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Application in Rhetorical Education: A Necessary Tool to Create Activists

I. Introduction

“You are failing us. But the young people are starting to understand your betrayal. The eyes of all future generations are upon you. And if you choose to fail us, I say: We will never forgive you” (NPR Staff). This is a powerful statement from young activist Greta Thurnberg’s 2019 speech at the U.N. Climate Action Summit in which she calls out the older generation for their inadequate action in terms of climate change. Like Thurnberg, throughout history, activists in various environments have employed specific rhetorical strategies to appeal to their respective audience and ensure their message is accepted by those who they are targeting. Whether it be fighting for universal child care, climate change, gun violence, suffrage or women’s rights, speakers make rhetorical decisions in an attempt to have their audience support their case. In this paper, I analyze speeches from the Women’s Suffrage movement and from those fighting for the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). In both spheres, feminist activists employed similar rhetorical tactics to appeal to an audience of male politicians. Their techniques included allusions to patriotic ideals, calls to action, comparisons to other countries, mentions of counter arguments but refutes them, rhetorical questions and facts.

The objects of analysis I utilize include the following: “The Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions” by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Jane Addams’ Statement to the U.S. House Judiciary Committee on Woman Suffrage; Carrie Chapman Catt’s address to Congress on

women's suffrage; Gloria Steinem's testimony before the Senate on the Equal Rights Amendment; Shirley Chisholm's speech to Congress on the Equal Rights Amendment and the Opening Statement of Congresswoman Carolyn B. Maloney on the The Equal Rights Amendment". I am using these texts because in each one, the speakers used intentional rhetorical strategies to appeal to those they are speaking to, a group of mostly powerful men. They make sure that they do not turn their audience away before getting their purpose across. Because all of these speeches took place at different points in time, as early as 1848 and as recently as 2021, I will be able to look at how the rhetoric about women's rights has changed and adapted over time. Additionally, as another object of study, I include an in person interview that I conducted with Professor Joon Trapp, an English professor and Director of the Emory University Writing Program. I incorporated this to add insight about the importance of a rhetorical education and Trapp's experience teaching applicational skills in her rhetoric classes.

Unlike many of my peers, I was lucky enough to have the opportunity to take a rhetorical public speaking course at Emory called Oral Communications. This course, as a part of my minor, Rhetoric, Writing and Information Design, allowed me to gain essential life skills that have improved my persuasion abilities. Not only did we analyze speeches from different rhetors, but we were able to write and perform our own speeches of various genres.

Women's rights are continuously under attack and because of that, our society needs more well-taught feminist activists. However, throughout my years of schooling, I have noticed that a standard rhetorical education focuses only on the identification of rhetorical techniques. It lacks instruction on how to apply these rhetorical techniques to make productive change. For instance, in most of my upper level high school and college English courses, we focused on defining the rhetorical triangle, identifying rhetorical devices in various genres, and

understanding the purpose behind an author's rhetorical decisions. Rhetorical education should include preparing students to be activists by teaching the application and use of popular rhetorical techniques.

II. Literature Review

In addition to my analysis of these speeches, to make the case for the implementation of a rhetorical education in schools, I included the perspective of authors in the conversation about rhetorical techniques. In “Intertwining Discourse: an Examination of Suffrage and Antisuffrage Rhetoric”, Emille Cutright, examines the contrasting language and rhetorical strategies of the anti-suffrage and suffrage movement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In terms of the suffragettes’ rhetorical techniques, Cutright focuses on the inclusion of patriotic ideals and the rhetoric of the founders in their speeches to appeal to a specific audience of men in political power. The strategy of including widely accepted documents in speech is something that I noticed among many of those discussed in this paper. Sarah Perkins, author of “The Vote: Gender Identification in the Women's Suffrage Movement Through the Rhetoric of Carrie Chapman Catt” explained how Catt utilized specific rhetorical techniques, such as the inclusion of patriotic elements, to persuade male leaders of the United States Government to ratify the 19th Amendment. This general concept of appealing to the feelings and attitudes of men comes from the idea that because it was not commonly accepted that women were not allowed to publicly speak, women made an effort to do what they could to please the men to whom they were speaking, without letting go of their purpose. This is an idea that Michaela Meyer discussed in her piece, “Women Speak(ing): Forty Years of Feminist Contributions to Rhetoric and an Agenda for Feminist Rhetorical Studies”. Her research focused on how many women activists strategically altered their rhetoric to counteract their lack of political power in public settings.

