

The House Floor's Lady in Red (2020-09-07 03:40)



IFRAME: [1]<https://www.youtube.com/embed/LI4ueUtkRQ0>

This week's powerpoint explains that an effective argument must have 'marketing appeal,' ways that grab attention and persuade people to act or buy, using methods such as logical appeals, emotional appeals, humor appeals, and many more. The video of AOC on the house floor mainly relies on emotional appeal, or pathos, to persuade her audience in a powerful way. Her use of visual and auditory methods to try to address her point are powerful examples of this. Representative AOC wears a red blazer and lipstick to speak on the House floor, symbols that allude to the power of women. Additionally, she opens with the statement, "'In front of reporters, Senator Yoho called me, and I quote, 'A f*cking b*tch,' she pauses, 'these are the words that Representative Yoho levied against a congresswoman.'" The way that AOC punctuates her syllables, as well as these vulgar expletives uttered on the House floor is most effective at grabbing her primary audience's, or older members of congress', attention. This uses shock value as an asset to attract the reader's awareness, similar to that of sex as an appeal. Later, AOC emphasizes that Senator Yoho decided to come to the floor of the House of Representatives and make excuses for his behavior, which calls to the audience's patriotism because it illustrates the standard of honor that we hold America to.

Because of the nature of AOC's televised platform on the House floor, she has a secondary audience to appeal to as well. By using the story of her father's passing, her nieces, and the demographic of her audience as well as using repetition in the statements, "I could not allow my nieces... I could not allow the little girls that I go home to...", she is able to use pathos to reach an audience of women and play on their empathy, relatability, and discouragement. This understanding that she creates along with the secondary audience establishes her ethos, or credibility as a rhetor. The points outlined by the powerpoint, AOC

exemplifies many of the characteristics of an effective spokesperson based on her ability to build said credibility. The points outlined such as attractiveness, trustworthiness, similarity, expertise, likeability, are all met by the congresswoman on various fronts.

Affordances of this message include that it is very professional and reputable that she is being filmed on the House floor , and it can also reach a wider audience. Her platform gives her credibility ; she has an audience that will already give her at least some degree of validation simply because she is a senator . However, some constraints of this message are that she is in fact in a professional setting speaking in front of America, so she has to filter herself, and censor her anger so she doesn't add to the "women are too emotional" stereotype. This message is effective in terms of its emotional appeal. AOC uses just the right amount of pathos to reach different audiences.

1. <https://www.youtube.com/embed/LI4ueUtkRQ0>

Universal International and National Sexist Rhetoric (2020-09-14 03:44)

[1]This article is a composite of rhetoric from leaders around the world in the form of sexist speech, with collaborative analysis from Women's Rights Division Senior Researcher Hillary Margolis. As of 2016, there's been a lot of attention drawn in the media to the sexist rhetoric of now President Trump. However, Margolis introduces the exigence of her article in the first paragraph as one to inform and remind her primary audience , the leftist female working class, that although Trump may seem like the current face of sexist rhetoric in the political game he is most definitely not the only prominent government official making such comments.

There is an abundance of logos , or logical appeal, used in this piece. Mostly, Margolis uses quotes from recent world leaders that exemplify different facets of extremely sexist speech. For example, South African AmaXhosa King Mpendulo Zwelonke Sigcawu is mentioned as saying "The country's problems have overwhelmed leaders who are men, how much more of a woman," which is extremely offensive and indicative of the typical 'females-are-too-emotional' trope that women are often bombarded with. Other world leaders are also noted as commenting that a woman's role is a mother, that sexual consent from a woman is irrelevant, and that when other leaders make comments such as these it's 'just the kind of thing that men do.' All of this also demonstrates pathos , or emotional appeal, to outrage and motivate the reader towards the direction of Margolis' purpose , or what she wants her audience to learn from this article. Margolis makes a point to emphasize that it is important to recognize that politicians can verbalize extreme versions of sexism, but it is important to fight back in this situations, especially if you are someone in a leadership position, so that you can set an example for the public who may be in your situation, but worse. She also calls out to her audience to be wary of politician's 'photo opportunities' during Women's history month, and how some perpetrators may use their 'support' in order to mask years of oppression and sexism in politics. Her dedication to informing her audience of this situation develops credibility, or ethos, on her part because she develops trust within her intended readers. Her tone is especially demanding and firm in the end of her article to elevate this.

