Rhetorical Analysis of Monsanto

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Rhetorical Analysis of Monsanto

An Honors-in-Discipline Thesis

presented to

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in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree B.S. in Communication Studies

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by

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ABSTRACT

Rhetorical Analysis of Monsanto

by

Kyle Brannon

Rhetoric, and therefore persuasion, can be utilized to impact society in profound ways. These communication devices can also be used for more sinister and nefarious purposes that can leave black marks on any society’s history. For the purpose of this rhetorical analysis, I thoroughly investigated three artifacts used by the Monsanto Corporation. This project attempts to show how Monsanto utilizes rhetoric and persuasion to convince consumers their products are safe to purchase, although there is no scientific consensus regarding that safety to humans and the environment. Through an examination of these artifacts, I was able to examine how Monsanto used apologia as image restoration during or after crises.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

As technology continues to evolve, individuals are able to communicate with one another on a much larger scale than was possible previously. This means that individuals utilizing the art of rhetoric are able to deliver their given persuasive message to a seemingly endless amount of people through both verbal and nonverbal forms of communication (Herbig, 2016). Throughout history communication based rhetoric has been utilized to spread and convince others of certain beliefs and ideologies (Burke, 1969). A recent example shows politicians utilizing rhetoric and persuasive techniques to convince others to follow their particular ideologies. Wenli et al., (2013) discussed how politicians used a tax-funded campaign to persuade consumers to move away from, or stop using, products that generate pollution.

A persuasive message can have a profound impact on our society. Rhetoric and persuasion at their core are exceedingly powerful and they usually aim at successfully motivating behavior or attitude changes in individuals. They can be used in an attempt to forge a better and brighter future, or be used to lead humanity down a darker path. For example, Lilly (1994) noted how the Communist party of Yugoslavia called upon on patriotic youths, after World War II, to join voluntary labor brigades and to help rebuild the country’s shattered infrastructure. According to Lilly, “The party took power after the second World War with a vision and program for what it claimed would be a new and better society, on which it based its ideological integrity (p. 395). Lily noted the party thought that persuasion and propaganda where crucial elements to realizing this goal. However, when faced with certain issues, their persuasive tactics
turned into coercion and scare tactics, such as threatening jail time or restricting food rations to those that did not fall in line.

Despite regulations and ethical codes, corporations regularly commit unethical acts that damage or even destroy human lives and the environment (Cassels, 1993; Fox, 2003; Hollaender, Sheldon, & Summy, 2010; Lawrence, 2009, Lowenstein, 2010). However, each time one of these stories comes to light little seems to be done to punish said corporation and the general public continues to buy and use their potentially harmful products. Because of this, studying certain components of rhetoric and persuasion, specifically the manner in which these corporations utilize rhetorical strategies when faced with public discrimination, to be of the upmost importance. Ultimately, my interest is in discovering what rhetorical strategies are used to persuade or convince the public to continue to buy and use products that have been scientifically proven to cause harm and even death to humans and the environment, focusing on the Monsanto Corporation.

Additionally, I want to examine what Monsanto Corporation’s rhetorical messages are saying versus what is actually taking place during a time of crisis. For the purpose of this work I primarily focused on the rhetorical strategies used by corporations like Monsanto that have caused harm to the general public or the environment. I begin by providing information that will illustrate the historical context and importance of rhetoric and persuasion, as well as the importance for primarily focusing on the rhetorical strategies and actions of the Monsanto Corporation.

Rhetoric

Rhetoric has a long history, and many definitions have arisen to try and explain this particular concept (Burke, 1969). According to Eidenmuller (2001) our modern concept of
rhetoric began with Aristotle, and most of the notable definitions surrounding rhetoric deal with persuasion to some degree. Eidenmuller discusses the origins of rhetoric and provides definitions for rhetoric by a few famous rhetoricians throughout history, such as Aristotle and Cicero. According to Aristotle (n.d.) “Rhetoric may be defined as the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion. This is not a function of any other art.” Similarly, Eidenmuller (2001) states that Cicero defined rhetoric as speech designed to persuade. Both of these definitions touch on the fact that rhetoric is aimed at successful persuading other human beings through the art of speech.

