

# Persuasive (aka Propaganda) Techniques and the Rhetorical Triangle

## **Logos: Appeals to logic and reason**

- A logical persuasive argument is built on an opinion supported by reason and evidence
- Reasons tell why everyone should accept an opinion as true.
- Evidence should support, or back up, an author's reasons.
- Examples of evidence
  - **Facts and statistics**--Researched evidence gives credibility to the author's reasons because they are difficult to argue.
  - **Expert testimony** - Statements made by experts in the field are very convincing.
- Logical fallacies are statements that sound logical and factual, but are not.
- Examples of logical fallacies:
  - **Hasty generalization**—Generalizations occur when the author comes to a conclusion on the basis of insufficient evidence.
  - **Name calling**—This occurs when the author attacks the person holding a view, rather than the view itself.
  - **Either/or**—The author describes a situation as having only two choices when there are actually more.
  - **False cause and effect**—The author asserts that because Event B followed Event A, A caused B
  - **Circular reasoning**—The author's argument appears to lead to a conclusion, but merely restates point.

## **Ethos: Author's character & ethics**

- **Expert testimony**—This can fall under both logos and ethos. If the author of a work is an expert in the field, he/she is appealing not only to logic, but he/she is establishing credibility with the audience.

## **Pathos: Appeals to audience's emotion**

- **Loaded words**—Words carefully selected to elicit a response from the audience.
- **Glittering generalities**—A type of loaded words so positive that they 'glitter' and make you feel good—like company slogans.
- **Testimonials**—These are comments by famous person or someone who has used a product or idea to endorse it—not an expert.
- **Bandwagon appeal**—This is the "Don't miss out" or "Don't be the last person to have one" appeal often used by advertisers and authors.
- **Fear tactics**—When a person believes something because he/she is afraid NOT to believe it—either knowing the truth is too scary, or the person is cared by others into believing it

## **Persuasive techniques to know:**

Facts and statistics  
Name calling  
Circular reasoning  
Testimonials

Expert testimony  
Either/or  
Loaded words  
Bandwagon appeal

Hasty generalization  
False cause and effect  
Glittering generalities  
Fear tactics

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_ RN \_\_\_\_\_

### How Persuasive Can You Be?

**Directions:** Assume you have a driver's license (even if you don't yet). Write four separate arguments to your parent/guardians explaining why they should let you borrow the car this weekend. The first argument should use logos. The second argument should use ethos. The third argument should use pathos. The fourth argument, your best, should use logos, ethos, and pathos. Each argument should be about two-three sentences long. Remember to be as convincing as possible.

#### Argument One-Logos

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#### Argument Two-Ethos

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#### Argument Three-Pathos

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#### Argument Four-Logos, Ethos, and Pathos

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