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Anticipated Audience

**Eminem’s Anticipated Audience**

In rhetoric, an audience is understood as those comprised of the listeners, spectators, and ultimately the intended circulation of the implemented speech or composition. The rhetorician’s contemplation of audience facilitates in defining the action urged upon the people by the rhetorician. For instance, it would be pointless to address undocumented immigrants in hopes of persuading them that citizenship is flawed and must change. Although personal gain of pride may be achieved, the external validity of this rhetoric is absent. Action will not be achieved through this tactic since the audience is comprised of those that lack the ability to act upon this matter. Eminem was well aware of the importance of audience in his political freestyle and utilized the roles of the different personas in rhetoric. However, other tactics like the implementation of appeals is influential in persuading one’s audience.

Eminem uses the appeal of pathos and public emotion. Everybody knows that Eminem raps with emotion, but he speaks upon multiple devastating events taking place at that time and now. The lack of attention on gun reform, military soldiers, and disabled are brought into the lyrics of the freestyle in order to evoke a sense of sadness in the audience. This creates a moral responsibility for the audience to really consider the words Eminem is articulating. Eminem also experiments with the appeal of public emotion. Public emotion is defined as the collective expressions of feelings that are “crucial elements of democratic deliberation, judgement, action”. It is evident that Eminem’s discussion of values invokes a public emotion of anger and frustration towards our presidency. With the recognition of these appeals, we can now move on to understand the different persona’s present in the rhetorical artifact.

Eminem’s audience can be observed and analyzed through the identification of the different persona’s enrolled in this rhetoric. The first persona is the author implied by the discourse. Since Eminem wrote the lyrics himself and performed the role of the rhetorician, Eminem obtains the place of the first persona. As we move on to the second persona, this information becomes more opinionated as is open to argumentation. The second persona is comprised of two groups. The first group is anyone politically affiliated and “active”. Being the topic at hand is a political matter, republicans, democrats and even independent parties play the role of the second persona. The second group is anyone that follows Eminem in the musical industry. Eminem explicitly states on various occasions within the song that “if you are a supporter of his, then I don't want you listening to my music”. Let it also be clarified that the second persona includes the status of legal citizenship and clear residence in the United States. Therefore, if there is a we, then there is a them. The third persona isolates those that are rejected or negated through the speech and or speaking situation. I would like to claim the third party as those that are identified as undocumented immigrants and considered the them in this group. This is due to the fact that although issues at hand may apply to them, they are unable to conduct and participate in action. The fourth persona is an audience is who well aware that the rhetor’s first persona does not display all that is relevant about the speaker’s identity. With this knowledge, we can place the label on politicians. Many politicians are well aware of Eminem’s background including: drug distribution, possible lack of political awareness, radical views, aggressive behavior, and failure to father. However, they remain silent regarding this matter in order to allow the public to act upon the rhetoric. Understanding these persona’s is essential in identifying those that have the most influence in the call to action.

Every persona contains a concept of audience agency. Audience agency is inherently the audience’s ability to act upon the rhetoric at hand. Being this, the second persona usually contains the highest degree of audience agency. This is because they are capable of applying the rhetoric to real life events and hopefully altering the current occurrences. In Eminem’s rhetorical artifact, the order is comprised of second persona, first persona, fourth persona, and then third persona. The first persona is placed second due to Eminem’s influential power in the musical industry as well as his recognition worldwide. The third persona is the least likely to contribute to audience agency due to the fact that they can’t contribute to the legalization or activation of any acts at hand.

It is apparent that the consideration of audience in rhetoric is vital to the success of the rhetoric. Mastering one’s understanding of audience is how leader’s engage the followers in action. After all, rhetoric is always conveyed to someone. This someone can be identified as “another”. If the rhetorician and the other aren't connected, then the message at hand will not be able to stimulate a movement.