RH1 LR Outline

Ethos 🡪 Delivery 🡪 MAAT/Intercultural Rhet 🡪 Digital Rhetoric 🡪 Interface/Glitch

Ethos (Trace)

* Origin of ethos
* How it changed over time (ancient)
* Areas it continues to be used similarly

Ethos 🡪 Delivery

Connection between ethos and delivery (Aristotle)

Delivery 🡪 MAAT

Modern connection to Delivery

* Performative
* Still accounts for audience and cultural practices (similar to MAAT)
* Elements of intercultural

**What are the 3 gaps?**

* Ethos is this this and this. Always a topic of discussion and contention in rhetoric. (use the trace)
* Delivery, closely associated with ethos. Use Aristotle and Cicero
* Then point out that it is not only an ancient greece thing. delivery was important to egyptians too. MAAT = delivery within a system. deviate and lose credibility (ethos)
* then bring up that writing/communication has changed due to developments in technology
* so rhetoric, while still important and discussed now includes, among other things, digital rhetoric. Define digital rhetoric. (fucking 4-6 pages right there I tell you).
* Use digital rhetoric definitions to bring up issues of technology (black box, etc.) --> same suspicion as Plato with the Sophists and rhetoric
* then fill it in with Gustav paper ideas and stuff from beth’s class

**Introduction**

 Ethos has long since been a point of discussion and contention in rhetoric. In Ancient Greece rhetoric’s association with its goal of persuasion carried with it a level of suspicion. It is the word persuasion that suggests there is an element of trickery, or underhandedness associated with rhetoric due to understanding, by its very definition, that its primary goal is to persuade. This weariness of rhetoric and those who practice it dates back to the earliest origins of rhetoric. Also discussed in rhetoric is delivery. In ancient Greece it may not be as explicitly discussed, or labeled as ethos, but it received similar attention. The similarities and link between ethos and delivery continues to play out in both the theory and application of rhetoric. This can be seen today in areas scholars in digital rhetoric research. As digital rhetoric grows as a field, scholars address more than the impact of communicating and writing in digital spaces, and begin to do research in areas that question the development of technology and our relationship with technology in various aspects of writing and communication, and our daily lives. This literature review will work to establish the connection between ethos and delivery in ancient rhetoric, as well as explore how the understandings and definitions of ethos and delivery in ancient rhetoric continue to exist within the field of digital rhetoric. In the conclusion of this paper I will argue for more work that links the ethos and delivery in ancient rhetoric that continues to influence scholarship in digital rhetoric and composition classroom pedagogy.

**Ethos and Delivery in Ancient Rhetoric**

In ancient rhetoric the purpose of character in practicing rhetoric is as important as it is criticized. Aristotle and Cicero present their understanding of ethos as a necessary part of successfully practicing rhetoric, or oratory. Before them the lack of expertise and questionable character/morals of practicing rhetors came under fire by Plato in his dialogue Gorgias. Isocrates saw ethos as the good character of the speaker, something that was ultimately cultivated in all actions of the speaker prior to giving the speech. It should be noted that each work may not directly use the term ethos it is clear that they are addressing issues of character, trustworthiness, and credibility, which are heavily associated with our modern understanding of ethos.

In *Gorgias* Plato, through the speaker Socrates, gives forth a very unfavorable view of rhetoric, and any person that teaches and practices rhetoric. In the dialogue the speaker Socrates is very critical of the practice of rhetoric. One of his critiques of rhetoric in is the lack of expertise needed to practice rhetoric. In 459c (p. 24) Socrates addresses this when he brings to the attention of Gorgias that the rhetorician “never has to know the actual facts of any issue; instead he’s equipped himself with a persuasive ploy,” and it is that ploy which allows him to make members of the audience that are non-experts believe he knows more than any experts. This causes trouble for Socrates. He begins to liken this lack of expertise and knowledge needed to be persuasive as a reflection of the morality of the rhetorician. He views it as dangerous that a rhetorican “lacking expert knowledge of good or bad, morality or immorality, or right or wrong,” can “make non-experts think he’s more of an expert than an expert, even though he isn’t” (p. 24). Without the knowledge or morality Plato, through Socrates, views the practicing rhetorician as untrustworthy. It is the skill of using rhetoric, and what he calls “persuasive ploys” that the rhetorician relies on to be successful in their persuasion as opposed to knowledge and truth. Plato in Gorgias does not use the term ethos, nor does he outright address character in the exchange in 459c, but he does bring up the general concerns of practicing rhetoric without good character, knowledge and trustworthiness, which are commonly understood as elements that make up a speaker’s ethos.. It is viewed as a skill, and not an art. This specific criticism sets up the relationship between a successful rhetor and ethos, which may be referred to as credibility, and/or trustworthiness. For Plato, the rhetor is not of the same level of trustworthiness because he does not need to be an expert. His speech is not made up of credible information.