Our current understanding of rhetoric differs in many ways. However, even in our current era public speaking and persuasion are still central components of rhetoric. Over time, typical rhetorical practices shifted towards specific public messages that are usually delivered by a politician, some corporation, or a regurgitated version of the previous two via some media outlet. Robert Heath (1992) discussed this change in rhetorical practices in one of his works, noting that although the origins of the rhetorical tradition can be traced to Aristotle, the emergence of rhetoric as an organized field of investigation within the modern academy began in 1915 with the inauguration of the Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking. Heath (1992) noted that the primary concern was to study the effects of specific public messages, and that most messages of interest were almost exclusively the speeches of recognized and celebrated persons who were usually political leaders. To help better explain the historical context of rhetoric, I provide information regarding certain theories or strategies for utilizing rhetoric for persuasive purposes.

It is difficult to conduct a rhetorical analysis without mentioning Kenneth Burke (1969). Burke had several theories and ideas regarding rhetoric and rhetorical strategies. Rutten and Soetaert (2014) stated that,
Burke’s rhetorical framework moved to the development of a general theory about the human being as symbol-making, symbol-using, and symbol-misusing animals. For Burke, language is the fundamental symbolic tool by which human beings exchange their interpretations of reality and he therefore claims that human action is rooted in language. (p. 341).

Additionally, the authors discuss how Burke believed humans are not random acting creatures but are instead social agents with attitudes and motives whose words negotiate relations of power, legitimacy, and authority.

For the most part, Burke’s views on rhetoric align with that of Aristotle’s, in terms of persuasion or the art of convincing other people. Higgins and Walker (2012) discussed how Burke believed that wherever there is persuasion there is rhetoric and wherever there is meaning there is persuasion. Basically for Burke, rhetoric involves the use of symbols or words in the attempts to persuade or convince others about a particular ideology or way of living.

Additionally, Burke had similar views regarding Aristotle’s three elements that characterize rhetoric: ethos, pathos, and logos. The authors continue their discussion by claiming that these elements reveal the characteristics of a good argument, as well as identifying the dimensions of the persuasive appeal. A quick review of these three aspects of rhetoric is necessary.

Higgins and Walter (2012) discuss each of the three appeals. The authors stated that the first appeal, ethos, refers to the persona or projected character of the speaker or communicator, including their credibility or trustworthiness. Furthermore, appeals to ethos emphasize the persuasiveness of the communicator’s character or perceived authority. Higgins and Walter (2012) claim that appeals to logos deal with the clarity or integrity of the argument, and that it
stresses logic and the appeal to reason. In other words, logos deals with persuasive appeals that revolves around logic, reasoning, and facts.

Higgins and Walters (2012) also provide information regarding the last of the appeals, pathos. The authors state that, “Pathos refers to the audience’s feelings and relies for persuasive effects on triggering audience emotions such as happiness, sadness, satisfaction, pity, or fear” (p. 198). Basically, this is an emotion-based appeal that does not necessarily rely on facts, logic, or a person’s credibility. The authors state that, “Burke claims that this is achieved through identification, whereby the persuader conveys a sense that she understands and relates to the needs, values, and desires of the audience” (p. 198). These three aspect of rhetoric are applied across a broad range of rhetorical strategies.

There are certain rhetorical strategies that organizations specifically utilize when facing some sort of crisis. According to Coombs (2010) a crisis is “the perception of an unpredictable event that threatens important expectancies of stakeholders and can seriously impact an organization's performance and generate negative outcomes” (p. 20). Noteworthy organizational crisis include the Union Carbide Bhopal disaster, the Enron scandal, the collapse of Long Term Capital Management, the BP oil spill, and the Tylenol tampering case. (Benson, 1988; Cassels, 1993; De Wolf & Mejri, 2013; Fox, 2003; Lowenstein, 2000; Hollaender, Sheldon, & Summy, 2010). Note it is not necessarily the event itself that is a crisis. A major contributing factor to whether the event will become a crisis is the way various organizational stakeholders (customers, stockholders, employees, etc.) perceive the event (negatively, neutrally, or positively) (Benoit, 1997). As such the “corporate rhetor” attempts to represent itself in positive ways (Cheney, 1992).
Processes of crisis communication come into play once an event is considered a crisis by a public. According to Coombs (2010), crisis communication is “the collection, processing, and dissemination of information required to address a crisis situation.” (p. 20).

Ihlen (2011) discusses some of these strategies, remarking that organizations in crisis typically rely on strategies ranging from the “aggressive” to the “accommodative” (p. 4). The organization in crisis will usually rely on strategies that either shift or deny the blame entirely or utilize one that seeks to reconcile a given situation by way of apology. Ihlen states that the rhetorical strategy of *apologia* or a speech of self-defense has been explored at length.

