

# Handout: Considerations for Peer Review

Joshua Bowles

October 6, 2010

## 1 Discursive Context

Keep in mind the structure, force, and general feel (i.e., your personal impression) of the **Argument**, as defined below.

**Definition 1.** ARGUMENT, (Parsons 1996: 5)<sup>1</sup>

An argument is a ‘task’ that employs a *reasoning structure* in a *setting* with a *target*.

1. **Setting**

Set of assumptions about the world; assumed rules, principles, propositions.

2. **Target**

The goal — is the goal actually met?

3. **Reasoning Structure**

A sequence of statements meant to reach a TARGET in a specific SETTING.

## 2 Some questions to keep in mind

1. Is there a clear sense of purpose by the first page?
  - a Do you know what the paper is about?
  - b Can you tell what the topic is and how the author approaches it.
2. Do you get a sense that there is a strategy?

---

<sup>1</sup>Parson, Terrance. 1996. What is an argument? *The Journal of Philosophy* 93:164-185.  
Or you can retrieve a Word document copy from Parsons’ faculty page.

- a Is the strategy consistent throughout?
- 3. Does the author seem knowledgeable by the first page?
  - a Do you get a sense that the author is a credible writer on this topic?

### 3 Ethos, Pathos, Logos

**Definition 2. ETHOS**

A shared ethical stance or commitment. Where the word ETHICAL comes from.

**Definition 3. PATHOS**

Emotional or eliciting a response of strong feeling. This where the words EMPATHY, SYMPATHY, PATHETIC come from.

**Definition 4. LOGOS**

Rational thought, reason, logic. This is where the word LOGIC comes from. It is also used in terms of THE WORD or THE BREATH of God/Spirit—but in the sense that it is assumed that a divine being is the most rational of all.

Rhetorical strategies are built around these three concepts. We use all three in any good argument or analysis, but we can also choose to emphasize one over the other.