Isocrates does directly address the speaker’s character. In *Antidosis,* a speech interpreted as a defense, he speaks on the role and purpose of character. Isocrates practiced rhetoric, therefore his view of rhetoric is not a critical one. He expands on some of the abilities needed to be a successful in giving speeches. For Isocrates ethos is a source for and effect of practicing ethics. Men of good nature and character would receive praise. This praise would give them power, and this power, according to Michael J. Hyde (2004) is what Isocrates “associates such powers with a person’s rhetorical competence” and that these powers are part of one’s “natural capacity to use language to deliberate skillfully and artfully with oneself and others about the importance of matters and about the goodness of actions (xv). Character, for Isocrates, comes from the actions of the speaker before the speech is given. The speaker’s actions and education help him to cultivate a good character. It is the “character of my life and conduct” that would separate him from the judgment associated with other Sophists, and negativity towards rhetoric. Like philosophers who see no reason to defend themselves, good character is enough to justify actions, because “the power to speak well,” which a person of good ethos possesses, is part of what makes up “the surest index of a sound understanding of discourse.” This understanding of discourse “is true and lawful and just” as is “the outward image of a good and faitful soul.” (255). The power of the good character in addition to eloquence in speaking ability is the power that gives the practicing rhetor persuasive power. Here begins the connection between ethos and delivery. The good character of the man makes him trustworthy, but that coupled with speaking well is what results in ethos.

However, Aristotle’s definition and application of ethos differs from Isocrates. Character, or ethos, comes about differently for the rhetorician in Aristotle’s work *On Rhetoric*. Aristotle is not as critical of rhetoric as Plato, however does not praise it in the same way that Isocrates did. For Aristotle rhetoric is defined as “an ability, in each case, to see the available means of persuasion” (p. 38). Persuasion through character, for Aristotle, is the use of ethos in rhetoric. This persuasion can be accomplished through the person giving the speech. That is to say “the speech is spoken in such a way as to make the speaker worthy of credence” (p.38). Aristotle goes on to explain that an audience is more likely to believe “fair-minded people” quicker and easier “on all subjects in general and completely so in cases where there is not exact knowledge but room for doubt” (p.38). This is not established solely on the good character of the speaker, as Isocrates stated. For Aristotle the character of the speaker comes from the speech itself. Ethos comes from the speech and how the speaker delivers it to an audience. There are necessary ways in which to expand ethos by taking into account the audience that will hear the speech. The most authoritative form of persuasion is the character established in the speech. It is the character that is “distinctive” and “most persuasive” and it is the “deliberate choice directed to an end” (p. 74). It is necessary that the speaker understand not only ethos, but also how to establish his ethos for each audience.

Cicero’s ethos differs from both, but in his definition of both rhetoric and ethos one can see the ways in which it was built upon previous notions and ideas about ethos, or character, and it’s effectiveness in persuasion. In *De Oratore* Cicero expresses his views on rhetoric. For Cicero an orator must know as much as possible about all subjects, be of good character, and have natural abilities to give a speech. According to Cicero, “people’s minds are won over by a man’s prestige, his accomplishments, and the reputation he has acquired by his way of life.” (p. 171). This ethos comes from the actions of the speaker. These actions are not limited to his life outside of the speech, like Isocrates suggested, nor are they limited to just the speech. Ethos according to Cicero is also established in how you deliver the speech. For Cicero the orator is more effective when using a “gentle tone of voice,” and “kindliness in the use of his words” (p. 171). The manner in which the orator speaks, looks, and acts help him to establish his ethos. If the orator acts in such a way that employs “thoughts of a certain kind and words of a certain kind, and adopting besides a delivery that is gentle and shoes signs of flexibility,” then he will “appear as decent, as good in character,” (p. 171) which make him a good man.