Hearit (1995) provides additional information about crisis communication, specifically *apologia*. Hearit begins his discussion of *apologia* by explaining what corporate social legitimacy is: the rhetorically constructed and publicly recognized congruence between the values of a corporation and those of a larger social system in which it operates. Hearit (1995) states:

> during times of crisis, corporations utilize apologia to dissipate public animosity and restore social legitimacy. An apologia is not an apology although it can contain one, but is rather a response to a social legitimation crisis in which an organization seeks to justify its behavior by presenting a compelling, counter account of its actions. (p.3)

The historical context of rhetoric and the information regarding rhetorical strategies foregrounds the following discussion of persuasion, since rhetoric and persuasion are virtually inseparable.

The art of persuasion or delivering a persuasive message in the United States can be utilized for both positive and negative outcomes. Positive persuasive messages include those by civil rights leader Martin Luther king, Jr., American evangelist Jonathan Edwards, Presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt and John F. Kennedy, along with a number of other social movements
including Yippies!, Students for a Democratic Society, as well as the feminist and LBGTQ
Stewart, Smith & Denton, 2012; Triafilopoulos, 1999).

From a business perspective, persuasion techniques are often utilized by organizations as
they attempt to market and sell products to consumers, or by politicians attempting to pander to
certain groups for more votes. Conger (1988) stated, “Persuasion is widely perceived as a skill
for selling products and closing deals. It is also commonly seen as just another form of
manipulation, devious and to be avoided” (p. 84). However, this does not mean that persuasion
cannot be used for the betterment of humanity. In fact, Conger proclaims that if used to its full
potential properly, persuasion is the opposite of deception. Persuasion then becomes a
negotiating and learning process through which a persuader leads colleagues to shared solutions
to a problem (Conger, 1998). To set this research in the proper context, I provide persuasive
models and examples regarding the proper way to utilize persuasion.

Matera and Artigue (2000) discuss Otto Lerbinger’s five designs of persuasion that he
rued stimulus-response, cognitive, motivational, social, and personality. The stimulus-
response model is based on association, much like Pavlov conditioning dogs with a tuning fork.
This approach, however, is simplistic and inappropriate to fit the needs of a complex issue.
Matera and Artigue claim “the cognitive model makes the assumption that certain individuals are
able of creating the correct conclusion if and when they are presented with sufficient
information” (pp. 94-95). The authors argue this model does not account for motivation.

The motivation model expands the context of persuasion by attempting to fulfill the
emotional needs of a target audience or population (Matera and Artigue, 2000). The social model
of persuasion expands on the motivation model by including information about social status and
group norms, which inform persuaders about the most acceptable patterns of behavior for the target population. Matera and Artigue (2000) note, “the personality model deals with the fact that a persuader must create separate messages based on different social influences and norms” (p. 95). This model also urges the persuader to be aware that even a well-developed message could still face complications because the audience is filled with a range of individual personality types and biases. Applying the combined information from these models can potentially prove beneficial to this particular analysis.

Kaptein (2015) noted that successful persuasive systems should deliver the right message, at the right time, and in the right way. As Kaptein explained, these three requirements are hard to fulfill if the persuader is unaware of all of the necessary situational elements that are involved. Kaptein’s adaptive persuasive system alters the persuasive message, the timing of the message, and a situational persuasive approach.

What all of these rhetorical and persuasive strategies have in common during crisis communication is the restoration of the organization’s public “face” or image (Benoit, 1995). According to Coombs, Frandsen, Halladay, and Johansen (2010),

Corporate apologia is the pivotal point around which crisis communication research developed. In general, corporate apologia is a communicative effort to defend the corporation against reputation/character attacks. Corporate apologia is a natural fit with crisis communication because a crisis threatens (attacks) the corporate reputation thereby calling forth a defense. (p. 338)

It is generally accepted that a good corporate reputation is a valuable, intangible asset that can attracts customers, investors, talented employees, garners positive press, and increases financial performance in a variety of ways (Coombs, 2007). A good corporate reputation is important and
organizations will utilize numerous strategies to maintain a positive image with their various publics (Benoit, 2015).

