

*check this for the correct paragraph order*

## LECTURE ON ETHOS

REVIEW: Remember that rhetorical theory (according to Aristotle) is a method of communication used by common people to deal collectively with their common problems.

Rhetorical theory takes into account that in addition to reason, humans are swayed by their emotions, their ethics, their values, their interests, their level of trust (or distrust). Hauser 91

Each day we make some judgment of character--the acts of public officials, co-workers, peers, students. Their acts contribute to our experiences of these people and our assessment of their moral, emotional, and intellectual disposition.

Initially, two points should be remembered: (1) Ethos is an Artistic Proof for it is a controlled proof, a caused response, a product, and (2) Ethos is dynamic, continually changing.

*Ethos is an artistic proof.*  
First, Ethos is a product of speaker-audience interaction. However it is a perceived phenomena, an interpretation rather than an existential attribute. (Hauser, 100)

An interaction takes place between communicator and an audience. Through their transaction within a rhetorical event, the audience forms a judgment--a social construct--that the speaker is competent, trustworthy (of good character), and of goodwill. Ethos is not an inherent character. It is an interpretation of the speaker's character based on how the person behaves in the specific rhetorical situation. (Hauser, 105) Some aspects of ethos do proceed the rhetorical situation, especially elements of character.

An audience's assessment is usually inferred. (Hauser, 98). You do not necessarily state your goodwill, character, or intelligence, it is inferred.