David A. Bobbitt (1991) explains in “Cicero's Concept of Ethos and Some Implications for the Understanding of Roman Rhetoric” Cicero understood the ways in which “ethos infuses all aspects of the speaker's craft, including style, delivery and arrangement, and that it cannot clearly be delineated from emotional appeal (p. 6).” Through these actions the trustworthiness, and ethos of the speaker are established. Abbot (1991) continues to demonstrate that Cicero’s notion of ethos was deeper than Aristotle’s, and that Cicero “observed that ethos functions not only in the speech proper, but is also a result of the reputation and personality that the rhetor brings to the speaking situation (p. 6).” Cicero’s deeper understanding of ethos, its importance, and all of the ways ethos is formed continues to inform current approaches to studying, and comprehending ethos.

Cicero directly addresses the importance and role of delivery in oratory. The effect of a man’s ethos “is enhanced by a gentle tone of voice on the part of the orator, an expression on his face intimating restraint, kindliness in his words” (p. 171). Cicero presents the idea that ethos can be elevated and more effective by delivery. For Cicero the two are linked based on the nature of giving a speech. The performing of a speech, according to Cicero accounts for the equal importance of ethos and delivery. “Employing thoughts of a certain kind,” and using a “deliver that is gentle and shows signs of flexibility, makes speakers appear as decent, as good in character,” which helps speakers establish themselves as good men. Ethos and delivery must work together. The judgment of good character is subjective, and therefore stems from the societal values and norms associated with ancient Greeks and the Romans of Cicero’s times. Therefore, the system rhetoric, or oratory, is produced influences the ways in which speakers establish credibility and what strategies of delivery are most effective.

This notion of a system influence writing and communication practices also exists in non-western rhetoric. Carol Lipson’s “Ancient Egyptian Rhetoric: It All Comes Down to Maat,” researches the ways in which the concept and system of MAAT influenced the writing of the ancient Egyptians. The system of MAAT refers to “truth, justice, or order, ” but Lipson translates MAAT as “what is right” (81). This understanding of MAAT refers to the “premise that humans must not disturb the balance state of creation, but instead must respect and live in accord with the cosmic harmony and natural order” (81) as introduced by Lipson. Lipson claims that MAAT influences the writing done in ancient Egypt, as it must always be in accordance with the key concepts of practicing MAAT. All of the writings could not upset the natural order, MAAT, and reflect deliberate choices made by the authors to appeal to MAAT. The ethos of a writer came from following MAAT, and their delivery of the writings would also fall within the system of MAAT. MAAT refers to the “premise that humans must not disturb the balance state of creation, but instead must respect and live in accord with the cosmic harmony and natural order (81).” All writing must be in accordance with the concepts of practicing MAAT. Therefore, all of the writings could not upset the natural order, MAAT, and reflect deliberate choices made by the authors to appeal to MAAT. Writing within the system of MAAT continues to blur the lines between ethos and delivery. A writer and speaker use MAAT to know how to appeal to their audience. Composing within a system, and making use of the affordances and limitations of that system did not only exist in ancient Egypt. Current scholarship in digital rhetoric also addresses the impacts of writing and communicating within an established system.

**Defining Digital Rhetoric**

Composing within a system, and making use of the affordances and limitations of that system did not only exist in ancient Egypt. Current scholarship in digital rhetoric researches the intersection of writing and technology. Specifically investigating the impact of writing and communicating within a digital space. Defining digital rhetoric is as tedious as defining rhetoric. No universal definition exists. Like ethos in ancient rhetoric, and modern rhetoric, defining digital rhetoric depends upon the person’s understanding of the goal of digital rhetoric.

Carolyn Handa’s book *The Multimediated Rhetoric of the Internet: Digital Fusion* defines digital rhetoric as:

“simply (or maybe not so simply) traditional rhetoric applied visually as well as textually. It is not another form of rhetoric. We do not switch from digital to traditional rhetoric. All of the components we are accustomed to discussing in traditional rhetoric, especially having to do with style and arrangement for the purposes of conducting logical, discursive, persuasive arguments, are elements that can occur visually” (p. 18).

This definition attempts to link traditional rhetorical practices to those in digital spaces. Doing so tends to give more attention to the elements of persuasion due to the fact that this definition keeps in line with Aristotle’s definition of rhetoric.

Zappen (2005) in “Digital rhetoric: Toward an integrated theory” attempts to differentiate between traditional and digital rhetoric. He defines digital rhetoric as “traditional rhetorical strategies function in digital spaces and suggest how these strategies are reconfigured within these spaces” (p. 319). Zappen situates his understanding of digital rhetoric within the digital space the writing and communication take place. This definition thus occupies itself more in the realm of the technology used to write and communicate than the strategies used. There is the suggestion that the strategies may be used differently in a digital space.

