

What Rhetoric Can Teach Us About Donald Trump

Donald Trump's rhetoric has been the subject of much debate and analysis. Some have praised it for its effectiveness, while others have condemned it for its divisiveness and dishonesty. But what can rhetoric, as a discipline, teach us about Trump and his presidency?



Faking the News: What Rhetoric Can Teach Us About Donald J. Trump (Societas) by Ryan Skinnell

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Rhetoric is the art of persuasion. It is the ability to use language to influence the thoughts and actions of others. Rhetoricians have studied the art of persuasion for centuries, and they have developed a number of theories and principles that can be used to analyze and understand persuasive discourse.

One of the most important things that rhetoric can teach us about Trump is the importance of audience. Trump is a master of audience adaptation. He knows how to tailor his message to the specific audience he is trying to

reach. For example, when he speaks to his supporters, he often uses simple language and appeals to their emotions. When he speaks to world leaders, he often uses more formal language and appeals to their sense of reason.

Another important thing that rhetoric can teach us about Trump is the importance of emotion. Trump is a very emotional speaker. He often uses strong language and vivid imagery to create a sense of urgency and excitement. This can be very effective in motivating his supporters, but it can also be off-putting to those who are not already on his side.

Finally, rhetoric can teach us about the importance of repetition. Trump is a master of repetition. He often repeats the same points over and over again, even when they are not supported by evidence. This can be very effective in driving his message home, but it can also be very annoying to those who disagree with him.

The study of rhetoric can provide us with a number of insights into Donald Trump and his presidency. By understanding the principles of persuasion, we can better understand how Trump is able to influence the thoughts and actions of others. We can also better understand the strengths and weaknesses of his rhetoric, and this can help us to make more informed decisions about whether or not to support him.

Classical Theories of Rhetoric

The classical theories of rhetoric were developed by the ancient Greeks and Romans. These theories provide a foundation for understanding the art of persuasion. The three main classical theories of rhetoric are:

- **The Aristotelian model:** This model emphasizes the importance of logos, pathos, and ethos. Logos refers to the logical arguments that are used to persuade an audience. Pathos refers to the emotional appeals that are used to persuade an audience. Ethos refers to the credibility of the speaker.
- **The Ciceronian model:** This model emphasizes the importance of style, arrangement, and delivery. Style refers to the way that a speech is written or spoken. Arrangement refers to the way that a speech is organized. Delivery refers to the way that a speech is presented.
- **The Quintillian model:** This model emphasizes the importance of invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery. Invention refers to the process of coming up with ideas for a speech. Arrangement refers to the way that a speech is organized. Style refers to the way that a speech is written or spoken. Memory refers to the ability to remember a speech. Delivery refers to the way that a speech is presented.

These three classical theories of rhetoric provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the art of persuasion. They can be used to analyze and understand any type of persuasive discourse, including the rhetoric of Donald Trump.

Contemporary Theories of Rhetoric

In addition to the classical theories of rhetoric, there are also a number of contemporary theories of rhetoric. These theories have been developed in the past century or so, and they provide new insights into the art of persuasion. Some of the most important contemporary theories of rhetoric include:

- **The Toulmin model:** This model emphasizes the importance of claims, data, and warrants. Claims are the statements that a speaker makes. Data is the evidence that is used to support a claim. Warrants are the reasons why the data supports the claim.
- **The Perelman-Olbrechts-Tyteca model:** This model emphasizes the importance of argumentation. Argumentation is the process of presenting reasons for and against a position. The Perelman-Olbrechts-Tyteca model identifies a number of different types of arguments, including logical arguments, emotional appeals, and ethical appeals.
- **The van Eemeren-Grootendorst model:** This model emphasizes the importance of critical thinking. Critical thinking is the ability to evaluate arguments and make judgments about their validity. The van Eemeren-Grootendorst model provides a framework for analyzing and evaluating arguments.

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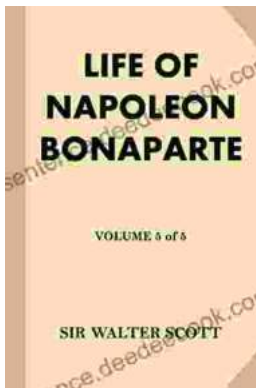
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