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Rhetorical Analysis Response

Rhetoric is the art of effective/persuasive speaking or writing, especially the use of figures of speech and other compositional techniques. Articles “Backpacks vs. Briefcases: Steps toward Rhetorical Analysis” by Laura Bolin Carroll and “Teaching Rhetorical Analysis to Promote Transfer of Learning” by Nelson Graff demonstrated that rhetoric could be used in either meaningful or manipulative ways. This depends on whether you are the consumer or producer of the context.

Nelson Graff discussed meta-awareness, or metacognition of one's writing and how it helps an individual write better. He highlights the examination of what people are saying and why they are saying it. Graff's focus is trying to enhance the literacy skills of individuals so that they can apply it to other factors in their life outside of an English class. This way, they can use their English skills universally. Namely in contrasted areas like newspapers, speeches, advertisements, and textbooks. All of these texts have a different style of writing and expression, which is why Graff places emphasis on rhetorical appeals.

Rhetorical appeals are known as ethos, pathos, and logos. All three of these appeals coincide with one another and manifest the art of persuasion. Ethos is credibility/trust. Pathos is a vivid language that creates the audience's emotional identification. Provoking a reaction in the consumer of your context in order for you to make them feel a certain way so that they are used

to think another way. This is assisted by logos, which is the logic behind what you are saying. Logos helps bring everything together and makes the context concrete.

Now, what Carroll discusses is rhetorical analysis. Realizing that certain statements or seeming realities are not the whole pictures. The power of rhetorical analysis allows us to understand or at least contemplate what it is we are being presented and if we want to use this information to make judgments or to believe in something. For instance, Carroll talks about making inferences and assumptions about people and places just with our observations. She even mentions how details assist our character evaluation. This is something to think about because we use our visual receptors for many things, but that does not make it entirely reliable. Then you add the norms of society and it creates this molded point of view on how people are and how things operate.

For a writer, rhetoric is a powerful device. If a writer knows the audience, then they know the specific language necessary in order to convey their message. They know how to be subtle, how to exaggerate, how to be straight to the point, and how to be comical. But this is not taught. This is simply the effects of metacognition and understanding how to use a literary skill in any occurrence necessary. Which makes the writer more adaptive to situations that require them to be more or less verbal. Knowing what to say is key, but knowing how to say it is the goal of rhetorical analysis.