Doug Eyman in Chapter 1 of *Digital Rhetoric: Theory, Method, Practice* (2015) makes a connection between digital rhetoric and visual rhetoric, based on “the sense that a focus outside of the tradition of written and spoken argument broadens the available opportunities to apply rhetorical theory to new objects of study.” Eyman continues by linking visual and digital rhetoric by writing that “visual rhetoric also draws on theory from art and graphic design as well as psychology (gestalt theory), bringing rhetoric into these spheres even as they contribute to the overall rhetorical methods,” and that since digital rhetoric includes visuals “it can align itself with these fields, as well as other technical fields—such as computer science, game design, and Internet research—that don’t usually take up rhetorical theory.” This approach continues to incorporate and promote interdisciplinarity.
 Eyman’s definition of digital rhetoric also accounts for the performance of composing and distributing, using a method of delivery that is not only based on speaking or writing, The implications of digital spaces suggests a reliance on the visuals used and perceived, that also find themselves closely related to methods of delivery. This attention to the visual and delivery is similar to Ian Bogost’s *Persuasive games: The expressive power of videogames* (2007). His work in procedural rhetoric pushes scholars to move beyond the view that the technologies we use are simply tools available to us. He puts procedural rhetoric under the umbrella of digital rhetoric because of the “practice of using processes persuasively,” due to the nature of the digital spaces we compose in, and inhabit, it is impossible to separate any understanding of digital rhetoric from the processes we engage in to accomplish communication.

Bogost differs from Eyman in that he focuses on the process users go through to communicate, and not the visual elements that assist delivery. Bogost attempts to expose the process that makes the technology assist us in composing, much like the scholarship in digital rhetoric that wishes to expose technology that is otherwise hidden. Bogost is not concerned with the visual in the same way Eyman is, because the process to him is more important than the visual. The procedures give the writer the power to write in the digital spaces, therefore his ethos comes from the practices, and not the delivery. Delivery under Bogost’s definition of digital rhetoric is attributed to the performance of working within, or through the procedure.

Scholarship in digital rhetoric influenced and/or informed by Bogost tends to begin to break way from Aristotle’s rhetoric, and the result of that pushes digital rhetoric in other directions. As digital rhetoric focuses on the technology, and not the rhetorical strategies it ventures into other theories and fields. Cressman (2009) in “A Brief Overview of Actor-Network Theory: Punctualization, Heterogenous Engineering & Translation” gives an overview of actor-network theory (ANT). In doing so he writes about the attempt to “open the black box of science and technology by tracing the complex relationships that exist between governments, technologies, knowledge, texts, money, and people” (p. 3). This pushes the field of digital rhetoric to view the technology, often the computer or the word processor when applied to composition classes, as an actor in the network. This again moves digital rhetoric closer to engaging with, and thinking through the role and purpose of the technology, before addressing how it impacts writing.

**Digital Rhetoric Research and Incorporating it in the Composition Classroom**

Lori Emerson (2014) in *Reading Writing Interfaces: From the Digital to the Bookbound* calls attention to the blackbox technology in iPads and iPhones, which influence how students read and write. The interfaces of these devices are viewed as “magical,” and presented as “something that allows us to perform magic tricks” (11). Understanding that an invisible technology exists behind an interface approaches delivery from a different perspective. Delivery shifts from a one-way transaction. The technology behind whatever device used to write, or communicate also has a method of delivery, and the ethos associated with it stems from its ability to work as expected.

Digital rhetoric scholarship approaches this other perspective in the form of research the glitch. In “The Rhetorical Question Concerning Glitch” Casey Boyle describes glitch scholarship as “models for expanding our current, critical approaches to rhetoric, especially as those practices concern mediation” (p. 12). Glitches expose what design and interface work to keep hidden, and this makes their technological delivery transparent. Boyle pushes for the result of the glitch to become an assignment in composition classes, because it “seeks not to error-check but to produce error” (p. 22), which allows for students to engage with the technology that is now exposed, and disrupt conventional methods of delivery and ethos.

At times the field of digital rhetoric concerns itself with a large amount of theory. The potential problem stemming from this occurrence results in how to merge this theory with the practice of applying it in the form of composition classroom curriculum. With several different definitions of digital rhetoric informing the theories implementing them can cause complications. Does curriculum reflect scholarship in revealing the black box technology and the active role of the technology as discussed in work with ANT? Or, should it reflect the practical nature of helping students develop skills in communicating in digital spaces?