This review of the literature on rhetoric and persuasion provides a foundation upon which this rhetorical analysis progressed. Because of the increases in technology, communicators are able to deliver their rhetorical messages to a much larger audience base. They can do this by accessing a number of media or social media based outlets or sites. Since the Monsanto Corporation is utilizing rhetorical strategies by using both nonverbal and verbal persuasive messages, a review of the strengths and weaknesses regarding persuasion in face-to-face and mediated communication is necessary.
CHAPTER 2

FACE-TO-FACE AND MEDIATED COMMUNICATION

This study focused on uncovering the rhetorical practices of a major corporation. Since the corporation utilizes both nonverbal and verbal forms of communication, there are a number of ways that the audience can receive these persuasive messages. Two of the main ways to receive these persuasive messages are via face-to-face interactions or through some media or social mediated outlet. Face-to-face communication was the staple for communication with others for thousands and thousands of years (Ong, 2013).

According to Lacovelli and Johnson (2012) there are distinct psychological and physiological differences between face-to-face interactions and mediated interactions. They found that individuals that were part of a face-to-face interaction disclosure group perceived that they received more help than individuals in the mediated group. The authors state, “Female college students who communicated their thoughts and feelings about a stressful experience with a supportive peer experienced a greater reduction in physiological stress symptoms, but became more sensitive to their negative affect” (p. 10). One of the major benefits of communicating via face-to-face is the ability to observe and gauge nonverbal forms of communication. Nonverbal ques can provide crucial data about the effectiveness of the particular message that is being delivered. Chung et al., (2013), stated that, “The implications derived from the findings also support the argument that non-verbal interaction records are useful for quantitatively and qualitatively analyzing face-to-face peer interactions” (p. 5).

Other beneficial aspects of face-to-face communication over mediated communication include the ability to accurately deliver, and specifically tailor a particular message. In other
words, face-to-face communication reduces the risk of the individuals receiving the message to misinterpret the message (Baym, 2010). This can prove to be essential to the success rate of a persuasive message that could be easily misinterpreted. Interacting with other individuals face-to-face provides one with the ability to tailor their specific message based on the interactions with the other individuals. This can help to further strengthen the particular message that is being delivered.

New methods of communicating with other individuals have sprung up with the introduction of new technologies to various populations of people all across the world (Herbig, Herrmann & Tyma, 2015). As technology becomes more readily available to the masses, these new methods of communicating are becoming increasingly popular. Just as with face-to-face communication, there are certain benefits that are primarily associated with communicating via media based sites or over the Internet in general. Herrmann and Herbig (2016) discuss some of the most significant benefits of internet based communication, including the capacity for instantaneous polymediated interactions, as well as the ability to perform different aspects of one’s identity. They also noted that one of the most significant benefits associated with communicating with others via the Internet is the ability to reach and interact with countless individuals all across the world at any time. As Dan Gordon (2012) noted, “Although face-to-face communications are still important, technology provides a vehicle for reaching more people, more often” (p. 5).

However, individuals are not the only users of Internet technologies. Organizations continue to invest large sums of money to reach consumers via technology. In fact, organizations were projected to spend $121B on Internet advertisements alone in 2014 (Lunden, 2014). This includes food and health organizations. As Shaun et al., (2012) noted, “With the recent
proliferation of social media channels (e.g., Facebook, Twitter), food safety and nutrition communicators have more opportunities than before to enable interactive communications with the public” (p. 10).

For example, Giselle Auger (2013) discussed how nonprofit advocacy organizations are using media to ethically persuade people to their perspective. Auger stated, “Today, individuals and organizations may promote and persuade using the various platforms and tools of social media, potentially reaching anyone in cyberspace” (p. 3). This increased access to a large population of people means that individuals are able to deliver their particular persuasive messages to a much larger audience than previously.

Relatedly, as discussed by Herrmann and Herbig (2016), another major benefit of communicating via social media based Internet sites is the ability for people to create and share their particular message with a community of like-minded individuals. Scott Young and Doralyn Rossmann (2015) illustrated this community building benefit in their article about Liberians building a community through social media. The authors noted, “In articulating and realizing an intentional and strategic social media program, we have generated results that demonstrate the community-building capability of social media” (p. 4). The authors continue by claiming that they transformed their social media practices from a one-way broadcasting system to a personality-rich two-way interacting system. In regards to community building, Young and Rossmann wrote, “By applying intentional social media practices, the researchers' Twitter user community grew 100 percent in one year, with a corresponding 275 percent increase in user interactions” (p. 5). These authors also noted, “Using a community analysis approach, this research demonstrates that the principles of personality and interactivity can lead to community formation for targeted user groups” (p. 5). Creating a community through media based websites
provides individuals with the opportunity to share their particular persuasive message with a large group of like-minded individuals.

