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## Rhetoric and Dramatism Activity

### **Part 1 – The Rhetoric**

Gorman shows many examples of the three types of rhetoric in her Inaugural Poet Speech “The Hill We Climb.” First, she uses Ethos to establish her authority to speak on the subject she says, “A time where a skinny black girl, descended from slaves and raised by a single mother can dream of becoming president only to find herself reciting for one.” This is so powerful because even though it highlights her right to be there but also connects not only so closely to the audience but also to the cultural divide in America. Next, we look at Logos and the logical point of her speech. What I gathered to be the main point of her speech is that our country is not perfect, she describes it in fact as bruised and broken but here she states, “And yes we are far from polished, far from pristine, but that doesn’t mean we are striving to form a union that is perfect, we are striving to forge our union with purpose.” The logical point here I believe is that nothing is perfect, we all know that is true but we as a country must be united with purpose, putting our imperfections, differences, and backgrounds aside. Finally, we take a glance into how she incorporated Pathos and how she used our countries and individual hardships to lift us up she says “This is true, even as we grieved, we grew, that even as we hurt, we hoped, that even as we tired, we tried, that we’ll forever be tied together victorious. Not because we will never again know defeat, because we will never again sew division.” I think this can really touch everyone

emotionally because we have all experienced grievances, hurt, tiredness, and defeat but both individually and as a country we pick ourselves back up because we have hope, we grow, and we keep trying.

Identifying the syllogism within Gorman's speech I believe the premises she presents are first that America will not be overcome by division and catastrophe, second that we are all Americans who put our differences aside for the betterment of the country in conclusion she says "So, while once we asked how could we possibly prevail over catastrophe? Now we assert how could catastrophe possibly prevail over us?"

In using the 5 canons of rhetoric invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery to create her performance persuasively I think she executed flawlessly. In her invention or what to say I really liked how she didn't use politics or talk about Biden or bring in any controversial topics she strictly kept her key point to bringing the country together in peace and harmony despite the differences and hardship. In her arrangement and structure of content she used a lot of metaphors and analogies although many of them were so powerful if I had to criticize one thing it would be that at some points some of them were harder to understand in relation to our country. On the other hand, her language choices and style were outstanding, she used very powerful words but not in a controversial way, she highlighted America's biggest problems but lightly and with purpose. As far as memory goes, being who she is and being able to give an inaugural speech is memorable in its own and will truly go down in history. Her delivery of the speech itself was so empowering, they were more than just words and you could feel that through her delivery.

## **Part 2 – Dramatism**

n rhetoric, "consubstantiality", as defined by Kenneth Burke, is "a practice-related concept based on stylistic identifications and symbolic structures, which persuade and produce acceptance: an acting-together within, and defined by, a common context". Gorman shows this a lot throughout her speech, here is an example she states, "And so we lift our gazes not to what stands between us, but what stands before us." Her entire speech and in some examples, I have given above also she clearly highlights the cultural divide and persuades us to put our differences aside, to unite to achieve a common goal.

In alliance with that we identify the five points of Kenneth Burke's pentad, act, scene, agent, agency, purpose. The way Gorman uses her poetry to bring the people of America together in her inaugural speech is the act. The scene is the context of her being an ordinary African American girl using her power of speech to speak for a president. The agent is Gorman herself, and the agency is using her poetic talents to speak to the entire nation. Lastly, her purpose is using her common desire for unity and prevalence to touch the hearts and minds of every American citizen in hope that it is their desire too.

In applying these rhetorical strategies to Gorman's speech, it allows us to reveal the true goal of the speech. By breaking down every little formation and intention we can truly see the reasoning behind everything she says. It also allowed for room to interpretation within all her metaphors to find our own understanding within her words and metaphors. Overall, I think It allowed me to better understand the true points she was trying to convey.

### **Part 3 – Reflection**

I do not think that while analyzing Gorman's speech through Aristotle's rhetorical theory that it shifted my perspective on her speech as a whole, but more allowed me to better understand the true meaning of what she was speaking. It allowed me to discover that deep down all any of us truly want is to be united in peace. Where it was unclear before I began to see that although she was giving this speech at the presidential inauguration the speech was not meant for the president or any of the government officials, in turn it was meant for us, the people. I think that the purpose of these theories is to break down the true nature behind any words, in a way stripping it to the bone, getting past all the formalities to truly understand the how and why. In the aspect of public speaking for me at least it allowed me to not just listen to the speech once and then carry on with my day but within analyzing I was forced to listen multiple times, rewind, replay and reiterate. In turn, the words sink in, I thought about them longer, instead of just listening I had to break them down, I had to find the deeper meaning and because of that I am left here reflecting, thinking, and admiring the power within those words.