Baron (1982), in “Pencils to Pixels” establishes the link between technology and the classroom when he states that the computer “promises, or threatens to change literacy practices, for better or worse, depending on your point of view” (p.7). Developments in technology account for new literacies to be learned, but agreeing upon how to do that is tricky at best. Yancey (2004) in “Made not only in words: Composition in a new key” declared the field to be in a most important moment. Throughout that address, the call to move away from alphabetic text only compositions is clear. Yancey (2004) through Daley presents the argument that “the screen is the language of the vernacular” (305). If it’s the language of the vernacular, then the approach to teaching, and using arrangement and delivery need to reflect that. The delivery of the content, or message the author attempts to convey, must express that delivery was part of their composing process. As Yancey points out, “we are digital already” and our students move from one medium to another. In doing so, they also change the way they arrange and deliver. Yancey (2004) continues by stating that the “potential of arrangement is a function of delivery, and what and how you arrange -- which becomes a function of the medium you choose -- is who you invent” (318). The role, and function of arrangement can’t be separated from delivery. Without thought, and practice going into the arrangement of a multimodal assignment, something not only in words as Yancey urged in 2004, then, the delivery of the message within the assignment will not be successful. Arrangement can’t exist outside of delivery, and delivery will not be successful without arrangement. In addition to rethinking of the canons, instructors must understand elements vital to other forms of composing. The two are closely related, and dependent upon each other for the student to successfully complete the learning objectives of digital multimodal assignments. These assignments rely heavily on arrangement, and delivery.

This call from Yancey, and similar observations about the role of technology, specifically the computer and the growing involvement of the Internet in our daily lives, leads to a shift to include the production of multimodal compositions in to composition curriculums. The developments in technology also lead to a similar call from Selber in 2004. In Multiliteracies for a Digital Age, Selber urges scholars to help develop students’ multiliteracies by changing their approach to using and integrating technology in the classroom. He believes to do this we must commit to moving beyond the functional level, and assist students in reaching a critical, and rhetorical level. The theoretical framework Selber provides helped to establish that students should be questioners of technology (critical literacy), and rhetorical in the way that they understand the implications of technology. Civic engagement has long been a learning objective, or byproduct of the curriculum found in composition classrooms. With the many shifts in technology, and their implications for society, Selber argues “if students are to become agents of positive change, they will need an education that is comprehensive and truly relevant to a digital age” (234). This comprehensive education must be different than what is taught with the alphabetic text essay. The learning objectives, and elements taught must be different, or else the student only learns how to transfer an essay to a different genre, or format. Attention must be paid to arrangement, because it relates to design and anything visual demands elements of design need to be taught, in addition to bringing delivery to the forefront along with content.

The urging of Yancey, Selber, and other scholars resulted in the inclusion of multimodal assignments. These assignments are typically in digital form. Assignments that aim to move the field of composition away from only teaching, and writing in alphabetic text causes instructors to rethink the ways in which the canons are taught, and/or used in composing, in addition to teaching other elements, such as arrangement, that are closely linked to multimodal composing. The evolution of technology influenced the types of assignments taught in composition classes. With new assignments came updated learning objectives. The NCTE Statement--"Multimodal Literacies and Technology" addresses some of these concerns. It is of no surprise that elements of arrangement and delivery are apparent in the statement.

The NCTE statement supports the inclusion of arrangement and new attention paid to delivery as a result of the multimodal assignment. The multimodal assignment is a direct result of the shift in technology. It also reflects the move away from alphabetic text that Yancey called for in 2004. The NCTE states “All modes of communication are codependent. Each affects the nature of the content of the other and the overall rhetorical impact of the communication event itself” (NCTE). In an assignment that incorporates visual elements, as is the case with a multimodal assignment, each element used to compose, and thus convey the message of the composer equal attention must be given to every decision made by the composer. The mixing of modes in a multimodal assignment requires students to negotiate the manner in which the modes are put together. The arrangement of the modes impacts delivery. Delivery is not only the means, a blog, website or Youtube for a video essay, used to deliver a message, but the arrangement of the modes that reflect how the message is constructed. Delivery can’t be separated from arrangement. The NCTE statement recognizes that “Certain conventions of design are more effective than others for visual, aural, or multimodal texts,” and as a result “teachers will need to become more informed about these conventions because they will influence the rhetorical and aesthetic impact of all multimodal texts.” Design relies, in part, on arrangement. This does not call for composition instructors to teach all elements of design, but it does require the field to understand the role, and impact of arrangement in design.