The final two benefits of communicating via media based Internet sites involves how easy these sites make it for any individual with access to a computer and the internet to share or receive information with others (Herbig & Herrmann, 2016; Rothschild, 2014). The first of these benefits deals with how easy it is for a wide range of individuals to share their particular messages with others by utilizing social media based internet sites. Previously, an average individual or business would have to go through great lengths to deliver their particular message to a large group of people. Furthermore, they would have no easily accessible way of knowing if these people received their message or interpreted the message as intended. However, this is becoming less of an issue with the creation of social media based websites. Philip Rothschild (2014) stated, “every author-and really anyone who has something to say or sell has an interest in building an audience using the social media tools available today” (p. 2). Similarly, Gruzd and Wellman (2014) noted, “People now have access to a wide range of online communication and information tools that can make it easier to spread their ideas and try to influence others independent of time and space” (p. 2).

The last benefit involves how easily these social media websites make it for individuals to find information that interests them (Herrmann & Herbig, 2016). Because of this, it could potentially lead a larger population of people to find and hear a specific persuasive message. Chidakel (2014) discussed how he uses social media to keep track of rapidly emerging trends in medicine and to stay current with the latest research and developments in his field. Chidakel noted, “Gone are the days, indeed, of thumbing through stacks of journals in the library and, in its place, I am now able to get breaking medical news delivered to my computer, phone, and
wherever else I choose” (p. 5). Now that I have discussed some information about the benefits for each of the two methods that pertain to this study, I will proceed by providing adequate information regarding the history and actions of the Monsanto Corporation. Immediately following that I will proceed to the methods utilized for this research.
CHAPTER 3

MONSANTO CORPORATION

The overall health and wellbeing of the food produced in the United States and the inhabitants that consume it is an important topic of discussion. Swarup, Mishra, and Jauhari (1992) discuss how the agricultural industry in the United States has come under more scrutiny in recent years. They claim that this is due to American consumers becoming more concerned with their overall health and the increase in pollutions from the agricultural industry (p. 263). This concern includes the large agricultural corporations that produce a majority of the crops used in the foodstuffs Americans buy and consume. In particular, Monsanto Corporation continues to come under scrutiny for a variety of practices, including their herbicide Roundup, which I will soon discuss.

The Monsanto Corporation has been in operation for 150 years, and they are responsible for creating one of the most notorious chemical weapons known as Agent Orange. According to Messer, Aaron, and McClatchy (2010) Agent Orange was a weaponized chemical herbicide used during the Vietnam War, which wreaked havoc on the environment in Vietnam, inhabitants of that area, as well as U.S soldiers. These individuals suffered severe health problems. Furthermore, there was an increase in horrible birth defects for years after the war. Some of the most debilitating side effects from exposure include several types of cancers, Parkinson’s disease, Non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma, Hodgkin’s disease, and a host of other complications (Sills, 2014). According to the timeline located on their own website, the Monsanto Corporation did not stop experimenting with and utilizing potentially dangerous herbicides, and instead turned its gaze towards the United States agricultural industry.
Monsanto is responsible for introducing and spreading certain herbicides and other toxins to the world, with the hopes of eradicating pests and unwanted variables from the agricultural industry. Monsanto (2002) lists some information about how they introduced these chemicals and their effects on the world on their website. These herbicides and toxins include DDT, PCB, and Roundup, and all these chemical compounds have caused environmental damage in their own way. DDT and PCB caused enough damage to certain individuals and the environment that the United States government and other countries around the world have banned them from being used. The United States District court Southern District of New York proclaimed, “Monsanto is the chemical company that was previously responsible for introducing to the world, Agent Orange, DDT, PCB’s and other toxins” (p. 501).

DDT, before it was banned, caused health issues with humans and animals, including fish, birds, and mammals. Adams et al. (1949) found that aquatic invertebrates were practically annihilated in areas that were heavily treated with DDT. These authors also found that bird populations decreased or were halted by exposure to DDT. Adams et al. (1949) stated that, “Further evidence that the DDT affected bird populations is furnished by the finding of dead or dying birds on the treated areas” (p. 251). DDT exposure also had negative effects on humans. McClatchy (2006) discusses a study that linked DDT exposure to certain health complications in babies. McClatchy (2006) found that the Salinas Valley babies that were exposed to DDT show neurological problems that include mental and physical impairment. The study revealed that with every tenfold rise in DDT exposure, the children’s scores on mental tests dropped two to three points, and that there motor skills were also reduced. DDT, although banned, still has negative consequences on ecological systems (Gill, Wilson, Cheng & Elliott, 2003).
PCBs are accompanied by their own set of negative side effects (Fahrenkamp-Uppenbrink, 2016). The journal *New Scientists* (2001) discussed how PCBs are toxins found in food that accumulate in our fat. The journal notes how that PCBs are hormone mimics, and affect wildlife as well as people, and that some women in Europe have enough PCBs in their breast milk to cause immune, thyroid, and clotting disorders in their babies. Sierra (1994) noted how Monsanto, the source of all PCBs in the United States, publically denied the issues related to their toxin. Sierra (1994) also noted how Monsanto falsified cancer research and then used the fudged results to delay the federal regulation of PCBs. Others speculated that Monsanto was well aware of the potential dangers associated with their chemical compounds.

