

# Rhetoric

*Henrik Juel*

To all the bright and intelligent students  
gathered here today in this workshop  
- *my favorite students*

# How we use the word “rhetoric”

- “The politician had nothing to offer but rhetoric” (pejorative sense: misleading or empty words)
- “In the court room lawyers practice their rhetoric (or: discourse)” (a special use of language)
- “She is studying rhetoric in Copenhagen” (an academic subject)



# What makes a good speech a good speech?

*"Communication is not about what is being said, but about **what is being heard**" (Jody Shaw)*

*"...and what is being heard depends on:  
who says it,  
in what way,  
when and where,  
and to whom?" (Henrik Juel)*

# How to define “Rhetoric”?

- How would you define it?
- Some famous or standard definitions?
- Is there a “correct” definition?



# Some definitions of rhetoric:

- *Aristotle*: Rhetoric may be defined as the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion." W. Rhys Roberts
- *Aristotle*: Rhetoric then may be defined as the faculty of discovering the possible means of persuasion in reference to any subject whatever. J H. Freese
- *Quintillian*: Rhetoric is the art of speaking well.
- *John Locke*: [Rhetoric,] that powerful instrument of error and deceit.
- *I. A. Richards*: Rhetoric is the study of misunderstandings and their remedies.
- *Andrea Lunsford*: Rhetoric is the art, practice, and study of human communication.

My *positive* suggestion:

Rhetoric is the art and study of speaking well (with clarity and beauty) – and thus it is also the art and study of feeling and thinking well (with clarity and beauty).



# My *critical* suggestions:

- “Where there is power, there is rhetoric”  
(Jonas Gabrielsen & Sine Carlsen, in a taxi cab in Rome, October 2016)
- “Power seeks to be effectively present, to be persuasively manifest in all corners of the current culture and media, also visually. Colosseum was the promotion and social media of Nero” (Henrik Juel, also in Rome, 2017)

# 3 types of speeches (classic)

- The judicial (forensic): *Who committed the crime? "Qui bono?"* **The past** (focus on causes and responsibility)
- The epideictic (ceremonious, festive): *Dear aunt Oda, we are gathered here today...* **The present** (focus on common values, praise)
- The deliberative (political, considering): *What are we going to do?* **The future** (focus on best plans and possible actions)



# 3 kinds of persuasive appeal:

- Ethos (the speaker): to **please** (delectare) and win over [by the personality and status of the speaker]
- Logos (the subject matter): to **instruct** (docere) and to prove [by information, examples, common sense, reason]
- Pathos (emotions): to catch and to **move** (movere) and motivate [by involving and engaging the audience to see and feel themselves and wanting to act]

# The 3 types of appeal – again

( Henrik's interpretation of Aristotle )

## The topic

Logos (subject matter,  
the nature of the case  
and the facts)

## The speaker

Ethos  
(character,  
trustworthiness)



Fronesis (knowledge)

Areté (virtue)

Eunoia (good will)

## The audience

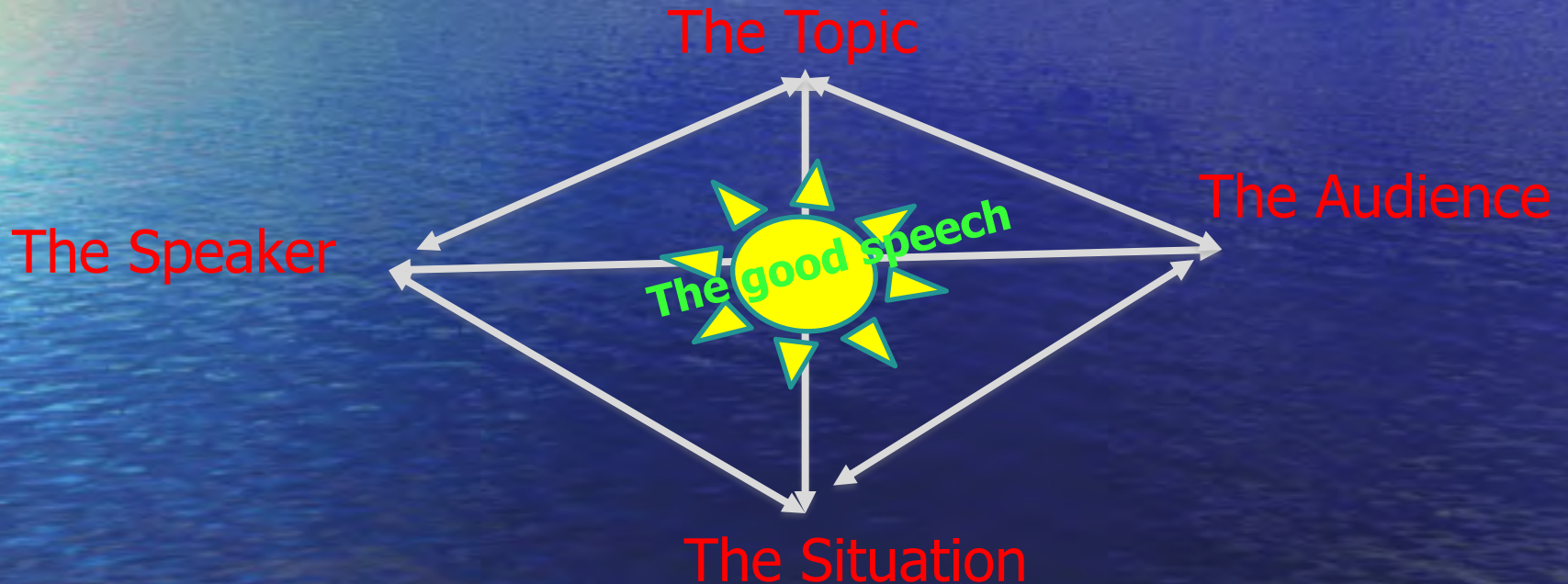
Pathos  
(involvement,  
emotion, feeling)