Arrangement can be the conventions of design that instructors must be aware of, and incorporate into their teaching. The multimodal assignment brings in elements of remixing, which demonstrates the ways in which arrangement and delivery can’t be separated. According to Palmeri (2012), “the critic would strive to sort art works into genres and periods, the remixer would seek to creatively recombine disparate materials--to make a new composition by juxtaposing samples from radically disparate artistic traditions and periods” (p. 13). Through remixing, the genres are not separated by movements, but are arranged together to deliver the message of the composer. Arrangement and delivery can’t be separated. Delivery is ineffective and unsuccessful if arrangement is not given equal attention as content. The shifts in technology bring renewed attention to the rhetorical canon of delivery. If the reader and writer have moved from the page to the screen, then the multimodal assignment that seeks to move the field beyond alphabetic text only needs to reflect the importance of delivery in the visual world society finds itself immersed.

 Yancey (2004) addresses the shift in public writing “the members of the writing public have learned-in this case, to write, to think together, to organize, and to act within these forums...” (301), and this observation of Yancey supports the importance of delivery. For the public to recognize and interact within these forums, then the writing must be delivered to them in a form, and forum they understand. Technological advances, and their inclusion into the daily lives of students, account for their place in composition classes. For students to make use of the networks that the Internet, and social media have created for them, they need to know how to write specifically to them. This isn’t only about content anymore, although content is, and always will be an important, if not the most important, element of composition. However, due to the visual nature of multimodality, and remixing, arrangement and delivery move up the hierarchy in importance. The reason for this is not just the technological advancements, but the social nature of the networks created. Arroyo (2012) discusses participatory composition, and the connectedness of students that alters composition classes. If, as she writes, “the commands of our online world relentlessly promote participation, encourage collaboration,” then students must also know how to deliver their work in the best, or most effective way possible to promote that continued collaboration and participation. Hocks had similar thoughts on participation as a result of the networks created by the Internet. According to Hocks (2003), writers “engage in what Porter calls "internetworked writing"-writing that involves the intertwining of production, interaction, and publication in the online classroom or professional workplace as well as advocating for one’s online audiences (12)” (631). The network technology creates forces rhetoric and composition to rethink delivery.

Delivery, in this sense, seems simple as addressing or appealing to the intended audience, but with the screen replacing the page, delivery becomes more complicated. The screen, as a visual and now interactive technology, requires students in composition classes to be aware of which method of delivering a multimodal assignment is most effective, but also how their modes should be arranged so that they are understandable, and appealing to their audience. These elements would not be addressed in composition classrooms if the field remained entrenched in alphabetic text, and without continuous shifts and advancements in technology there would be little need to move away from alphabetic text and towards multimodal compositions, or similar assignments that promote the development of multiple literacies of our students. Numerous scholars attempt to provide a theoretical and practical framework for instructors in the field of rhetoric and composition. It is clear that in the work of some their approach is influenced by different understandings and hierarchy of learning objectives, and in others that the focus is on the theory that should inform instructors. However, whether their differences are subtle, or starkly different, it is generally easy to see where shifts in technology, and uses of technology influence not only what assignments we teach, but what elements should be taught that can go ignored in alphabetic text composition.

Through these works character, or ethos, is an important element of the speaker successfully persuading an audience. The character, or ethos, of the speaker is as important as the words used within the speech. The modern understanding of ethos is linked to credibility of the author or speaker. This credibility can come from being an expert in the filed written or spoken about, which harkens back to Plato’s criticism that rhetoricians know the skills or tricks to persuade, but not the knowledge of the experts on any given subject. Over time ethos continued to develop to include the character of the speaker, which is not too dissimilar from credibility. There are actions, and deliberate decisions a speaker or writer can make to establish their ethos.

The concerns of ethos in persuading, or informing, an audience have not greatly changed over time, but the language used may differ from author discussing ethos may differ. However, the concepts and understanding of the importance of ethos in studying, and practicing rhetoric remain remarkably similar. This is an important area of inquiry due to the fact that establishing ethos as a writer/speaker is important. Therefore, its history and evolution should be researched so as to create in more informed writers/speakers and audience members.