Contrasting with Meyer's idea of looking to charm the male audience, in Matthew Gerber's piece "Agitation in Amsterdam: The International Dimension of Carrie Chapman Catt's Suffrage Rhetoric" he analyzes Carrie Chapman Catt's 1908 address to the Amsterdam Congress and of her 1923 address to the International Alliance of Women (IWA). He explores Catt's use of guilt and international embarrassment as a tool to achieve Congressional action from her male audience. Although her international speeches are not part of the objects of study I am working with in this essay, another speech by Catt, an address to the United States Congress, is one of the speeches I do include in my essay as an object of study. I plan to use Gerber's analysis to better understand Catt's 1917 speech, as well as the other suffragette speeches that I am examining in my paper.

In Stephanie Durnford's "We Shall Fight for the Things We Have Always Held Nearest Our Hearts": Rhetorical Strategies in the U.S. Woman Suffrage Movement", Durnford analyzes the rhetorical strategies that were utilized by various organizations to push for women's suffrage in the year of 1917. She describes several techniques that aid the speaker's ethos and the overall credibility of the argument presented. The author assesses the differences in the strategies used by various women's rights groups, such as the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) and the National Woman's Party (NWP). This commentary is helpful to my understanding of the contrast between different organizations and their rhetorical techniques when they are still trying to achieve the same purpose. Finally, unlike Durnford, Jacqueline Royster and Gesa Kirsch explain there have been major shifts in feminist rhetorical inquiry and that there is a new landscape of the field of feminist rhetoric in "Feminist Rhetorical Practices: In Search of Excellence". The authors illustrate that for a long period of time, feminist rhetorical patterns revolved around Western patriarchal ideals, but they argue that has shifted from this.

In terms of the conversation about a rhetorical education, in. “Composing a Rhetorical Education for the Twenty-First Century: TakingITGlobal as Pedagogical Heuristic.” Jessica Enoch studied the online activist site TakingITGlobal, which provides teachers with rhetorical pedagogy for educational practices. She discusses the importance of learning from others and applying it to your own work. This strategy is something I find to be significant in relation to rhetorical education. Additionally, she mentions the importance of using rhetorical education to teach students how to successfully be engaged in civics. I use this work to support my argument for the inclusion of rhetorical application skills in the classroom.

III. Analysis of Feminist Rhetorical Techniques in Speeches

The rhetorical technique that I found to be most significant in feminist speeches is references to patriotic ideals, which appeal to both the logos and ethos of the audience. The audience for the speeches in this paper is men with political power. Therefore, it is important for the rhetor to adjust to their audience to ensure that these men will listen to what they have to say. If the rhetor ignores the values of their audience, it is likely that the audience will choose to ignore what they are being told. This is seen in the “Declaration of Sentiments” written by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and other women at the Seneca Falls Convention, whose primary audience was the lawmakers of the United States, who were strictly a group of men. The purpose of this piece is to convey that men and women should be treated equally, and that the word “men” contrary to popular belief, does not actually represent humankind. Stanton's speech starts off alluding to the Declaration of Independence which states, “We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal...” (3). This phrase is almost a direct quote from the Declaration of Independence. There however is one difference: the inclusion of the word “women”. Because this sentence is almost identical to the exact words of the

Declaration of Independence, Stanton is appealing to her audience, a group that is likely to be proud of the Declaration of Independence and the ideals that it represents for their country. This is one of the most important documents in the history of the United States. The inclusion of this specific sentence at the start of her speech draws the audience of male legislators in. She gains their attention and respect from the start, even though Stanton is presenting an idea that is likely to not be widely accepted by her audience. In “Intertwining Discourse: an Examination of Suffrage and Antisuffrage”, Cutright examines the inclusion of patriotic ideals and the rhetoric of the founders. In suffragette speeches to appeal to an audience of powerful men, Cutright argues:

In paralleling the American Revolution to female suffrage, they voiced that restricting the ballot paralleled the British violation of democratic principles that the United States was founded upon, specifically a “without representation” argument. Thus, any state that honors the founding principles of the United States and its republican ideals must extend the vote to women. (14)

