

Dr. martin luther king juniors use of ethos and pathos in his "i have a dream" sp...

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



On August 28, 1963, people around the nation tuned into hear several civil rights speeches going on in Washington. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was one of those civil rights speakers, and that day he gave his famous “ I have a dream” speech. In Dr.

Martin Luther King Juniors speech, he spoke about unifying the nation, to create a place where Americans “ will not be judged by the color of your skin but by the content of your character. ”(2) He shocked the nation into actions advising that they’re will be a “ rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual. (1)Thankfully, many people in America were changed, and wanted to make a difference after hearing the speech.

Through appeals to pathos, “ a strategy in which a writer tries to generate specific emotions in an audience, to dispose it to accept a claim;” (1042) and appeals to ethos, which is “ the self image a writer creates to define a relationship,” (1042) Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was able to use his passion and character to help open American’s minds, and motivate them to make a nonviolent change towards equality. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as a well known civil rights leader, a well educated African American doctor, preacher, and an articulate speaker. In arguments, “ most writers try to establish an ethos that suggests authority and credibility. ”(1042) Dr.

Martin Luther King Jr. had already established credibility and shared values and did “ not have to make an open claim to authority,” (59) as our text indicated. This allowed him to have many avenues with which to start his argument without the people having to check his credentials on the subjects he would be speaking about. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. starts off in his speech

with an ethos appeal to his audience by speaking about the promises America has made to the black community in the Emancipation Proclamation.

“ Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. ”(1) He goes on to say “ But one hundred years later, the Negro still is not free. ”(1) As Americans we value upholding our laws, and they should be respected and not neglected.

He is using character appeals to “ establish credibility by connecting your own beliefs to core principles that are well established and widely respected. ”(60)In the speech Martin Luther King Jr. compares the US government’s allowance of segregation to a bank that won’t pay up. “ It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. ”(1) He then says “ we refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great faults of opportunity of this nation. ” (1) Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

s trying to instill in the African American community a sense of value for the promissory note. That they should not give up hope on America’s character, and that one day they will have the same rights as all other Americans. Dr.

Martin Luther King Jr. was an African American; and felt the same inequality as every other African American. He was able to relate to the “ unspeakable horrors of police brutality” (1) that had been part of segregation. He also states that “ We cannot be satisfied as long as the Negro’s basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one.

" (1) Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. summarizes how society was treating African Americans. It allowed people to realize on a larger scale how wrong it was and how much it needed to change.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. , wanted America to imagine and feel the suffering the black community was facing and change it. Dr.

Martin Luther King Jr. , used many pathos appeals in his speech to express how he felt towards the civil rights movement. This is much more apparent when you listen to the speech then when you read it.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. spoke as if he were giving a sermon. Martin Luther King Jr. sed quotes from familiar places, an example being the bible when he quotes Isaiah, saying " I have a dream that every valley shall be exalted.

"(2) Part of which he repeats eight times. Or the use of songs America was familiar with such as " Let freedom ring" from the song my country ' tis of thee, which he repeats five times. Martin Luther King Jr. used repetition, passion, long pauses, gesturing, and occasionally throwing his voice to make an emotional impact on America. Martin Luther King Jr. , used these to sustain his argument and to connect to the people through common heritage. The civil rights movement ended up being very successful. It changed more than Dr.

Martin Luther King Jr. could have imagined. Dr.

Martin Luther King Jr. used his intense passion, and strong intellectual character, to get his message across that America needed to end

segregation and inequality. America will remember and quote his speech for generations to come. He opened our eyes and preached to our souls.

He made Americans believe that we are all brothers and sisters, we are all equal, and there is no reason why we shouldn't all be treated as such.