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Half draft (**Intro, Body 1**, Body 2, Body 3, Conclusion) Everything below is subject to change.

One of the largest factors driving what we decide is rhetoric. Rhetoric is a multi-medium tool that people can use to influence the decisions of another. This is extremely important for generating integrity, responsibility, teamwork, motivation, etc. We see these qualities being used by many different people and for many different reasons. For instance, a president promoting their policy, social media posts to support a cause, or even the news influencing what info you consume. There are many people using such strategy, so what would define a rhetorical superhero? A rhetorical superhero uses many different persuasive strategies, such as ethos logos pathos, aimed at motivating their audience towards taking the initiative for the better. For such case, I believe Michael Stevens to be the perfect rhetorical superhero because of his important role in motivating people of all ages, to become eager to learn more, broaden their horizons, and fulfill their own curiosities. These qualities are the most important driving forces of R&D (Research and Development) that can take seemingly inapplicable concepts and apply them to fields that have real-world benefits on our society. Michael Stevens is a widely popular YouTube science and education channel speaker who created his channel to bridge the gap between silly or mundane topics and profound lessons. Michael Stevens has a bachelor’s degree in both Psychology and English Literature which lead to a path of theater and video production. He began a YouTube channel starting from 2010 and has become of the most widely known inspirational speakers in 2023. His main method of providing knowledge is through his YouTube channel via videos and shorts. Michael’s TED talk is extremely important because it encompasses the drive of his content and the reasons why he creates educational videos. Michael Stevens is a rhetorical superhero through his clever use of ethos, logos, and pathos in his TED Talk “Why Do We Ask Questions?” to persuade his audience to peruse knowledge and not be afraid to seek explanations. In this analysis I will cover how Michael uses ethos through credibility through explanation and background, logos using logic and reason behind the structure of his content, and lastly pathos through the abundant use of jokes and humor to keep the audience engaged.

In Michael Stevens’ TED talk he uses ethos by showing his credibility in his youth, credibility in how he addresses his audience’s values, and credibility in thorough research into each topic. During the beginning of Michael’s talk, he went into some of his own background in his youth. Specifically, this was sharing what he did in high school as a precursor to his career. During this section Michael stated, “Now when I was a teenager, I discovered a competitive speaking program and one of the events was informative speaking … My very first informative speech ever was about ketchup. The history of ketchup, the etymology of the name, its legal status, the physics of its viscosity and how it flowed. It was super nerdy stuff but at my very very first public speaking tournament, I took first place. Hey! Look at that guy.” This statement is using ethos to familiarize the audience with Michael’s experience in informative speaking. The statement shows that back in his youth, he was very passionate in the exact same topic he dwells in today. Michael is effectively using this rhetorical strategy to show his experience in the field and motivation to do it right. A bit later on in the talk, Michael states how he views the audience and alters his delivery methods accordingly, “So I’ve found that one of the best ways to gain attentive listeners is not to be who you think your audience wants you to be but instead to say and make and show things that allow your audience or your students to be who they want to be.” This powerful statement shows the use of ethos through the credibility of open-minded teaching. It shows trust and care for the audience/learners which raises Michael’s credibility as an informative speaker. The statement also shows that Michael is concerned about attentive listeners and that he will go to lengths to fulfill each member of the audience. Shortly after, Michael states his solution to the statement above, “So what do you do — I’m trying to collect the largest audience possible that I can I want to appeal to and attract as many people as possible. So what I do is I camp out with the subject, in this case, Rayleigh scattering. I learn as much about it as I can. What else is it responsible for? Who is it named after? Who did he love? Whatever I can find that could become a great hook to bring in just the right person.” Just like the last statement, this statement solidifies his credibility through hard work to appeal to the largest audience possible. His hard work and dedication to expanding topics generates ethos for a wider group of learners. His thorough research into the topic also shows credibility through trust in teaching the correct information. These three statements demonstrate Michael’s use of ethos to gain trust, credibility, and appeal. He uses these statements to allow the audience to regard what he says as the truth and make the audience comfortable receiving information from an experienced individual. This strategy is effective at giving Michael the ability to reach his audience even with some difficult philosophical concepts, back up his own content on YouTube, and verifies his position as a credible source. This is extremely important for gaining a hold of the audience to regard himself as a credible source of information but also gain the ability to go off on tangents to fuel the curiosity of his audience to peruse knowledge.

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**Outline: Project 2 Rhetorical Superheroes**

**OSIE Method:**

Introduction –

* Definition of Rhetoric: One of the largest factors, outside of our own volition, driving what we decide is rhetoric. Rhetoric is a multi-medium tool that people can use to influence the decisions of another. This is extremely important for generating integrity, responsibility, teamwork, motivation, etc. What would a rhetorical superhero be? A rhetorical superhero uses many different strategies, such as ethos logos pathos, aimed at motivating their audience towards taking the initiative for the better. For such case, I believe Michael Stevens to be the perfect rhetorical superhero because of his important role in motivating people of all ages, to become eager to learn more, broaden their horizons, and fulfill their own curiosities. These qualities are the most important driving forces of R&D (Research and Development) that can take seemingly inapplicable concepts and apply them to fields that have real-world benefits on our society.
* Background for Rhetorical Superhero: Michael Stevens is a widely popular YouTube science and education channel speaker who created his channel to bridge the gap between silly or mundane topics and profound lessons. Michael Stevens has a bachelor’s degree in both Psychology and English Literature which lead to a path of theater and video production. He began a YouTube channel starting from 2010 and has become of the most widely known inspirational speakers in 2023. His main method of providing knowledge is through his YouTube channel via videos and shorts. Michael’s TED talk is extremely important because it encompasses the drive of his content and the reasons why he creates educational videos.  
    