Stanton continues to allude to patriotic ideals when she utilizes rhetoric that is similar to the words and phrases in the Declaration of Independence. She uses the phrase “a long train of abuses” (3) to address their concerns. This approach of touching on accepted patriotic beliefs was also used by Carrie Chapman Catt in her 1917 Open Address to the U.S. Congress. The purpose of Catt’s speech was to promote women’s suffrage and push Congress to ratify the 19th Amendment. Similar to Stanton, in an effort to appeal to her audience of the U.S. Congress, Catt explicitly mentions the Declaration of Independence. She writes “Woman suffrage became an assured fact when the Declaration of Independence was written” (2). By mentioning this unchallenged document in the beginning of her speech, Catt is gaining her audience’s attention because this document represents a time in U.S. history that they are proud of. By arguing that women’s suffrage was already established in the Declaration of Independence, Catt is making the point that because the men value that document, they should then agree that women should have

the right to vote. Perkins, the author of “The Vote: Gender Identification in the Women's Suffrage Movement Through the Rhetoric of Carrie Chapman Catt” is in agreement with Cutright when she writes “Catt's direct quotes [...] prove that the documents inherently and undeniably support women. If the all-male legislature were to not vote for suffrage, they would directly deny democracy by claiming that women were not people” (Perkins, 66). In addition, she continuously alludes to the beloved Declaration of Independence throughout her piece, to keep her audience engaged. She includes phrases such as “taxation without representation is tyranny” and references “Uncle Sam” (2). This argument relies on the fundamental rhetoric of the Founding Fathers, creating an argument that appeals to both logos and ethos. (Cutright, 16) Another aspect of this strategy is Catt’s use of phrases like “un-American” (2) and “American blood” (3). By including these phrases, she “subconsciously questions their love for the country and democracy” (Perkins, 46). Another rhetor that employs this strategy is Shirley Anita St. Hill Chisholm, the first African American woman in Congress. She does this in her 1970 speech supporting the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). This speech was given to the House of Representatives in reference to Joint Resolution 264, the action of proposing the ERA. Unlike Stanton and Catt, Chisholm does not allude to the Declaration of Independence. Rather, she references the Constitution, another widely supported document by the citizens of the United States. She references the 14th Amendment’s Due Process clause and uses that to support her argument of the ratification of the ERA. Although it is likely that a majority of Chisholm’s audience does not agree with her, by defending her argument with the words of the 14th Amendment, her audience of her fellow politicians can better understand the logic of her position. By hinting at common patriotic ideals and including wording from documents that represent the United States’ independence, the speakers appeal to the pathos of the audience who

identifies closely with the mentioned ideals, and increasing the likelihood that they would have a positive reaction to their presentation.

Likewise, the use of rhetoric of comparison is another rhetorical technique that appeals to *logos*. These speakers compare the United States to other countries or individual states that have made advancements for women that the United States has not. For example, in Jane Addams' 1912 Statement to the U.S. House Judiciary Committee on Woman Suffrage she says, "The women in the north, particularly Finland, Sweden, and Norway, have the full franchise; and America, so far from being in the lead in the universal application of the principle that every adult is entitled to the ballot, is fast falling behind the rest of the world" (Addams). By mentioning specific countries where women do have the right to vote, it leads the representatives to feel bad about the United States being behind in terms of gender equality, making them more likely to fight for the ratification of the amendment. This technique is also used by Maloney in her speech when she references the states that have already voted in support of the ratification of the ERA. She says

In 2017, Nevada voted to ratify the ERA. Illinois followed in 2018, and Virginia in 2020. 38 state legislatures have now voted to ratify the ERA, meeting the constitutional requirement. But the ERA still doesn't appear in the Constitution (Maloney).

This factual information helps pressure the audience to give in to Maloney's argument and feel more inclined to pass the ERA. Another speech that uses this rhetorical strategy is Catt's 1917 speech in which she mentions that Canada, Russia and France have all pledged to give women the right to vote in the next election. (Catt) By pointing out that these countries have made strides in giving women the right to vote, she is insinuating that America has not done enough and is not progressive. Cutright explains that by using democratic examples, Catt is able to "showcase how tyrannical the United States was on this issue" (Cutright, 20). She continues to write that "Most

major nations, especially the ones she references, were still led by monarchies. Yet the United States, who was the first to implement democracy in the modern era, still did not allow women to vote” (Cutright, 20). By comparing the United States to countries like Russia, Catt is leading her audience to question their morals and policy making abilities. The men in the audience of these speeches are likely to buy into and support the idea that the United States is a “beacon of hope” in terms of democracy and the rights the country provides to its citizens. However, the use of rhetoric of comparison in these speeches undermines and disproves the conclusion that praises the United States and those who preach this false reality.