Of particular importance to this study, the Monsanto Corporation developed a herbicide known as *Roundup* in 1970 (Baird, Upchurch, Homesley & Franz, 1971). *Roundup*, and therefore glyphosate, is quite popular in the United States and other parts of the world. The problem with this herbicide is directly related to the main ingredient, glyphosate. According to Thomas Pat (2008):

> Since its introduction during the mid-1970s, global use of glyphosate has increased rapidly, and it is now the world's most widely used pesticide. In 2002, the global sales for glyphosate amounted to around $4.705 billion and accounted for more than 30 percent of the volume of total global herbicide sales. (pp. 20-21)

Pat (2008) noted that in an attempt to stop the growth of weeds or other unwanted plants resulted in irresponsible agricultural practices, causing plants to become increasingly resistant to the herbicide. Affected plants are known as “superweeds.” This resistance forces farmers to purchase and use more *Roundup* to achieve the same effect.
Furthermore, the Monsanto Corporation designed and patented genetically modified seeds that have the *Roundup* herbicide scientifically spliced into their genetic make-up. Monsanto’s website states that these crops are known as “Roundup Ready” crops, which were designed to reduce the need to spray herbicides on crops, and also protect the crops from being damaged by the use of Roundup. However, “Roundup Ready” crops still require the use of the herbicide *Roundup*. Before I continue, a distinction should be made between Roundup and Roundup Ready crops. As I have stated, Roundup is the herbicide developed by the Monsanto Corporations that kills weeds, grass, and other plants. Roundup Ready crops are genetically modified crops that have the herbicide Roundup genetically spliced into the crops DNA. The reason for this genetic modification is so that the extra use of Roundup on the Roundup Ready crops will not kill the crops themselves. This makes it so that the use of Roundup kills the undesirable weeds and other plants around the Roundup Ready crops, but not the Roundup Ready crops themselves. Without these genetically modified crops or the Roundup Ready crops, the use of Roundup would jeopardize the crops that were not genetically infused with this product. Letters (2000) stated that the total amount of herbicides used with soybeans has changed little with the introduction of “Roundup Ready” varieties, but the data did show a substantial reduction in the number of applications made to soybean acreage. Before the introduction of “Roundup Ready” crops, most farmers would use two to three different herbicides, which would damage crops. According to Letters (2000), “The primary reason growers have adopted Roundup Ready weed control programs is the simplicity of a weed control program that relies on one herbicide to control a broad spectrum of weeds without crop injury or crop rotation restrictions” (p. 803).
An additional study revealed that *Roundup* and glyphosate can potentially cause extensive damage to crops and create complications for organic farmers. New data suggests that glyphosate from *Roundup* drains the nutrients from the crops they are used on. This is especially true for the genetically modified crops that are “Roundup Ready.” Bøhn et al. (2014) discussed how conventional soybeans were observed to have superior nutrient and dry matter compositions, as opposed to glyphosate treated genetically modified soybeans. However, it is important to note that in a review of this study certain conflicting factors were observed and certain studies showed that glyphosate did not affect the nutrients in the crops. This same study did reveal that glyphosate reduces photosynthesis and nutrient uptake in genetically modified soy crops. Unfortunately, these farmers were unaware of the damage that could be caused from “Roundup Ready” crops and the heavy use of the herbicide *Roundup*. In fact, this system of agricultural practices has recently been identified as a cause of a number of environmental issues, including the population problems of the monarch butterfly and American honeybees. (Balbuena, Tison, Hahn, Greggers, Menzel & Farina, 2015; Sirinathsinghji, 2015).

