

# CLASSICAL RHETORICAL APPEALS OF PERSUSASION

**Ethos:** An appeal to shared values or beliefs to sway readers or motivate them to act.

**Note:** this is *in addition* to the definition I've been using, which has to do with establishing credibility as author/speaker. Add this to your definition.

**Pathos:** Emotional appeals use language that is heavily charged to evoke feelings of pity, awe, sympathy, or shock.

**Logos:** An appeal to reason or logic. Uses facts, credible authority, expert testimony, verifiable evidence to support claims in a reasoned, non-emotional way.

**Kairos:** Appropriateness, timeliness

## SOME COMMON LOGICAL FALLACIES

***Hasty generalization***: broad conclusions based on little evidence

***Oversimplification***: Offering a solution or explanation that is too simple for the problem being argued.

***Stereotyping***: A form of generalization or oversimplification in which an entire group is narrowly labeled based on the characteristics of a few.

***False Analogy***: Claiming that because something resembles something in one way, it resembles it in all ways.

***Ad hominem*** arguments: “Against the man” Attacking the character of the arguer rather than the argument itself.

***Tu quoque*** (kwo-kwee): You, too! Accusing arguer of hypocrisy (A person can argue about the dangers of smoking, but his argument is not undermined even though he smokes).

***Ad populum*** argument: “To the people” Taking advantage of the audience’s desire to be liked and to fit in with others. Also known as—

***Bandwagon*** argument “Everyone thinks so” “70% of people think thus....therefore it must be right”

***Emotionally-charged language***. See Barack Obama. Haha.

***Red Herring***: Changing the topic and diverting the audience’s attention away from the issue being argued. Arguing about National Day of Prayer but then bringing up the issue of prayer in schools. Two different issues.

There are many others. Begin to pay attention to how people argue. Listen for (and examine) their logic. Do the same for yourself. Are you guilty of these fallacies in your own speech or writing?