Further, I repeatedly observed the use of a call to action as a rhetorical tool among multiple feminist speeches. The use of a call to action in a speech gives the audience a feasible and specific responsibility, to carry out in relation to the purpose of the speech. This technique is seen in Chairwoman Carolyn Maloney’s 2021 Opening Statement to the House of Representatives on the hearing on the Equal Rights Amendment. She says, “I call on President Biden—who is a true champion of women—to withdraw this flawed legal opinion and allow the Archivist to certify the ERA without delay” (1). In this statement, she directly calls out President Biden and tells him what to do. Her request is simple and easy for her audience to comprehend. From hearing this speech, Biden is able to digest the concrete task he is being asked of, whether or not he decides to carry out the task. She goes further and says “I also strongly support the legislation led by our colleague, Congresswoman Speier, that the House passed to eliminate the time limit from the ERA. [...] I urge the Senate to take up this bill without further delay” (2). In addition to asking Biden for action, she is requesting action from her fellow representatives and provides them with a very specific task, supporting the piece of legislation. Another rhetor that utilizes this approach is Catt in her 1917 speech. In the closing portion of her speech she says,

Gentlemen, we hereby petition you, our only designated representatives, to redress our grievances by the immediate passage of the influence to secure its ratification in your own state, in order that the women of our nation may be endowed with political freedom that our nation may resume its world leadership in democracy (11).

Similarly to Maloney, Catt is directly asking her audience to support her requests and ratify the 19th Amendment, providing women the right to vote. In, “Agitation in Amsterdam: The International Dimension of Carrie Chapman Catt's Suffrage Rhetoric”, the author writes, “Catt hoped that these arguments would shame and embarrass the American Congress enough to add momentum to the suffrage cause” (12). By directly calling out the audience and insisting that they take action, it adds to the effect of her speech. It includes an element of responsibility for her audience. If they do not follow through with her ask of them, they are intentionally ignoring her plea. Utilizing a call to action at the end of a speech is a simple way to ensure the audience knows and understands the purpose and goal of a speech.

Furthermore, the utilization of addressing counter arguments but then refuting them with facts is a technique used by many feminist speakers that appeals to both logos and ethos. In Gloria Steinem’s 1970 Testimony before Senate hearings on the Equal Rights Amendment, she utilizes this strategy and acknowledges the counter arguments to the ERA. However, she quickly follows them up with evidence that debunks them. For example, in response to the argument that women are biologically inferior to men she says,

Women live longer than men, even when the men are not subject to business pressures. Women survived Nazi concentration camps better, keep cooler heads in emergencies currently studied by disaster-researchers, are protected against heart attacks by their female sex hormones, and are so much more durable at every stage of life that nature must conceive 20 to 50 percent more males in order to keep some balance going. (Steinem)

By bringing up one of the popular counter arguments among her audience, she is helping establish her own ethos. She shows she is aware of the arguments of the other side, but still has the ability to refute them and use it to support her argument. She utilizes facts in her rebuttal to quickly put the false counterargument to bed. She continues to mention the other common “myths” that her audience may believe but follows them all up with an explanation as to why they are completely false. She says,

Another myth, that children must have full-time mothers. American mothers spend more time with their homes and children than those of any other society we know about. [...]The truth is that most American children seem to be suffering from too much mother, and too little father. Part of the program of Women’s Liberation is a return of fathers to their children. If laws permit women equal work and pay opportunities, men will then be relieved of their role as sole breadwinner. (Steinem)

This section strengthens her argument and shows she has anticipated what her audience is thinking, helping her overall credibility. Chisholm also does a similar thing in her speech when she brings up the counter-argument that some may think the ratification of the ERA would create confusion and require more litigation to establish its meaning. She says,

This objection overlooks the influence of legislative history determining intent and the recent activities of many groups preparing for legislative changes in this direction. State labor laws applying only to women, such as those limiting hours of work and weights to be lifted, would become inoperative unless the legislature amended them to apply to men. As of early 1970 most States would have some laws that would be affected. However, [...] it is likely that by the time the equal rights amendment would become effective; no conflicting State laws would remain. (Chisholm)

This concern is something that a lot of her audience believes to be true, and by countering it she leads them to rethink their beliefs, leading them to be more likely to support the ratification of the amendment. The utilization of facts by these speakers to refute the opposition’s false beliefs

and support their own argument appeals to logos, because they are leading the audience to question their own flawed logic.

