how to advertise and tell the story of someone else.

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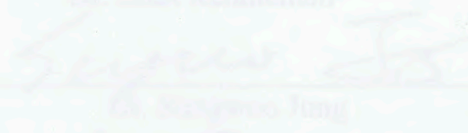


Dr. Alex Rendleman

Date:

12/14/17

Committee Member:



Dr. Seungwoo Jung

Date:

Dec 2, 2017

Honors Committee Member:



Dr. Mark James

Date:

1 Dec 2017

Honors College Dean:



Dr. Cindy Tucker

Date:


12/14/17

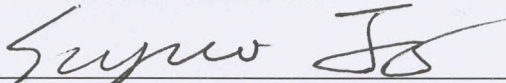
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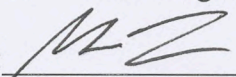
PICK ME! PICK ME!
USING ARISTOTELIAN RHETORICAL PERSUASION AND ADVERTISING APPEALS
FOR SELF-PROMOTION

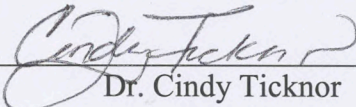
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Thesis Advisor:  Date: Dec 16, 2017
Dr. Eliot Rendleman

Committee Member:  Date: Dec. 7, 2017
Dr. Sungwoo Jung

Honors Committee Member:  Date: 7 Dec 2017
Dr. Mark James

Honors College Dean:  Date: 12/16/17
Dr. Cindy Ticknor

