

Sample essay on rhetorical analysis of the ku klux klan website

[Technology](#), [Internet](#)



For this Rhetorical Analysis the website of the organization called the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) is chosen. The reason behind this choice is that the group has already attracted the interest of thousands of Americans, both laypeople and experts in the field of sociology. The group has been labeled or described by unpleasant adjectives, such as extremist, racist, even evil. Nevertheless, this group had shown fluctuating growth rate in terms of number of members since the 1920s up to the present. The membership of the group have reached more than 5, 0000, 000 in the 1920s and then plunged down to more than 6, 000 at present. One of the ways this organization recruits is through the internet. It is an accepted knowledge, that persuasion is dependent the affectivity of the rhetorical techniques used by the recruiter. The website, since its main function is for recruitment, would have to be persuasive, therefore, to entice probable recruits to join the Klan. This makes the website of KKK an interesting subject for this rhetorical analysis.

The website author is anonymous, meaning, it is concealed. But it is obvious that the website creator is a clan member due to two reasons. The author is advocating membership to the clan and the clan will not allow such work to be done by just anyone – it has to be a member of the KKK. Such identity of the website author would mean that its content would be extremely bias, leaning towards supporting the clan. In other words, the author will have the aim of justifying and elevating the clan to the highest degree of recognition possible. The author's identity, clearly, affects the text he or she has incorporated in the website.

As a recruitment website, the author's main aim is to give an overview of the Ku Klux Klan organization. In other words, the author is trying to convince

people about the “ good” cause of the clan, so that when it is read by a site visitor, he or she would be enticed by the cause and join the clan. This aim is pronounced in the slogan placed at the very center of the receiving page. The slogan says, “ Out of the Storms of Old A NEW BEGINNING: THE ROYAL WHITE KNIGHTS OF THE KU KLUX KLAN” and below this slogan is a phone number where the possible recruit could dial to inquire more of the process to membership. Note that based from the content of the website, its intended audience are the people of the white race - meaning people of white skin, the Europeans and the Americans - both consenting and objecting white people on the issue of immigration. The content of the website is also to put oppositions of the KKK in a bad light. That is, to make the KKK oppositions look like gossip mongrels that resort to character assassination and distribution of irrational, untruthful, and irreligious information to the public. This aim is manifested through the posting of an anti-KKK article at the very beginning of the website’s main body and its heading in red font.

What is most interesting about the website is the authors mastery of rhetorical appeals. The slogan itself is already making a strong ethos and pathos statement. The phrase, “ From the Storms of Old,” is pathos statement which has a certain archaic touch to it. It somehow wants to make the reader think of old times in an emotional way, as conveyed by the word “ storms.” What the phrase could mean is to think of the times when all other colored race in the United States lay subdued to the white Americans and the times of their liberation - the brink of the American civil war. This particular phrase is appealing, therefore, for the support of the Americans

who upheld white supremacy over other colored race – especially those who advocated slavery. The phrase is also somewhat trying to invoke the feeling of losing this supremacy, especially when the adjunct phrase followed, “ A NEW BEGINNING.” The entire phrase is, therefore, invoking feelings of loss and hope to revive what was lost. Note that the change in font size from sentence case to all caps in the “ A NEW BEGINNING” also instigates strong feelings of hope. This pathos phrases are also ethos phrases when the background graphics is considered. In the background are two images - an image of a white cross with a white dove and a knight in white robes. These three symbols that are put together in one graphical image are symbols that are used in many religions to imply purity, justice, chivalry, goodness, and other related terms. The author is therefore implying that he and the rest of the organization which created the website as well as the ideas found therein are highly moral – they are like the moral crusaders of ancient times. Hence, when this images are considered with the combined phrases, “ From the storms of old a new beginning,” a strong ethos statement is made. These people – the author and the members of the Ku Klux Klan – are advocates of a strict moral and religious cause. It should also be noted that the quality of graphics in the website seem to be short of budget. The images have very low resolution and the header is almost unreadable due to pixel problems. Nevertheless, it can be inferred that such was intentional as such strategy could give the image of being poor or even an underdog. Note that such image goes with the feeling of “ loss” as implicated in the first phrase discussed. Everybody loves the underdog, and the author uses this image to attract recruits. A simultaneous appeal to both pathos and logos also spreads

across the entire text, especially with the use of biblical verses and feeling words, instead of euphemistic words or neutral words. An example of the latter style is manifested in this phrase, “ dispel some of the lies told about us” through the use of the words dispel rather than disprove and lies rather than misinformation. These two words bring about feelings of indignation towards the oppositions of the KKK rather than induce a rational way of thinking from the reader. The logos appeals are very few in the text provided in the website, as there is really very little to be logically argued when it comes to the KKK cause. But the logical argument that the author is stating is that the white race have accomplished great things that unsurpassed by no one from the other races. It is these accomplishments which separate the white race in a pedestal of greatness making them superior over all other races. The author notes, “ Our great race has created all which is great in the world today.” Nevertheless, it should be noted that this is also pathos appeal as it instigate the feelings of pride and superiority among the white readers. Another worth analyzing in this website is its Kairos. Accordingly, the topic that is largely dealt by the author is immigration. This topic is highly relevant at present in the US. Note that the US is currently trying to shove-off the effects of the world recession. It still has a high unemployment rate. Immigration is making this issue in unemployment worse as immigrants are competing with the job offers by the majority of the companies. The result is that the white Americans have very few jobs to apply to. No time and place could be more suitable to discuss such topic and offer the KKK cause than the present and the US. The time and place maximizes the rhetorical appeal of pathos that the reader could hardly think rationally. This is the reason of

the imbalance between the three rhetorical appeals in the website. The author clearly understands the sentiments and problems of the times and carefully and craftily suggests a solution for them – to join the Ku Klux Klan. In conclusion, the author of the website has exhibited excellent mastery of using rhetorical analysis for achieving the cause and aims of the website which he or she created. No matter how twisted or evil that cause of the KKK may be – as it is declared by the US government as a hate organization – the author could easily instigate feelings of patriotism, loss, hope, and perhaps hatred from the reader. The author has masterfully combined graphics font styles and rhetorical appeals to make the KKK's recruitment highly possible. From an entirely unbiased perspective, the author of the KKK website could receive a verdict of 5/5 score when it comes to writing for persuasion.

Work Cited:

Ku Klux Klan. Royal White Nights of the Ku Klux Klan. 2014. Web. 23 October 2014. .