  <https://www.vsauce.com/img/Vsauce1-michael-bio.pdf>
* Thesis Statement: Michael Stevens is a rhetorical superhero through his clever use of ethos, logos, and pathos in his TED Talk “Why Do We Ask Questions?” to persuade his audience to peruse knowledge and not be afraid to seek explanations.
* Preview:
  + Ethos: Credibility through explanation and background.
  + Logos: Use of logic and reason behind the structure of his content.
  + Pathos: Use of humor and jokes to keep the audience engaged.

**Note: Michael Always incorporates a mix of all three rhetorical strategies into all his sentences. These sources are representations of the strongest rhetorical strategy in each. There are obviously some overlaps.**

**Sources may be trimmed down.**

Body 1 – (Use of Ethos)

* Observation: Michael Stevens uses ethos by showing his credibility in his youth, credibility in how he addresses his audience’s values, and credibility in thorough research into each topic.
* Sources:
* “Now when I was a teenager, I discovered a competitive speaking program and one of the events was informative speaking where you literally got to write a speech explaining something to judges and then you were given points and medals if you were good enough. My very first informative speech ever was about ketchup. The history of ketchup, the etymology of the name, its legal status, the physics of its viscosity and how it flowed. It was super nerdy stuff but at my very very first public speaking tournament, I took first place. Hey! Look at that guy.”
* “So I’ve found that one of the best ways to gain attentive listeners is not to be who you think your audience wants you to be but instead to say and make and show things that allow your audience or your students to be who they want to be.”
* “So what do you do — I’m trying to collect the largest audience possible that I can I want to appeal to and attract as many people as possible. So what I do is I camp out with the subject, in this case, Rayleigh scattering. I learn as much about it as I can. What else is it responsible for? Who is it named after? Who did he love? Whatever I can find that could become a great hook to bring in just the right person.”
* Interpretation 1 2 3
* Evaluation Reasons for using, benefits, impact.

Body 2 – (Use of Logos)

* Observation Michael Stevens uses logos through the use of reasoning of going deep into a topic, logic in why we ask questions, and logic in his very fun and unorthodox teaching style to teach some of the most fundamental topics.
* Sources:
* “And I’ve learned two things from this. First of all, people love a good explanation. I mean they hunt them down. Even people who say they hate learning and that they hate books and all that stuff, they love explanations. Second of all, if you look closely enough and you take the time, anything can be interesting to anyone because everything is related in some way to something they care about.”
* “So I started looking more generally into questions. And the more I read about them and their history, the more I realized that questions might be quite unique to humans, apes that have been taught to use sign language can communicate with us. They can answer complex questions. They can convey novel thoughts and they can express their emotions. But an ape who knows sign language has never been observed to ask a question. Soliciting information from an organism belies this assumption that other organisms in some way have access to information that you don’t that they have different unique intentions or desires. It’s often called the theory of mind and it is incredibly difficult to show that animals have such a thing. But of course we intuitively feel that we do.”
* “In the 1950s, Harold Edgerton took a series of amazing pictures of nuclear explosions. This is the detonation, just milliseconds after happening with an exposure time of 1 billionth of a second. You can see the energy of this plasma ball, the energy of the explosion is vaporizing the metal wires holding up the tower, that’s where these glowing spindly legs come from. His work attracted wider and new interest to physical phenomenon simply because he featured something that people couldn’t help but want to look at, a moment you couldn’t witness alone. He famously said the trick to education is to teach in such a way that people only find out they’re learning when it’s too late. Works for me.”
* Interpretation 1 2 3
* Evaluation Reasons for using, benefits, impact.

Body 3 – (Use of Pathos)

* Observation Michael Stevens most known rhetorical strategy pathos and emotion are commonly used here too. His jokes offer great leadups to complex questions, the emotion and feeling that support his love for teaching, and use of emotion to relate to the audience.
* Sources:
* “What is the best kind of cheese to use to catch a bear? Someone knows over here. Obviously the answer is Camembert. Camembert! Camembert!”
* “So some of the hairs here moved down here but other than that, I am the same guy. Seriously, still doing the same thing. To be at that tournament, and to see the expression on someone’s face win, they suddenly understand and are fascinated by something in the same way that you are is a phenomenal feeling.”
* “But we also ask questions because we can, because perhaps uniquely here on earth we know that other people can help. And that’s a great reason to ask more and more questions, to celebrate more and more whys. We all want to be kicked in the discovery. It feels great but we don’t all have a discovery in the same place. Taking the time to find where someone’s discovery is so you can give them a kick there isn’t just about whys, it’s also a very wise thing to do. And as always, thanks for watching.”
* Interpretation 1 2 3
* Evaluation Reasons for using, benefits, impact.

[**https://talkstar-photos.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/1e881af9-77af-4623-9ffd-4db959d8c5c8/MichaelStevens\_2013A-stageshot.jpg**](https://talkstar-photos.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/1e881af9-77af-4623-9ffd-4db959d8c5c8/MichaelStevens_2013A-stageshot.jpg)

**Possible photo: (Not from actual TED talk discussed here, this is from a different TED talk.)**

A person holding a small device

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[**https://i.ytimg.com/vi/u9hauSrihYQ/maxresdefault.jpg**](https://i.ytimg.com/vi/u9hauSrihYQ/maxresdefault.jpg)

**Possible photo: (From actual TED talk “Why Do We Ask Questions?”) Would be cropped.**

A person standing on a stage

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