Shawna McCann, Amanda Phillips, and Haley Tucker

English 400-16

Dr. Guler

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Common Good Project

Rationale – Use of Different Course Concepts in the Common Good Project, Breaking the Stigma

1. Ethos- First used by Aristotle, ethos can be described as character building and is used in order to make the audience have faith in that what you are saying is credible. Our website uses ethos by establishing the credibility of our information. In particular, we have two pages on our website titled “depression” and “anxiety.” On each of these pages, information and statistics can be found about both of these mental illnesses. We also cited information from a published textbook. This establishes credibility because the sources that we used are researched, written, reviewed and published. In terms of the rhetorical affect that this would have on an audience, it makes us appear as professional and trustworthy. Thus, making the viewers of our website more likely to consider our website as credible.

2. Logos- We establish logos which can be described as argument by fact or logic using the statistics as well. The statistics make what we have to say appear not only as credible but also appear as logical. The viewer of the information could look at our website and say that it would be “logical” to take care of their mental health for the many benefits it has for an individual. The website includes resources such as hotlines for those struggling with depression, suicidal thoughts, victims of rape, etc. this information appears to the viewer as a logical way to take care of their mental health, as presented by the facts of the hotlines as well as other counseling resources.

3. Pathos- Our website also includes the use of pathos, also known as an appeal to emotion. This is done by the use of the testimonials of celebrities that are located within the “celebrities” page. The stories of the celebrity’s struggles would pathos because a viewer of the website could view this section and really connect with one of the stories and be emotionally moved by it. The testimonials of celebrities such as Demi Lovato and Cara Delevigne discuss anxiety, depression, substance abuse and feelings of hopelessness and being lost. The two women are just two examples of stories featured on our website that talk in detail about the difficulties of emotional turmoil. By establishing and emotional connection through the use of testimonials, we establish pathos with our target audience.

4. Decorum- Decorum was a term first termed by Aristotle, and it falls under Aristotle’s principle of ethos. Heinrich describes decorum as ethos that matches “the audience’s expectations for a leader’s tone, appearance, and manners” (47). Essentially, decorum is fitting in with your audience to suit their needs. We utilized decorum in our project by making our website and brochure appeal to students at Longwood University. College students most frequently gather information from online sources; hence, our website is more accessible to students at Longwood. To suit their decorum, college students can easily navigate the website by clicking on labeled tabs and the text is easy to read and understand. We also incorporated decorum by providing facts and statistics that would appeal to college students. Similarly, we provided locations and resources that are applicable for students at Longwood, such as local parks and counseling services.

5. Synecdoche- Synecdoche occurs when a part, piece, or member of something is used to describe its whole or vice versa (Heinrich 249). By discussing the longwood community, we are actually referring to every individual at Longwood University. In other words, we are appealing to individual members, but describing them as a whole (Longwood and/or Longwood University). By using synecdoche, we are creating a sense of community and encouraging people to work together to end the stigma around mental health.

6. Tactical flaw- Heinrich describes tactical flaw as revealing a weakness that wins sympathy or shows the sacrifice you have made for the cause (65). In our Common Good Project, we used tactical flaw in our blog on the website. Through the blog, people can comment about their own imperfections and create a positive discussion about struggling with anxiety and depression. As the authors of this website, we also posted about our flaws to help our audience see our dedication to ending the stigma at Longwood University.

7. Virtue- Virtue, which can also be referred to as cause, is when the audience believe you share their values according to Heinrich (57). We have done this in our common good project by projecting to our audience that we are care about their mental health and that we want to provide them with resources to help them handle their depression or anxiety. By giving the audience resources and facts and statistics on these diseases, they can tell that we share their belief that mental health is important to address and get help for.

8. Identity Strategy- This can be defined by Heinrichs as getting your audience to identify with your strategy. We implemented this with our common good project by giving the facts about how prevalent depression and anxiety are and how it needs to be address on social media. We also provided information on how being outdoors can impact the prevalence of depression symptoms. When doing this we are getting our audience to identify with why we chose this specific strategy.

9. Keep Everything Simple or using Simple Speech- This involves not using fancy language since that can confuse your audience. We did this by keeping to a language in which anyone could understand. We did not include medical terms or diagnostics since not everyone can understand that language and could easily get confused. We did not put any jargon in the website or brochure so that way the audience can just focus directly on the subject matter and its relevance.

10. Metonymy- Heinrichs explains that metonymy takes a characteristic of something and makes it stand for the whole (222). We did this by the name of our group, breaking the stigma. In retrospect, there is nothing to physically break, but we are using the term break in such a way that would make it easier to talk about the subject manner. “Breaking” is simply just a word we are using to stand for us starting the conversation on mental health and normalizing the topic.

Website URL

<https://shawnamccann.wixsite.com/breakingthestigma>