

# Persuasion

Speech 220

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## A Core Social Dynamic

*"Because there has been implanted in us the power to persuade each other...,not only have we escaped the life of the wild beasts but we have come together and founded cities and made laws and invented arts."*

Isocrates (436-338 BC)



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## A Core Social Dynamic

- Social Persuasion
- Political Persuasion
- Economic Persuasion
- Interpersonal Persuasion
- Intrapersonal Persuasion

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## A Core Social Dynamic

We have the *gift* of decision making

- ☐ Must gather information
- ☐ Must weigh options
- ☐ Must make informed, reasoned decisions
- ☐ "Persuasion is the art of gaining fair and favorable consideration for our points of view."

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## Persuasion and Ethics

### ■ Powerful Persuasion Requires Ethical Behavior

- ☐ Best, latest, most accurate information
- ☐ Arguing for the benefit of the audience
- ☐ Revelation of motivation
- ☐ Aiming for clarity and understanding
- ☐ Using honest, appropriately intentioned motivational appeals

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## Persuasion vs. Information

1. Informative reveals options—Persuasion advance specific choices
2. Informative speakers teach—Persuasive speakers advocate
3. Informative speakers use evidence to enlighten—Persuasive speakers use evidence to prove and justify
4. Persuasive speeches ask for audience commitment
5. Personal credibility and leadership traits are more important in Persuasive
6. Use of appeals to emotion are more appropriate in persuasion
7. Ethical obligation for persuasion is greater than in informative

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## Major Persuasive Functions

- To influence beliefs
  - Belief: what we believe is true/false; exists/does not exist
    - As caffeine consumption increases, the risk of heart attack increases.
    - Dinosaurs were killed off by the results of the impact of an asteroid 12 million years ago.
    - As the number of hand guns increases in a given community, the number of innocent people shot/killed increases.

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## Major Persuasive Functions

- To influence attitudes
  - Attitude: opinions of events/situations based on our beliefs
    - The concealed carry law is beneficial to the citizens of Minnesota
    - The current parking fee charged at Ridgewater College is too high.
    - Diet Coke is the best tasting diet soft drink on the market.

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## Major Persuasive Functions

- To influence action
  - To urge an audience to alter an action
    - To **start** an action
    - To **stop** an action
    - To **substantially increase/decrease** an action
    - To act to **avoid** a potential problem

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## Major Persuasive Functions

- To influence action
  - You should volunteer at least 15 hours per month in the community. *(start an action)*
  - You should not drink alcohol. *(stop an action)*
  - You should wear a seatbelt anytime you are riding in a moving vehicle. *(substantially alter an action)*
  - You should take out as little in student loans as possible to avoid large debts upon graduation. *(act to avoid future problems)*

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## Major Persuasive Functions

- To Answer Opposing Viewpoints
  - To present arguments counter to those presented by another
    - Debate: the reasoned, polite, respectful presentation of arguments for and against a specific issue
    - Deliberation: the consideration of all sides of an issue prior to decision making

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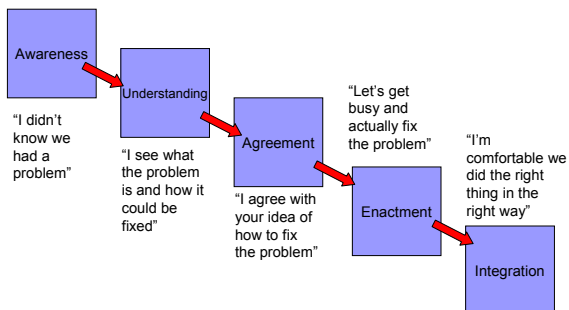
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## Process of Persuasion



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## Process of Persuasion

### The Problem

- Identification: what the precise problem is
- Harms: who is being hurt in what way
- Significance: the degree of harm

### The Solution

- The Plan: the course of action advocated
- Workability: realistic, feasible, "easy"
- Solvency: it will fix the problem identified

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## Process of Persuasion

3. Agreement: audience accepts recommendation *and* knows why they accept it
4. Enactment: Getting audience to actually act on their agreement
5. Integration: New action/attitude becomes part of their overall mindset

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## Three Modes of Proof

□ **Ethos**: speaker credibility, believability, trustworthiness

□ **Pathos**: appeals to emotions and motivational factors

□ **Logos**: use of good reasoning and rational thinking



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## Ethos

The level of believability, trustworthiness, and credibility *assigned the speaker by the audience.*

Serves as a *Gatekeeper* for the audience

*Perceived Competence/Confidence*  
*Perceived Knowledge/Intelligence*  
*Perceived Motivation*  
*Perceived Power*

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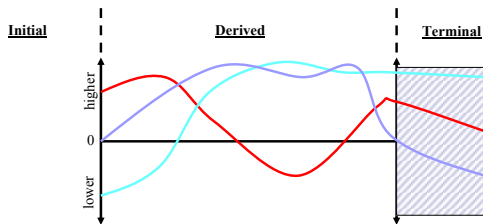
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## Stages of Ethos



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## Pathos

The use of emotional appeals to move an audience to change

- Combined Appeal**
1. Build a negative emotion
  2. Contrast that with a positive emotion
  3. Offer a course of action which get rid of the negative emotion and continue the positive emotion

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## Building Emotional Appeals

- Colorful, emotive language
- Examples/Stories
- Hypothetical Situations
- Visual Images
- **CAUTION: Underlying rational reasons should be developed concurrently**

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## Logos

- Appeals to good reasons
- Argument
  - The presentation of a *claim* with supporting *data*

**CLAIM:** You should donate blood.

**DATA:** We all have a social responsibility to help our fellow citizens in need.

**DATA:** Over 20,000 people in Minnesota alone need blood each year.

**DATA:** You will feel good about doing something for your fellow citizens.

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## Argument Types

### Reasoning from Principle (Deductive)

- Assert a general principle, then apply a specific situation to that principle

**CLAIM:** Minnesota should increase state funding for higher education  
**CLAIM:** You should donate to charity.

**DATA:** Those of us who are more fortunate should help those in need more satisfactory life, higher lifetime earnings, and more contributions back to society.

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## Argument Types

### Reasoning from Observation (Inductive)

- Draws conclusion from the “addition” of several related specific items

**CLAIM:** Ridgewater College is the best college to attend.

**DATA #1:** Ridgewater College's tuition is very reasonable.

**DATA #2:** Ridgewater College's faculty are highly knowledgeable.

**DATA #3:** Ridgewater College's faculty and staff are very student friendly.

**DATA #4:** Willmar is a good town in which to live.

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## Argument Types

### Reasoning from Analogy

- Draws conclusion from the comparison of two items in which the significant similarities outweigh the significant differences.

**CLAIM:** Willmar should have a public water park.

**DATA:** Montevideo has a public water park.

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## In General...

- Make sure data and claim are strongly connected
- Make sure to cite sources to enhance credibility
- Make sure to lay out arguments clearly

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