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English III - 2

2 February 2018

### Dreaming with King

“I have a dream” is one of the most famous phrases from a speech in American history. The inspirational Martin Luther King Jr. created this phrase and used it effectively in the speech he delivered to the hundreds of thousands of civil rights supporters who converged on Washington, D.C. on August 28, 1963. King’s speech challenged the audience to impact our nation by stepping out of the preconceptions of society and embrace the true meaning of freedom and equality for all.

Martin Luther King Jr. presented his speech with many words and phrases that influenced the audience in such a way where trust and credibility was established. In his “I Have A Dream” speech, Martin Luther King Jr. appeals to ethos by emphasizing his faith that “all men [no matter beliefs or skin color], someday would be brothers” (King) . Since the audience was clearly divided, King continuously used the words and phrases like my “my friends” and “peaceful” and “all men” in order to create, and then nurture a bond between both sides in order to maximize the intent of his speech (King). King’s repetition of these key phrases and words acted to develop a great amount of trust between both sides of the audience, whether they agreed with him or not, due to the peaceful and friendly connotation through which he delivered his words.

As a way to establish his ethos and strengthen the trust between King and the American nation, King led many groups and activities designed to address the issue of civil rights. He

“worked with a number of civil rights and religious groups to organize...a peaceful political rally designed to shed light on the injustices faced” (Gavins). This can be seen during King’s “I Have A Dream” speech when he says, “I have a dream that...the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together” (King). Through his sacrificial and selfless actions, the audience can recognize that he truly believed in what he said, and that he would die his dream for America would become a reality. Martin Luther King Jr.’s work with civil rights and religious groups not only established that King would truly do everything to see his dream for America come true, but that he was qualified and experienced in leading the movement for freedom. This created a tremendous amount of credibility and understanding between King and his audience.

The use of factual and logical approaches in King’s arguments for freedom helped convey a temporarily unbiased opinion of equality for everyone. During Martin Luther King’s “I Have A Dream” speech, the logical appeals presented act as a link between the historical evidence of racial discrimination and the extent to which King was willing to go for the truth. He portrays this hunt for truthful, historical accuracy by stating “the negro is still...crippled by the manacles of segregation” and “as [blacks] walk, [they] must make the pledge to...march ahead” (King). As a way to accurately and efficiently strive towards those goals of truth, King had to step out of society’s norms and do things that eventually caused him to be “arrested many times during his protests for civil rights” (Dlugan). The appeals to logic that are present in King’s speech are a reason why these protests were occurring. These especially influenced people who didn’t agree with him, as evidenced by the fact that “while tense at times [during the movement], in the end, Martin prevailed and segregation came to an end” (Jijon). Martin Luther

King Jr. also used evidence of historical documents, like the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, when he stated “[These] were a promise that all men would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness...[but]...America has defaulted on that promissory note” (King 4). Because the topic of racial discrimination was in fact coming from a black American, King realized that in order for the bell of freedom to be heard across the country, he had to present his arguments with as little of bias as possible so that every citizen would not only hear, but truly listen to his words. Through clearly fierce logical appeals, Martin Luther King Jr.’s message of freedom for all was heard by every citizen of America, and left an immense impact on society as a whole.

Martin Luther King Jr. also approached this emotional topic with sentimental words to influence his audience to feel a certain way. A strong way that King grasped his audience’s attention throughout this speech was through his emotion provoking words. His observations and statements included diction along the lines of “the whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges” (King). By appealing to pathos in his “I Have A Dream” speech, Martin Luther King, Jr. inspires his audience by making “the crowds [feel] uplifted by the emotional strength and prophetic quality of King’s famous [words]” (Kirk). King also used heartfelt expressions to further enhance the message of democracy that he so aptly portrayed. In order to bring out some positive feeling for such a dire subject, King said “This is our hope...with this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood” (King). By using these uplifting words, he brought his audience a feeling of hope during the grim discussion of this time period in our history. King’s appeals to the emotions of his listeners brought a sense of urgency

and especially of hope to Americans, and solidified the Constitution's promise that all men are created equal under the fundamentals of the law.

Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have A Dream" speech portrays the importance of freedom and equality for all in America, and why people were willing to die so they could see that dream come true. As freedom is the basis of our culture, government, and society, so is the guaranteed action and follow-through to apply that freedom to ALL Americans. King's speech undeniably accomplishes this through his appeals to ethos, pathos, and logos. His dream that the bell of freedom should be heard throughout our country and by every citizen in the land can only be achieved by those of us who are still here continuing the work King lost his life striving to attain.

Works Cited

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