The platform that Margolis uses has many affordances, or benefits ! Her article was published in *The New York Times*, a popular publication , and was also republished by the *Human Rights Watch Organization* which elevates the reach of her purpose . Constraints, or restrictions , for the platform include that some working class women may not find themselves reading publications in the class of *The New York Times*. Additionally, it pulls at the issue of **international** political sexism, and the focus in the U.S. is primarily on **national** political sexism. Also, she lacks much input in her article from U.S. congresswomen on the topic, which would establish a firmer connection and clearer understanding amongst her audience of Margolis' purpose with this article, on both left and right leaning aspects of the issue.

1. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/03/13/17-times-politicians-have-resorted-wildly-sexist-speech-over-last-year>

Callouts vs. Calls to Action (2020-09-21 04:02)

One thing that I learned from the workshop that I think is especially important to look at is how both groups had individual differences with their standpoints on issues. Through this, they were able to demonstrate differences of opinion within parties as well as how to communicate and listen to each other's point of view. I see this through the article "[1]Trump's latest tweets are about silencing women of color in Congress," because it shows that this is exactly what Congress needs to do, especially in their individual parties. This article is littered with generalizations and fire-backs on Twitter between Democratic and Republican men, and four specific Democratic POC women. In this article, there is obviously severe mistreatment of POC congresswomen, even amongst the democratic party, and even amongst the women in the democratic party. It would help if the democratic congressmen and women sat down and did a workshop similar to the one that we did in class for their own party, and listened to people's reasons for their party alignment and political views without interruption.

The exigence of the article that POC congresswomen are being silenced by their male and female counterparts is true and a very important one. However, the rhetoric that the author uses that points blame on people doesn't convey the message that togetherness is the goal. It seems more like a 'cancel culture' idea, with no intention of using the platform given for the article to call the attention of how there is no method to resolve this tension. The purpose of this article is more accurately one to throw blame around and intensify feelings of disdain towards certain politicians. The kernel of truth that this article doesn't address is the aspect of politics that is brand-focused. People in power will do and say things to make themselves look better to themselves and their own party, and will respond accordingly to feedback from viewers. This doesn't mean that a perspective is changed, it just means that the politician is aware that his or her audience isn't receptive to this idea. Democrats are also known to be more socially progressive, so there is incentive to hold a more progressive and accepting brand standard than Republicans, just to secure a next term. Calling these people out for sexism and racism isn't going to achieve compromise or new mindsets; calling them out for what they're going to do about it does.

While participating in the workshop, I was placed in the breakout room that did not align with my political standing. Therefore I had to make sure that I kept my body language and expressions in check. However, the responses from the Red side didn't come off as disrespectful to me at all. I really appreciated the way that all of the volunteers spoke about their personal connections to the issue or question and didn't bring the other side into it.

In my opinion, there is immense worth in understanding the other side without trying to convince them. If someone feels like they're constantly talked-over, one-upped, or not listened to, they will give up on the idea of compromise. Similarly, if the red and blue sides cannot take the time to put down their battle axes and noise cancelling headphones to how and why the opposition party members believe in what they believe in, change is not possible. There is no route to common ground if you don't lay out the maps first.

Also, understanding the other side helps you understand why you think the way that you do in terms of your own political opinion. From listening to those on the Red side, I can now see that I have different family and individual values than they do, so I hold social issues in a higher rank of importance. Also, economic stability isn't something that I think about often, or worry about, so it's natural for me to not concern myself with politics involving such. However, listening to the perspectives of the other side made it clear to me how valid and important their views and opinions are too. Before this workshop, I had dwindling faith and patience to hear the other side out, so I am very thankful for this exercise to teach me a good way to think about my own opinion and how it relates to others', as well as how polarizing and impatient I was being with people who have differing views than my own.

