21W.747 Class 2

14 September 2009

Figures removed due to copyright restrictions (from several slides).
Agenda

• Historical Background of Classical Rhetoric
• Examples of Different Rhetorical Stances in Modern Politics
• Introduction to Rhetorical Figures and Topics
• Republican Response to Obama’s Speech on Health Care
• Congressman Joe Williams’ Video Explaining His Outburst
• Class Exercise
Class Exercise

1. Form groups of three
2. Read each other’s postings
3. For each posting note:
   • What was persuasive
   • How could the person been more persuasive
   • Missing details that would make the narrative more vivid.
Historical Background of Classical Rhetoric
Western Rhetoric Began in Greece

- Literacy

- Democracy
Greeks Adopt the Phoenician (Semetic Alphabet) ~700 BCE
Rise of Democracy in Athens

- Mycenaean & Homeric Ages
- Archons & Oligarchies
- Dracon & Solon
Solon Establishes Courts & Trial by Jury

- 501 to 2000 citizens
- Several courts
  - Areopagus
  - Heliaea
The Persian Wars

The Greek World during the Persian Wars (500-479 BC)
- Ionian revolt
- Main battle
- Greek opponents of Persia
- Greek neutral states
- Persian empire
- Persian vassal states
- Ionian rebels (498 BC)
- Mardonius (492 BC)
- Artaphernes/Datis (490 BC)
- Xerxes/Mardonius (480 BC)

Courtesy of wikimedia.org
Persian Wars

- Marathon 490 BCE
- Thermopolae 480 BCE
- Salamis 480 BCE
- Plataea 479 BCE
The Age of Pericles
461 BCE – 429 BCE

• Athenian Empire
• Flowering of literature and arts
• Pure democracy
  – Pericles reelected every year
  – Subsidy so all citizens could serve on courts and the assembly
  – Any citizen could propose new laws
  – Complete freedom of speech
But was Athens really a Democracy?

- Male Citizens, 60,000 (10%)
- Athenian Women, 60,000 (10%)
- Slaves & Metics, 360,000 (60%)
- Children, 120,000 (20%)
The Athenian Empire
The Peloponnesian War

Courtesy of wikimedia.org
The Decline of Athens

- 412 BCE Mass revolt of Athenian “allies”
- 405 BCE Sparta destroys Athenian Navy
- 404 BCE Surrender of Athens
  - The 30 tyrants
- 403 BCE Restoration of Athenian Democracy
- 399 BCE Trial & Death of Socrates
And the Rise of Rhetoric

• Each person spoke for themselves in courts and assemblies.
  – There were no advocates
• Writing allowed the profession of *logographer*, speech writers
• Professional coaches
• Teachers of systems of persuasion
The Case of Corax & Tisias

- Corax and Tisias are reputedly the inventors of the art of rhetoric.

- Facts of the case
  - Tisias contracts to pay Corax for instruction in rhetoric on the condition that he wins his first lawsuit.
  - Corax instructs Tisias in rhetoric.
  - Tisias refuses to pay.
Corax sues Tisias in court for payment.

- Tisias's argument
  - If I win, I do not need to pay.
  - If I lose, I should not have to pay. For if I lose, it proves that Corax's instruction is worthless.

- Corax's argument
  - If I win, Tisias must pay.
  - If I lose, Tisias should have to pay. For if I lose, it proves that I have taught Tisias well.
What the case of Corax and Tisias tells us about issues in rhetorical theory

• Language is ambiguous.

• Knowledge is constructed by human beings.

• There are at least two sides in every case—often more.

• Persuasion does not deal in certainties but rather probabilities.

• The need for action obviates the need for absolute truth.
The Sophists

- From Greek *sophos* “wise” & *sophia* “wisdom”
- Philosophers who deal with many topics besides rhetoric
- Major theme was *relativism*
Two Major Concepts

Paidea

Learning

Education
**Nomos / Physis Controversy**

- **Protagoras**
  - “Man is the measure of all things”
  - Teach *areté*

- **Gorgias**
  - Nothing exists
  - If anything exists it cannot be thought of or known by man
  - Even if can be known, it cannot be communicated to another
  - Teach skill in persuasion; there is no *areté*
Rhetorical Timeline

- 476 BCE Corax & Tisias
- Sophists
  - Gorgias 485-380
  - Protagoras 485-410
  - Isocrates 427-338
- Socrates 469-399
- Plato 427-347
- Aristotle 384-322
- Demosthenes 384-336
The Rhetorical Scene

Subject

Rhetor

Audience
The Rhetorical Triangle
Three Kinds of Artistic Proof

Logos

Ethos  Pathos
Three Rhetorical Situations

• Forensic
  – The law court

• Deliberative
  – The assembly or senate

• Epideictic
  – Ceremonial
  – Nominating speeches
  – Eulogies
  – Modern roasts
  – Award ceremonies
The General Type of Situation and the Particulars Combine to form *kairos*

- Place
- Time
- Opportunity
- Setting
# The Rhetorical Situation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kind of Discourse</th>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Ends (<em>teloi</em>)</th>
<th>Means (<em>topoi</em>)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forensic</td>
<td>Decision-makers</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>The just and the unjust</td>
<td>Accusation and defense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliberative</td>
<td>Decision-makers</td>
<td>Future</td>
<td>The expedient and inexpedient</td>
<td>Persuasion and dissuasion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epideictic</td>
<td>Spectators</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>The noble and shameful</td>
<td>Praise and blame</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rhetorical Building Blocks

• Topoi
  – Universal
  – Particular

• Figures of Thought

• Figures of Style
The *Departments* of Rhetoric

- Invention
- Arrangement
- Style
- Memory
- Delivery
Invention

• Finding ways to persuade
Arrangement

• Putting together the structure of a coherent argument
Style

- Presenting the argument to stir the emotions
Memory

• Speaking without having to memorize a speech word-for-word
Delivery

• Making effective use of voice and gesture
Different Rhetorical Stances
As you view the speeches

• What is the speaker trying to accomplish?

• What is his attitude toward the audience?

• What is his attitude toward his opponents?

• How does the speaker try to convince the audience?

• Do you think he was/is/will be successful?
Carter Crisis of Confidence Speech
Obama’s Speech on Stimulus Package – Feb. 7 2009
Rhetorical Figures

• Obama uses the Figure of Thought: *Dilemma*

• Does Carter formulate a *Dilemma*?
Another Rhetorical Strategy

- *Licentia*
  - Frankness of speech

- What is the effect of Obama’s confession in this recent interview?
For Wednesday

• Read Book I, Chapters 1-3 of Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*

• Use the reading guide and study questions on the web site

• Watch Nixon’s *Checker’s Speech*. Why was the speech successful?
In-Class Exercise

• Persuasion papers
  – Questions
    • Did the writer give sufficient detail and background?
    • What was the goal of the persuasion?
    • What worked?
    • What, if anything, did not work?
    • How could the argument been more persuasive?
  – Report Out: Common characteristics of successful persuasion
  – Participants:
    • V Barrera, N Monroe, Lauren Chai, Noah Caplan
In Class Exercise

• Read each others papers in the context of the following questions:

1. What was President Obama’s purpose in giving the speech?
2. Who were the audiences for the speech?
3. What parts of the speech were effective to each audience?
4. What do you think were the most effective parts of the speech overall?
5. What parts were the least effective?

• Discuss each point and try to reach a consensus to report out
Groups

• Group A
  – G Downs, J Boortz, R McIntyre, I Luccero

• Group B
  – X Jin, S H-J Li, D Beauboef