Recent studies have linked medical issues in both humans and animals with the exposure to and consumption of “Roundup Ready” crops and the herbicide *Roundup*. Carey Gilliam (2013) claims that, “Heavy use of the world's most popular herbicide, *Roundup*, may be linked to a range of health problems and diseases, including Parkinson’s, infertility and cancers, according to a new study” (p. 1). These issues arise from the residues of glyphosate that is found in the food. Gilliam states that the residue from glyphosate enhances the damaging effects of other food-born chemical residues and toxins in the environment to disrupt normal body functions, which induces diseases. Additionally, CCPA Monitor (2007-2008) noted how a group of French scientists found that human placenta cells are very sensitive to *Roundup* at concentrations that
are less than what is currently being used in agricultural practices. The CCPA Monitor stated, “An earlier epidemiological study of Ontario farming populations in Ontario showed that exposure to glyphosate, the key ingredient in Roundup, nearly doubled the risk of late miscarriages” (p. 22).

Other studies have shown some potential health risks caused by glyphosate and Roundup. “In 2002, French scientists found that Roundup activates one of the key stages of cellular division that can potentially lead to cancer. There is also research that shows that even brief exposure to glyphosate causes liver damage in rats” (Pat, 2008, pp. 20-21). Colopy (2015) noted how the use of glyphosate has increased due to the formation of glyphosate resistant crops. Glyphosate enhances the damaging effects of other food borne chemical residues and environmental toxins, which effects are insidious due to the fact the long term negative effects are not immediately apparent. Colopy (2015) noted, “Glyphosate is likely to be pervasive in our food supply, and, contrary to being essentially nontoxic, it may in fact be the most biologically disruptive chemical in our environment” (pp. 31-32).

Furthermore, organic farmers are also suffering from contamination caused by glyphosate found in Roundup (Bouchie, 2002; Holman, 2014). Genetically modified seeds and pollen containing Roundup can be carried by the wind, or other means of transportation, and infect other farms that rely on organic practices. Due to the contamination, these farmers are not allowed to label their crops as organic. These farmers are attempting to rectify the situation and filled a class action lawsuit against the Monsanto Corporation. An article by Natural Life (2002) stated:
In January, two Saskatchewan organic farmers filed a class action against Monsanto and Aventis on behalf of all certified organic farmers in Saskatchewan. The suit claims that genetically engineered (GE) canola has spread across the prairies and contaminated conventional crops so extensively that most certified organic grain farmers no longer attempt to grow canola. (pp. 20-21)

Natural Life (2002) claimed that the farmers are suing for damages caused by the genetically modified seeds and are attempting to ban Monsanto from introducing genetically engineered wheat to their area. These farmers claim Monsanto should have known that their genetically modified seeds would spread and contaminate the environment. They also claim that the contamination robbed these farmers of a lucrative and growing market. Regardless of any particular opinions about the Monsanto Corporation, the information provided gives one pause and reason to persuade others to seek a more environmentally friendly and safer form of herbicide.

Historically, from Agent Orange, to DDT, to PCBs, Monsanto has a dubious reputation among the public and environmental groups. Given the current environmental, financial, and human costs regarding the herbicide Roundup and the genetically modified Roundup Ready crops, this study intends to answer two questions.

**Research Question**

Research Question 1: Which rhetorical strategies are being utilized by the Monsanto Corporation during times of crisis for the corporation?
CHAPTER 4

METHODS

Again, the purpose of this rhetorical analysis is to identify which rhetorical strategies are being used by the Monsanto Corporation to persuade individuals to continue to buy their products. I compared said rhetoric with the reality of what is going on during a time of crisis for this corporation or in response to a previous situation in which the company faced crisis. For this work, I applied the neo-Aristotelian method of rhetorical criticism. According to the book *Methods of Rhetorical Criticism: A Twentieth-Century Perspective* by Brock, Scott, and Cheseboro (as cited by Carter, 2001) a neo-Aristotelian analysis examines the intended effects of an artifact on an audience and the strategies used by the writer for achieving the intended effects. According to the book *Rhetorical Criticism: Exploration and Practice* by Foss (as cited by Carter, 2001) there are three primary steps involved with conducting a neo-Aristotelian rhetorical analysis. These steps are to reconstruct the context in which the artifact occurred, to analyze the artifact, and to assess the impact of the artifact. According to Mitsein (2016) an artifact can be any visual element or written forms of media. Additionally, according to Foss (as cited by Carter, 2001) there are five canons involved with classical rhetoric which are the bases of the analysis in neo-Aristotelian criticism. These canons are invention, arrangement, style, delivery, and memory.