If having a better understanding of the other side doesn't help you convince people who view in the opposition, it can certainly provoke further thought on the subject and aid in the search for other solutions to the issue. Personally, I have a difficult time listening to reds list their reasons for supporting specific leaders as economic-related reasons, but I can understand needing government support so you can keep a business running if it's profit fuels your children's education and fills their bellies. One of the red candidates explained to the group that she valued the Republican small business support because it had helped keep her family's business afloat, which I see as a very positive and understandable thing. I found empathy where I didn't think I would for this type of issue.

I think that the Braver Angels-style discussion could definitely help aid in collaborative rather than combative rhetoric, but it would take implementation of the reform of political mindsets in order to make this change possible. Political debate is so polarized and deaf to the idea of nuance to opinions. This change would be impossible to make at the drop of a hat, so it is likely that smaller groups would be helpful for this activity, similar to as how the Braver Angel's setup is broken down in to communities.

1. <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2019/4/8/18272072/ilhan-omar-rashida-tlaib-alexandria-ocasio-cortez-racism-sexism>

Capitalizing off of Fixed and Fluid (2020-09-28 03:04)

So interesting to see “Progressive” Democrat Congresswomen, who originally came from countries whose governments are a complete and total catastrophe, the worst, most corrupt and inept anywhere in the world (if they even have a functioning government at all), now loudly.....

— Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) [1]July 14, 2019

Fixed and fluid orientations now align with partisanship, which is obvious largely through disputes on cultural issues. This issue in particular involves immigration discourse, manifested in a sexist tweet by the president. Throughout U.S. history, the standard congress members have been white males, so it is expected for someone with who is described as “ fixed ” to have a reaction to the vocal disagreement of those who do not identify with that demographic. In this twitter thread, Trump is referring to four democrat congresswomen, Pressley, AOC, Tlaib, and Omar, all of whom are congresswomen of color . Because t hey additionally disagree with him on his stance and policies on immigration , there is further tension here. In terms of this week’s readings, these democratic and progressive congresswomen would align more towards the fluid side of the political spectrum. They seek out new and different experiences and don’t have the inherent opposition to the fear that more open immigration policies would bring , in which someone with a more fixed position would.

President Trump is using his rhetoric to further market himself toward his conservative twitter audience, hoping that people implement selective perception , in which individuals perceive what they want in media messages while ignoring opposing perceptions. In terms of this media message, this means that Republicans and Democrats will disagree on not only their opinions, but facts as well. His tweets rely heavily on selective exposure and confirmation bias . Selective exposure is used in these tweets in terms of how Trump depends on the reader’s lack of willingness to look up information that he spews out in terms of the women in question not being from the U.S. Confirmation bias shows up in these tweets through the comments of various U.S. citizen twitter users (I’m assuming) from both fixed and fluid sides. Confirmation bias is referring to the idea that people accept facts that support the way they see the world and reject facts that don’t support their worldview. With the callous language that Trump uses in his tweet, he successfully targets his demographic of like-minded individuals to make their thoughts feel valid and heard. The way that Trump invalidates the opinions and actions by these four congresswomen by describing their actions as “ viscous, ” assuming and leading the readers to assume that the women come from “ countries whose governments are a complete and total catastrophe, ” and how he refers in a condescending tone to Nancy Pelosi , takes advantage of the implied presence of said confirmation bias within his platform.

His audience, blatantly polarized and raging fixed and fluid members will either accept

or reject his statements based on the way they see the world. Thus, for those that tend to have more of a fixed worldview, there is no reason to question Trump's words, which perpetuates the stain of sexism and racism against women in congress. This message plays excessively with the idea of polarization between both fixed and fluid ends of the spectrum in terms of how they view their news source and the critical thinking that individuals are willing to do about its messages.

