

Three Rhetorical Appeals for ENGL 1301

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Ethos

'Ethics'

Establishing
personal
credentials

Getting your
audience to
trust you

Pathos

'Pity'

Inspiring an
emotional
response

Getting your
audience to
feel

Logos

'Logic'

Arguing based
on reason and
facts

Getting your
audience to
think

Examples

To illustrate what ethos, pathos and logos could look like, here's a set of examples –

Ethos:

- *“Anyone who wishes to improve their literary skills should read the Hyperbolit blog, because it is written by an Oxford English graduate who's passionate and knowledgeable about literature.”*

Why is this an example of ethos? → The blogger's credentials are established with the references to “Oxford English graduate”, as well as her passion for and knowledge of literature.

Pathos:

- *“Ever pulled a painful all-nighter to write an essay on a poem you have no clue about? The frustration of not being able to identify poetic devices, the confusion of not knowing how to structure your writing, and the panic of facing a looming deadline that's only intensified by the ticking of the clock – we've all been there. But fear not, because with the Hyperbolit blog, you've got a trustworthy resource to fall back on.”*

Why is this an example of pathos? → The emphasis on negative emotions – frustration, confusion, panic – suggests the necessity of there being a source of learning support for any student of literature.

Logos:

- *“Contrary to popular belief, mastering literary skills isn't all that hard. One should be an avid reader of different literary forms, genres and works, as increased exposure to a variety of writing familiarizes us with how words can be used in different ways to convey various meanings. One should also make it a habit to read the Hyperbolit blog, as it provides a wealth of quality materials on skills in literary appreciation and analysis.”*

Why is this an example of logos? → First, the problem is presented – mastering literary skills is hard. To address this, FOLLOW THIS SOLUTION... reading widely and frequently.

PERSUASION

LOGOS

1 Content

Arguments

Scientific Research

Facts

Numbers, Statistics

Patterns of
Development

ETHOS

2 Content

Qualifications

Experience

Published Works

Guiding Beliefs

Personal Anecdotes
– Why Me?

PATHOS

3 Content

Story Telling

Literary Devices

Descriptive Words
– Adverbs

Descriptive Words
– Adjectives

Sample Annotated Article

	logos
	pathos
	ethos

The **Dumbing** of America

→ PDescriptive/strong word

By Susan Jacoby
Sunday, February 17, 2008

"The mind of this country, taught to aim at low objects, eats

→ Figurative language

upon itself." Ralph Waldo Emerson offered that observation

→ Quoting a person of authority

in 1837, but his words echo with painful prescience in today's

very different United States. Americans are in serious

intellectual trouble -- in danger of losing our **hard-won**

→ Figurative language

cultural capital to a virulent mixture of anti-intellectualism,

anti-rationalism and low expectations.

This is the last subject that any candidate would dare raise on the long and winding road to the White House. It is almost impossible to talk about the manner in which public ignorance contributes to grave national problems without being labeled an "elitist," one of the most powerful pejoratives that can be applied to anyone aspiring to high office. Instead, our politicians repeatedly assure Americans that they are just "folks," a patronizing term that you will search for in vain in important presidential speeches before 1980. (Just imagine: "We here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain . . . and that government of the folks, by the folks, for the folks, shall not perish from the earth.") Such exaltations of ordinariness are among the distinguishing traits of anti-intellectualism in any era.

Arguments and Patterns of Development seen throughout the article:

- Causes and effects
- Contrast the past with the present

————→ Contrasting the past with the present

————→ Humor

The classic work on this subject by Columbia University

historian Richard Hofstadter, "Anti-Intellectualism in

→ Quoting a person of authority

American Life," was published in early 1963, between the

anti-communist crusades of the McCarthy era and the social

convulsions of the late 1960s. Hofstadter saw American anti-

intellectualism as a basically cyclical phenomenon that often

manifested itself as the dark side of the country's democratic

impulses in religion and education. But today's brand of anti-

intellectualism is less a cycle than a flood. If Hofstadter (who

→ Figurative language

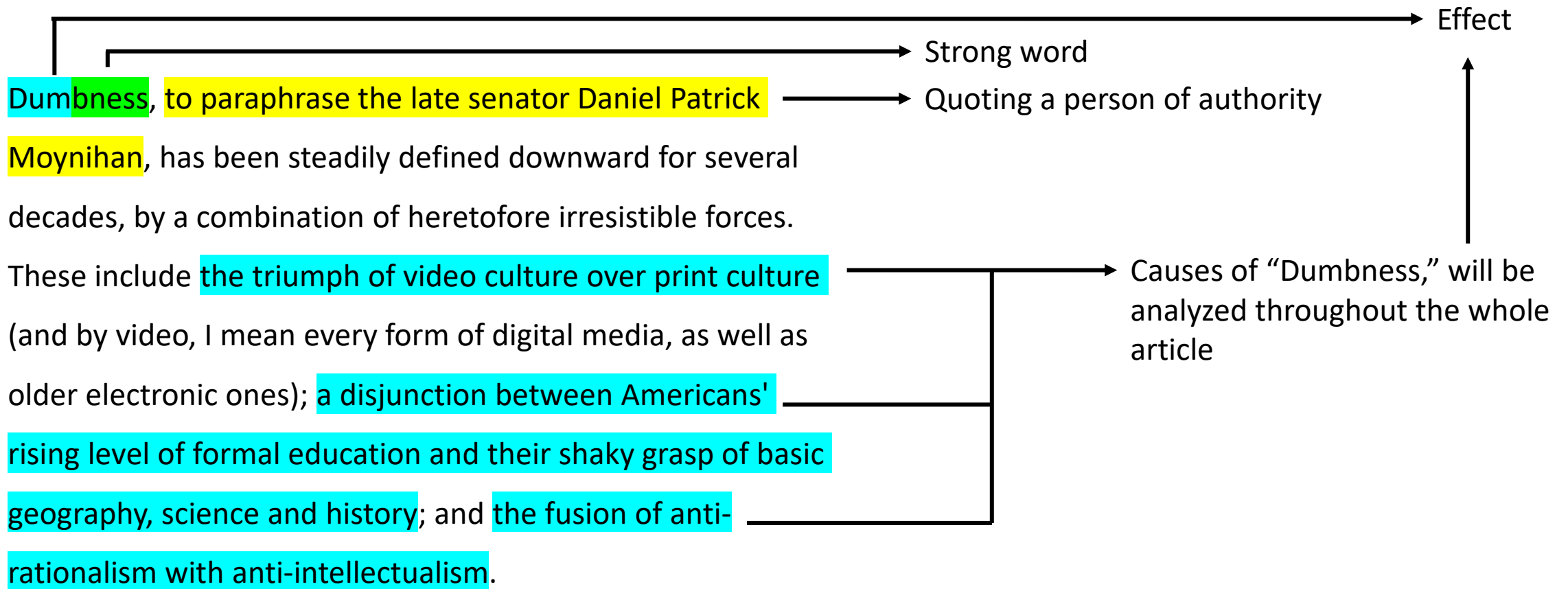
died of leukemia in 1970 at age 54) had lived long enough to

→ Humor

write a modern-day sequel, he would have found that our era

of 24/7 infotainment has outstripped his most apocalyptic

predictions about the future of American culture.



First and foremost among the vectors of the new anti-intellectualism is video. The decline of book, newspaper and magazine reading is by now an old story. The drop-off is most pronounced among the young, but it continues to accelerate and afflict Americans of all ages and education levels.

Reading has declined not only among the poorly educated,
according to a report last year by the National Endowment for

→ Using a credible source

the Arts. In 1982, 82 percent of college graduates read novels
or poems for pleasure; two decades later, only 67 percent did.

And more than 40 percent of Americans under 44 did not
read a single book -- fiction or nonfiction -- over the course of
a year. The proportion of 17-year-olds who read nothing
(unless required to do so for school) more than doubled
between 1984 and 2004. This time period, of course,

→ Numbers/ Statistics

encompasses the rise of personal computers, Web surfing
and video games.

Does all this matter? **Technophiles** **pooh-pooh** jeremiads about the end of print culture as the navel-gazing of **(what else?)** elitists. In his book "Everything Bad Is Good for You: How Today's Popular Culture Is Actually Making Us Smarter," the science writer Steven Johnson assures us that we have nothing to worry about. Sure, parents may see their "vibrant and active children gazing silently, mouths agape, at the screen." But these **zombie-like** characteristics" are not signs of mental atrophy. They're signs of focus." **Balderdash**. The real question is what toddlers are screening out, not what they are focusing on, while they sit mesmerized by videos they have seen dozens of times.

Informal language

Discussing an opposing view
=> showing objectivity

Humor

Despite an aggressive marketing campaign aimed at encouraging babies as young as 6 months to watch videos,

there is no evidence that focusing on a screen is anything but



Disputing the opposing view
=> strengthen argument

bad for infants and toddlers. In a study released last August,



Using a credible source

University of Washington researchers found that babies

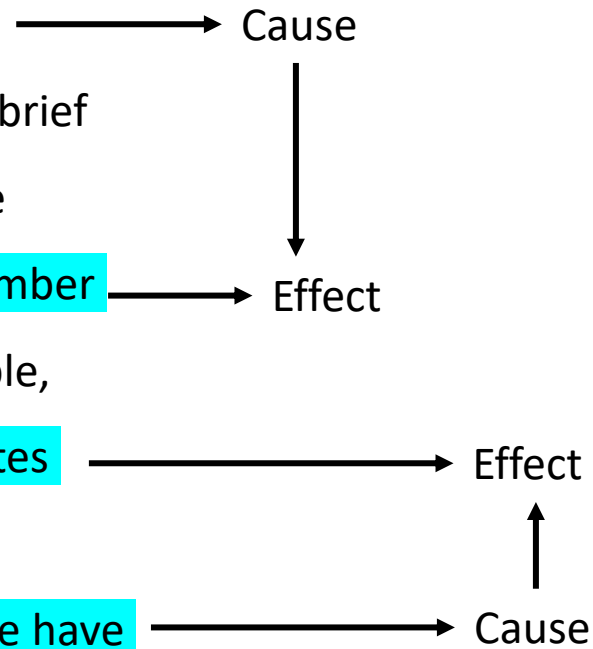
between 8 and 16 months recognized an average of six to



Numbers/ Statistics

eight fewer words for every hour spent watching videos.