Asking rhetorical questions is a common strategy used among rhetors to lead an audience to question their personal beliefs based on the response and reaction the speaker wants them to have. This gently encourages the audience to think a certain way without being aggressive or forceful. Catt asks rhetorical questions throughout her entire speech to control the thoughts of the audience and make sure they are listening to her. She asks six questions in a row and says,

It is not clear that American history makes woman suffrage inevitable? That full suffrage in twelve States makes its coming in all forty-eight States inevitable? That the spread of democracy over the world, including votes for the women of many countries, in each case based upon the principles our Republic gave to the world, compels action by our nation? Is it not clear that the world expects such action and fails to understand its delay? In the face of these facts we ask you, Senators and members of the House of Representatives of the United States, is not the immediate enfranchisement of women of our nation the duty of the hour? Why hesitate? (3)

By asking these questions, she is engaging her audience to think of answers to her simple questions and in hand is persuading them to agree with her. The answers to the questions seem to be self-explanatory, which is why she is asking them. Additionally, she is allowing the audience to think they are coming up with the answers on their own, while in reality Catt is just leading them to think that way. Catt gives her male audience the power they crave, without taking away her own power. Moreover, her audience is more likely to agree with her if they reach the conclusion on their own, rather than just accepting what they are told to believe. Kacy Miller, President and founder of CourtroomLogic Consulting LLC says, “Rhetorical questions create opportunities for engagement and participation. While the listeners (or readers) may not vocally respond to your question, the wheels inside their brains are turning” (Miller). Catt also utilized this technique, paired with the use of repetition to further emphasize her message. Catt repeated

the question “do you realize?” four times in a row, during her speech. By doing this she emphasizes that her audience has been thinking the wrong thing and would be making a bad decision if they don’t support women's suffrage. She is asking them to investigate their own beliefs. It is impossible for her audience to not understand her argument and purpose of the speech. Chisholm also utilizes rhetorical questioning often in her speech. For example she says, “What would the legal effects of the equal rights amendment really be? The equal rights amendment would govern only the relationship between the State and its citizens—not relationships between private citizens” (Chisholm). Similar to Catt, Chisholm leads her audience to think they are making their own conclusions in response to her questions, when she is actually making space for them to think what she wants them to believe. Using rhetorical questions to lead an audience to reexamine their personal beliefs is an effective method to guide an audience to agree with your argument.

During the suffrage movement and even in today’s contemporary world, women who outwardly express their opinions in a public setting are ignored. Because of this, feminist speakers strategically adjust their rhetoric to appeal to their audience and gain their attention. Feminist speakers from 1917 to 2021 utilize similar rhetorical techniques to get their message across in the best possible fashion.

IV. Application of Rhetorical Techniques in the Classroom

I have taken many English classes at Emory University in which the professors attempted to incorporate application skills into the curriculum. However, it was only in one of my courses at Emory that I was extensively taught how to implement these devices into my own persuasive speech writing. It was in that Oral Communications class that I was able to fully understand the importance of learning how to speak with a purpose. As someone who is

interested in politics and activism, this class was essential to my abilities to persuade an audience. An Oral Communications class should be required as a basic general education requirement, so that universities can create more activists, which are desperately needed in our contemporary world.

The professor of that course, Dr. Joonna Trapp shares the belief that public speaking courses should be a requirement for college students. In an interview that I conducted with her, she explained that “Rhetoric is a practical discipline. It has its theory side, but that all spins out of ‘how do we create civic engagement, pass on information to people learning rhetoric about how to use it ethically?’” Trapp understands that many professors get attached to their theoretical beliefs and end up ignoring the application part. Trapp once taught a course called “History in Theory of Rhetoric,” which taught her students the history of rhetorical change and the theory behind it. However, to ensure her students got more out of the course than just the theoretical learning, she had an interlude every three weeks, in which she had her students apply the rhetorical techniques they saw in writing by speakers such as Aristotle and apply it to the work of activists like Martin Luther King Jr. She then had her students compose a speech that argued aloud the similarities among the speeches and their techniques, and she required them to utilize the rhetorical techniques in their speeches. Although this course was theoretical in nature, Trapp was sure to include practical aspects so that her students learned more than just pieces of information. They gained knowledge and experience to help them be a productive speaker. Trapp believes that “A class should be a set of activities with an overarching goal at the end” and encourages professors to think about their courses as a group of activities rather than a list of scheduled readings. Trapp’s pedagogy of including practical activities and lessons into her

teaching allows students to gain more than just facts and theory. Students learn how to apply what they are being taught, and then they can use that knowledge outside of the classroom.