1. https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1150381394234941448?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw

Week 12 and 13: Trial of Socrates Simulation (2020-11-23 03:47)**Session 3 Speech (against compensation for citizens serving on assembly):**

Members of the Assembly, it is wrong to pay citizens to serve as Assemblymen and jurors as acts of public service. My fellow Socratic member Simon argues that Good Athenians should want to serve their great state for free, and that people should focus on what they do best. I have personally observed ample evidence for this case solely from sitting on this court as an assemblyman myself. Are we, as assemblymen, not chosen to fulfill duties on this board based off of our passion for Athens? In past meetings I have observed the disinterest and lack of drive of select members of our assembly, and a few meetings ago I had even witnessed members falling asleep, oblivious to arguments being made at the trial! If we are all to have a vote in the decisions being made in this court, how does this fair for Athens? It is wrong to pay citizens to serve as assemblymen, especially if they are going to disregard the distinguished and respected call of sacred duty.

In additional observations of the court, a handful of meetings past I had noticed that after assemblymen had received their three obols for civic duty, those citizens proceeded to buy wine and were soon drunk, yelling and cheering for those who made the funniest speeches, not the wisest ones. This act was severely disrespectful to not only the whole of Athens, but also the dignity of this court. Introducing paid compensation into our court system has turned our refined assembly into one of futility, idiocy, and greed. I call on the court today to consider the proposition that citizens serve in our assembly with no pay, as Good Athenians should want to serve their great state for free. The wisest should serve on our court as assemblymen. Not just anyone can participate in the governing body- not because there shouldn't be representation, but because everyone has their calling as a worker.

It is too soon to celebrate the success of this assembly with payment for its members-first, we must consider our duty to maintaining the integrity and strength of Athens right here in this court.

Session 5 (Against random lottery selection for officials):

I, Antaeus, a member of the Socratic faction, call to the members of the Athenian assembly today to rethink the proposed lottery system. The socratic followers are appalled by the

idea of selecting positions by random lottery: it is far better to train the brightest and most promising young people, regardless of background or gender, and educate them in the tasks of making decisions and ruling.

While the oligarchs (Solonian aristocrats) regard property as a convenient and appropriate marker of merit, the Socratics prefer selection based on non materialistic criteria. The contents of a man's head matter more than the contents of his storehouse, which follows up with the passed legislation of education for citizens that was passed last assembly. The sportsmanship and integrity of the court is important to me, especially as a practiced wrestler. You see my fellow assemblymen, wrestling is simple yet complex. Wrestling simply is not possible. Cooperation is key to the success of the sport. An opponent's cooperation is necessary for the possibility of the activity; without him one may neither win nor lose. The objective may be to win, but without resistance, one cannot build his own strength.

I call these points to your attention as a basis to understand my own relationship to the teacher Socrates, a man many of you have great qualms against. Although today I practice a position as a follower of Socrates, in the past I had no knowledge of him. It is only when I met Socrates in a gymnasium after one of my wrestling matches that I became aware of him and his teachings. At this time I was weary and weak. My wit didn't manifest itself into my work; I lost many matches to competitors whom I consider to have lesser skill and execution. Over a period of time, I began to converse with Socrates between matches at the gymnasium. He observed my state after days of consecutive losing rounds and Socrates enlightened me in my downtrodden, losing state about the athletic terms of pursuing wisdom. Wisdom is achieved through argument, shaming, fair play, and cooperation in competition. Wisdom is not achieved without an opponent's resistance-this part of wrestling is necessary to build strength. Socrates teaches through this, that wisdom is not achieved through materialistic value. Wisdom is achieved through fair play and cooperation, through engagement and cooperation with persons of different backgrounds.

Although wrestling seems to be a test of strength on the surface, it is a true measure of cooperation and wit. Of brains over brawn. The contents of a man's head as a basis for consideration of participation in our beloved assembly rather than blind random selection ensures that the Athenian wisdom we so desire will be as powerful as possible. Our plan for education as well as our Athenian knowledge test set in place during our second meeting ensures the success of this proposal. I ask you, my fellow Athenians, are you for the success or failure of our democracy? I urge you to vote accordingly.