Cicero "...quid aptum sit..."

- what is the most suitable or accomodating way of speaking?

Consider these correlations when planning/analysing a speech:



# 5 phases in the process of making a speech

(traditional order)

- Inventio – idea, inventing
- Dispositio – order, structuring
- Elocutio – styling, beautifying
- Memoria - memorizing
- Actio – delivering, performing



# Standard division of a speech

- Intro: *Nice to see you...*

*I shall first talk about ... and then.... and at the end....*

- Body:

Story: *The situation is...*

Argument:

*Positive: 1) I argue that because .... and because  
and so it follows that...*

*(1,1) Some specific example or story)*

*2) I further argue that --- and therefore bla. bla...*

*Counter argument: My opponets wrongly claim...*

- Conclusion:

– *So my point is.....*

*(thank you)*

# Again: The different parts of a standard speech (dispositio):

- Exordium **intro** (perhaps with *captatio benevolentiae* – pleasing the audience)
  - Partitio (overview, the parts of the speech)
- Corpus **body**
  - narratio (diegesis) – telling the story/situation
  - argumentatio
    - Probatio, confirmatio (pistis)
      - 1)
      - 2)
      - 3)
    - Refutatio **rebuttal**
- Peroratio (epilogos) **outro**



# Other ways of keeping an overview of your speech (without writing - which often distracts)

- Beginning – middle - end
- The fish
- Your five fingers
- Make drawings of the main points
- Plan where to stand and walk, and the main gestures to each part of your speech
- “Place” main points in a house or on a route you know by heart

# A bit about style and tropes

- 3 step rocket: *Yesterday..., today..., but tomorrow...*
- Rhythm, alliteration, lyrical language:
  - *In Spain the rain falls mainly on the plains*
- Choice of words, emphasis:
  - *She is boring/She is not cracking silly jokes*
- Comparison:
  - *Your lips are like a rose*
- Metaphor:
  - *Her new job makes her grow and blossom*
- Methonym
  - *I would like you to be the mother of my children*
- Allegori
  - *I am the gardener taking good care of the precious rose in my garden, I shield it from the wind and I fertilize its soil. I may also have to crop it a bit and take care that it does not grow wild. Certainly I do not want it to grow or show its flowers in any neighbor's garden*



# A few informal fallacies (that might however be effective)

- Argumentum ad baculum (threat, violence)
- Argumentum ad misericordiam (have pity on me)
- Argumentum ad populum (most people believe)
- Argumentum ad ignorantiam (we don't know, so...)
- Argumentum ad verecundiam (good old)
- Argumentum ad hominem (go for the person)
- Argumentum ad consequentiam (consequence)
- Circulus vitiosus (bad circle)
- Petitio principii ("begging the question")
- Non sequitur (does not follow)

# Dirty tricks

- Impute (misrepresent your opponent)
- Red herring (introduce stinking case)
- Bad company (bad guys also claim that)
- Smoke screen (talk a lot to hide truth)
- Boost detail (in your favour, forget the rest)
- Open door (argue for what we all agree on)
- Gallery (cater for the lowest taste)
- Old saying (seems to add credibility)
- Bogey (knock down a scare crow)
- Change subject (to where you are stronger)



# Plan a short speech: "What we need today"

- **Intro:** *Hello – Happy to be here - What we need today is.....*

- **Body:**

Story: *The situation is... and this makes me feel ...*

Argument:

Positive: 1) *So I argue that what we need today is ...  
because .... and*

2) *And I argue that ...because...*

Exampel: *Look at how... /Imagine that ...  
and that is why today we need...*

Counter argument: *Others might say..., but that is  
wrong, because...*

- **Conclusion:**

*So my point is: what we need today is.....*

*Thank you!*

Plan an online speech for a video debate, plan two-by-two. Pro & con:

- More surveillance cameras in cities
- We demand school uniforms at RUC
- Become a vegan
- Avoid vaccination
- Trump will win the election
- Yoga is good for everyone
- Group work is not a good way to study



# See more

Overview of rhetorical terms and concepts:

The site: Silva Rhetoricae

<http://rhetoric.byu.edu/default.htm>

My homepage: <http://www.henrikjuel.dk/>