The ability to successfully use speech to persuade is vital to achieving progress in our world. According to Trapp, in the Western world, “if you want to have a voice and have agency, you have got to learn how to speak. [...] Our government system is set up so that if you want to have a voice you have to talk.” The rhetorical techniques that students are taught to identify and analyze should be used to develop their persuasive abilities so they can become activists. In the book, “Oral Communication in the Disciplines: A Resource for Teacher Development and Training”, the author writes that

By incorporating communication in your courses, you have the potential to help your students learn what it means to interact as a member of your discipline, to prepare your students for future success ... and to encourage civic participation and responsibility. (Dannels, 5-6).

This perspective is in agreement with Trapp in that oral communication and the application of rhetorical skills is essential for active engagement in our modern-day world. Jessica Enoch’s study “Composing a Rhetorical Education for the Twenty-First Century: TakingITGlobal as Pedagogical Heuristic” investigates an activist group called TakingITGlobal’s (TIG) pedagogy of rhetorical education. Enoch describes that site as “a transnational, online community committed to educating youth around the world toward social change” (197). In her paper, she explains that one of TIG’s practices is that they spotlight a particular member’s activist accomplishments, detailing the ways they achieve their goal, and through reading about other activists’ work, members are able to learn how they might apply similar rhetorical tactics to their own activism work in their communities. (197) This concept can be applied to the rhetorical education that takes place in the classroom. When teachers guide their students to read speeches written by activists and understand the rhetorical strategies they use, it is important that they also have their

students apply what they have identified to their own persuasive speeches. For example, if students read the included feminist speeches and identify the rhetorical techniques used to persuade the rhetor's audience, they can utilize those strategies, such as rhetorical questions and repetition, in their own persuasive speeches. Enoch highlights Shirley Wilson Logan's work "To Get an Education and Teach My People': Rhetoric for Social Change". She argues for the importance of rhetorical education at the college level, expressing that "the purpose of college English should be to teach students more intentionally how to analyze and deploy language and images in ways that better prepare for meaningful civic engagement" (165). Similar to Trapp's theory, that in our society it is essential to be active speakers, Enoch explains that because our "contemporary moment [...] is shifting, it seems only logical that our pedagogical practices for rhetorical education follow suit" (172). Because activism is so important to achieving progress in our society, teachers must update their curriculum and practices to better prepare their students to become the change makers of our world. A more applicable rhetorical education will guide students to succeed as active members in their communities, fighting for social change.

The ability to understand and utilize the rhetorical triangle and identify specific rhetorical techniques is essential to analyzing pieces of writing. However, this is only one of the necessary components of a complete rhetorical education. Teachers must also include application aspects, such as public speaking and speech writing using the rhetorical strategies students have identified, into their rhetorical classes. This will help ensure their students grasp the practical facets of rhetoric which they then can utilize outside the classroom setting.

V. Conclusion

Unfortunately, we live in a time where women's rights are constantly under attack. As of September 1st 2021, abortion is illegal in Texas once a fetal heartbeat can be detected, which is

something that can occur as early as six weeks into a pregnancy. Many other states, including Georgia, are also trying to push similar pieces of legislation that places limits on women's reproductive rights. It is the role of activists to speak up and persuade those in power to make changes and fight for gender equality. However, there is a need for more activists in our contemporary world. Because of this, rhetorical education must include teaching students how to apply the rhetorical techniques used by feminist speakers to their own persuasive speeches and activism. As the first Emory student to graduate with a minor in Rhetoric, Writing and Information Design, I can attest to the importance of courses like this to prepare students to stand up for their beliefs and successfully achieve their goals. Without an application aspect incorporated into a typical rhetorical education, students will not be adequately equipped to be activists and successfully gain the attention and support of their audience.

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