

Brooke Gaumer

Funderburk

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### Journal #5: Rhetorical Appeals Evaluation

#### Part I: Text Specific

Throughout the three texts we discussed in class, “Is Google Making Us Stupid?” by Nicholas Carr, “Reading in a Digital Age” by Naomi S. Baron, and “A Declaration of the Independence of Cyberspace” by John Perry Barlow, the authors rely on rhetorical appeals to reach their target audiences. Carr relies heaviest on ethos. He establishes self-credibility by presenting himself as a witness, having the article published in The Atlantic, and quoting/referencing critics, sociologists, scientists, etc. This assists him in reaching his intended audience of educated readers interested in technology and general readers of The Atlantic by using a balanced and cautious tone; acknowledging both the benefits and disadvantages of the internet. Baron focuses on logos, showing illustrations of graphs, and bringing in statistics/data. This helps her reach her target audience of students and teachers because the educational community tends to take into account and trust things that are backed up by facts. Barlow, the only author who is optimistic for the rise of technology, uses pathos to explain why cyberspace should rid itself completely of government control online. He uses emotional appeals to defend the internet and explain how it should be its own entity. These emotional strategies are effective for reaching the target audience of internet users but also limit reaching the government because much like Naomi Baron’s passage reaching educators, the government would be more concerned of issues backed up by facts, statistics, and data.

In “Is Google Making Us Stupid,” Carr uses logic to argue that technology reshapes our brains and diminishes our ability to concentrate and think deeply. He backs up his claims with evidence from neuroscientists, historical studies, and personal observations which appeal to the trust among him and the reader. Carr’s analytical and reflective tone and logical reasoning help build his credibility. Not only this, but the worry he expresses elicits worry from the audience. In contrast, overall, John Barlow’s piece is driven by pathos and ethos rather than logical appeals. He writes in a creative, passionate, and revolutionary style expressing the need for freedom from online government control. He evokes excitement and optimism for the future of technology, while Carr focuses mainly on warning the readers about the dangers of it. Naomi Baron fits between these two pieces as she uses research-based logic showing studies of reading comprehension results when taking tests online versus print. She does not glorify internet independence but recognizes the downsides of reading electronically.

Each author responds to the current digital state of the world from the time the texts were written- Carr in 2008, Baron in 2020, Barlow in 1996. In different ways, they all hit the nail in the head of the underlying issue of technology and society. Barlow wrote his passage as the internet started off. This is why he had such an optimistic tone; he was trying to predict a positive future of technology without government control. Carr’s article was written after technology and the internet started, but we did not have nearly as much access to such forms of electronics. Baron writes her piece in 2020 as technology is just starting to be incorporated into school systems and education. She explains her concerns for society if we continue to learn digitally. If they were writing to today's generation of technology users, I think Baron and Carr would definitely reference the dangers of things like AI, using phones during class, and playing games/ the distractions we have while learning. I believe Barlow would be praising the

developments, advancements, and tools that have been created by mankind like phones/other handheld devices and artificial intelligence.

## Part II: Outside Application

Advertisements by the organization American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) use the rhetorical appeal pathos. The commercials show extremely hurt, sad, and injured animals to persuade viewers to donate to their organization and adopt these animals. These clips make the audience extremely empathetic and appeal to their emotions.

In today's world, the audience is truly the main factor when determining which rhetorical appeal is most effective. However, especially with the influence of social media and how quickly people's opinions can be changed, I think pathos is currently the most persuasive. Barlow was able to appeal to a much broader audience than Carr and Baron because he wasn't as focused on statistics, data, and gaining credibility, but instead was able to grab the attention of a vast majority of people by persuading them to want digital independence.