**PETA gets Rhetorical: Understanding Commercial Persuasion through Ethos, Pathos, and Logos**

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**Logistics:**

Prior to coming to class, students read “Ethos, Pathos, Logos” (an attached .pdf, which is an excerpt from Lunsford et al.’s *Everything Is An Argument*).

In class, teacher and students discuss briefly the article, making sure to cover not only the intent behind each appeal but also the different ways one can make each appeal. With the latter, think in terms of type (e.g., using deductive reasoning to make an appeal to logos or using figurative language to make an appeal to pathos) and mode (e.g., using a visual to make an appeal to pathos or using written word to make an appeal to logos).

After have a firm understanding of each appeal, the teacher shows five different PETA videos (commercials) that have the same rhetorical purpose (to persuade one to go vegetarian) but target different audiences. The links for these five videos are as follows:

* [Super Bowl Ad](http://www.petatv.com/tvpopup/video.asp?video=super_bowl_30&Player=qt)
* [WWJD](http://www.petatv.com/tvpopup/video.asp?video=easter_movie&Player=qt)
* [Silverstone](http://www.petatv.com/tvpopup/video.asp?video=alicia_veg&Player=qt)
* [Prepared](http://www.petatv.com/tvpopup/video.asp?video=prepared&Player=qt)
* [Chew on This](http://www.petatv.com/tvpopup/video.asp?video=chew_on_this&Player=qt)

All of these videos employ ethos, pathos, and logos to varying degrees. After watching each video, work as a class to answer the following questions:

* Who is the target audience of this video?
* How, if at all, are the rhetorical appeals (ethos, pathos, and logos) used? With that, what mode(s) are used to create the appeal? (Here, also think in terms of the appeals working in isolation and together; instances of both will be present)
* Which appeal is most overt and central to the video?
* Is this video effective; why or why not?

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**Context:**

I typically use this activity when students are composing multimodal compositions because these videos, for all intents and purposes, are examples of multimodal compositions. Earlier in the semester, I introduce these appeals to the students to consider in terms of writing, which is why I typically hold a discussion prior to showing the videos so we can talk about the ways these appeals manifest themselves in all rhetorical texts.