I cannot prove that reading for hours in a treehouse (which is what I was doing when I was 13) creates more informed citizens than hammering away at a Microsoft Xbox or obsessing about Facebook profiles. But the inability to concentrate for long periods of time -- as distinct from brief reading hits for information on the Web -- seems to me intimately related to the inability of the public to remember even recent news events. It is not surprising, for example, that less has been heard from the presidential candidates about the Iraq war in the later stages of the primary campaign than in the earlier ones, simply because there have been fewer video reports of violence in Iraq. Candidates, like voters, emphasize the latest news, not necessarily the most important news.



No wonder negative political ads work. "With text, it is even easy to keep track of differing levels of authority behind different pieces of information," the cultural critic Caleb Crain noted recently in the New Yorker." A comparison of two video reports, on the other hand, is cumbersome. Forced to choose between conflicting stories on television, the viewer falls back on hunches, or on what he believed before he started watching."

—————→ Quoting a person of authority

—————→ Figurative language

As video consumers become progressively more impatient
with the process of acquiring information through written
language, all politicians find themselves under great pressure
to deliver their messages as quickly as possible -- and
quickness today is much quicker than it used to be. Harvard
University's Kiku Adatto found that between 1968 and 1988,
the average sound bite on the news for a presidential
candidate -- featuring the candidate's own voice -- dropped
from 42.3 seconds to 9.8 seconds. By 2000, according to
another Harvard study, the daily candidate bite was down to
just 7.8 seconds.

→ Cause
↓
→ Effect

→ Contrasting the past with the present

→ Quoting a person of authority

→ Numbers/ Statistics

→ Numbers/ Statistics

→ Using a credible source

The shrinking public attention span fostered by video is
closely tied to the second important anti-intellectual force in
American culture: the erosion of general knowledge.

→ Figurative language

People accustomed to hearing their president explain complicated policy choices by snapping "I'm the decider" may find it almost impossible to imagine the pains that Franklin D. Roosevelt took, in the grim months after Pearl Harbor, to explain why U.S. armed forces were suffering one defeat after another in the Pacific. In February 1942, Roosevelt urged

→ Contrasting the past with the present

Americans to spread out a map during his radio "fireside chat" so that they might better understand the geography of battle. In stores throughout the country, maps sold out; about 80 percent of American adults tuned in to hear the president.

→ Numbers/ Statistics

FDR had told his speechwriters that he was certain that if Americans understood the immensity of the distances over which supplies had to travel to the armed forces, "they can take any kind of bad news right on the chin."

This is a portrait not only of a different presidency and president but also of a different country and citizenry, one that lacked access to satellite-enhanced Google maps but was far more receptive to learning and complexity than today's

public. According to a 2006 survey by National Geographic-

→ Using a credible source

Roper, nearly half of Americans between ages 18 and 24 do

not think it necessary to know the location of other countries

in which important news is being made. More than a third

→ Numbers/ Statistics

consider it "not at all important" to know a foreign language,

and only 14 percent consider it "very important."

That leads us to the third and final factor behind the new American dumbness: not lack of knowledge per se but arrogance about that lack of knowledge. The problem is not just the things we do not know (consider the one in five

Numbers/ Statistics

American adults who, according to the National Science Foundation, thinks the sun revolves around the Earth); it's the alarming number of Americans who have smugly concluded that they do not need to know such things in the first place.

Using a credible source

Call this anti-rationalism -- a syndrome that is particularly dangerous to our public institutions and discourse. Not knowing a foreign language or the location of an important country is a manifestation of ignorance; denying that such knowledge matters is pure anti-rationalism.

Figurative language

The toxic brew of anti-rationalism and ignorance hurts discussions of U.S. public policy on topics from health care to taxation.

Cause

Effect

Figurative language

There is no quick cure for this epidemic of arrogant anti-rationalism and anti-intellectualism; rote efforts to raise standardized test scores by stuffing students with specific answers to specific questions on specific tests will not do the job. Moreover, the people who exemplify the problem are usually oblivious to it. ("Hardly anyone believes himself to be

against thought and culture," Hofstadter noted.) It is past time for a serious national discussion about whether, as a nation, we truly value intellect and rationality. If this indeed turns out to be a "change election," the low level of discourse in a country with a mind taught to aim at low objects ought to be the first item on the change agenda.

Quoting a person of authority

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