Argument and Analysis

Even documents that seem to be very static and factual are presenting an argument for something. One way to evaluate the argument they are creating is the use of Aristotle’s theory of persuasion. Aristotle’s theory of persuasion, also known as appeals, is divided into the three categories of Pathos, Logos, and Ethos. Ethos focuses on the character, credibility, and integrity. From the information provided in the Department of Homeland Security agent profiles, Ethos and Logos arguments/analysis are more prevalent than Pathos arguments/analysis.

Pathos appeals to the audience’s emotions and senses. In the Vault profiles, the only indications of an emotional argument for the agents are found in the photos and sparse personal information given. For example, agent Jean Gourd’s photo expresses a carefree appearance, while agent Travis Atkison portrays a more serious character. We can obtain a visual image of these Agents by the information given on height, weight, gender, ethnicity, and age. However, it is difficult to relate the argument of Pathos to this information because a picture shows some emotion, but does not is not a compelling argument.

While Pathos focuses on emotion, Logos emphasizes the logical and rational facts of an argument. In this argument the main evidence of Logos originates from education and work experience provide on the employees. Although all the profiles contain this information, some contain more compelling facts. For example, Agent Drew McKevitt does not provide as much information about his education and previous employment as does Agent Galen E. Turner. Agent Turner seems to have a depth of knowledge and a wealth of experience that creates a strong argument for his status and position at the DHS.

Despite Logos and Pathos having an important role in the current argument, from evidence given, Ethos will be more dominant concerning this case. Ethos focuses on the audience’s perception of the character, credibility, and integrity of the individual. The Department of Homeland Security Employee Profile’s include information concerning to Ethos, such as their past education and previous employment. One can conclude an employee’s work ethic and character from their accomplishments, therefore assuming that they are a credible source. According to the employee profiles, an instance of the potential for a strong Ethos argument the provided resume of Agent Christian Duncan. Agent Duncan has several impressive degrees from prestigious colleges and has worked two previous jobs that were high statuses in the companies. This shows that his work ethic is strong, and a character trait he reflects is determination in order to obtain such degrees and high power positions.

The analyst profiles do contain all three elements of persuasion, but Ethos and Logos are definitely the more powerful methods being used. In cases involving making rational judgments and picking appropriate personnel this should be expected and encouraged. Some emotional data is helpful but agents with this great responsibility should argue for their credibility, character, and knowledge of their profession.