Karr (1995) discuss information regarding these five canons. According to Karr, invention involves coming up with the point of view, the ideas, and the strategy for expressing the author’s thoughts to the audience. Invention is where the author decides which of the rhetorical appeals/strategies that they will use to persuade the audience of their particular
ideology (p. 48). These appeals are ethos, pathos, and logos that are discussed previously in this work. Given that the point of this work is to identify the rhetorical appeals used by Monsanto, this is where the focus of the analysis will be. According to Karr arrangement is simply how the artifact is organized (p. 51). Karr explains style as the ways in which the rhetorical messages are delivered, and it focuses on such things as clarity and use of evidence (p. 53). Basically, style focuses on the choice of language the author uses for their rhetorical messages. Style is similar to the next canon delivery. Karr explains delivery as how the author uses their body or gestures when delivering their rhetorical messages (p. 58). This canon also deals with the speakers body language. Since the last canon, memory, does not particularly pertain to this work, I will not be focusing on it.

Following the neo-Aristotelian steps mentioned above, I began by identifying the context in which my chosen artifacts occurred. The second step was to actually analyze my chosen artifact. This includes applying the four canons that are mentioned above, to the selected artifacts. The final step that I took was to identify the potential impact of these artifacts, or the potential impact of the rhetoric used in these artifacts. I also provided examples of visual elements that were used to enhance the persuasiveness of these artifacts.

For this work, I used three rhetorical artifacts that were utilized by the Monsanto Company during times of crisis for the company or in response to previous situations in which the company faced crisis or criticism. The first artifact that I have selected to analysis is Monsanto’s mission statement and facts about the organization. This message was delivered by Monsanto CEO Hugh Grant via the Monsanto website (Monsanto, 2002). The second artifact that I selected involves a response to the PCBs scandal that took place during the nineteen seventies. This response was also located on the Monsanto website (Monsanto, 2002). The final
artifact that I have selected is a video called who is Monsanto that was located on their YouTube channel (Monsanto, 2016). This video outlines how they make farmers lives easier and the world a better and safer place. Again, I followed the steps of the neo-Aristotelian method of rhetoric and outlined the rhetorical devices used in each of these artifacts. Upon completion of these steps, I provided additional information that reveals the reality of the situation for each of the artifacts.
CHAPTER 5

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

I conducted a rhetorical analysis on three of Monsanto’s artifacts. Again, the first step in conducting this rhetorical analysis using the neo-Aristotelian method, after selecting an artifact, was to identify the context of said artifact. To begin identifying the context of a particular artifact, I started by explaining the purpose of the artifact, the author of the artifact, and the artifact’s targeted audience.

The first artifact is Monsanto’s mission statement and general facts about the company, from the *Monsanto 2015 Sustainability Report* which can be found here: http://www.monsanto.com/sustainability/documents/monsanto-2015-sustainability-report.pdf.

The artifact begins,

Dear Stakeholders, Sustainability is a journey that presents a constant but welcome challenge: how can we push ourselves to achieve even more? How do we feed a growing planet in a changing climate? These are tough questions, and we must collaborate to find answers. *We grow better together.* (p. 3, Emphasis in the original)

The purpose of this artifact is to provide general information about what the company does, what their goals are, and how they operate. This particular artifact was crafted by current Monsanto CEO and chairman of the board of directors.

The targeted audience for this particular artifact involves any individual or group actively seeking information about the corporation Monsanto. Since it is on their website, individuals have to actively seek it out in order to see it. Arguably one of the largest audience that this
artifact targets would be farmers that are interested in Monsanto’s products since this company is heavily involved with agriculture. There is lot of information regarding the context surrounding this particular artifact. During the time that this artifact was created, Monsanto was facing a great deal of criticism and scrutiny for unethical and illegal practices involving their interactions with farmers and the damages they were causing to the environment with their chemical creations such as Roundup ready crops. I will now proceed with the second step in the analysis process which is to actually analysis the artifact. I will do this by using the four canons mentioned above.

The first canon, invention, involves identifying the strategies used to convince the audience of the author’s particular ideology. This involves identifying the use of the three primary rhetorical appeals which are ethos, pathos, and logos. After reviewing this particular artifact, I concluded that the author uses a combination of all three rhetorical appeals in an attempt to persuade consumers to support and buy their products. Again, ethos refers to the persona or projected character of the speaker or communicator, including their credibility or trustworthiness. Grant utilizes many instances of appeals to ethos in order to strengthen the argument that this company, and by extension Hugh Grant, are credible and trustworthy. One of the major instances of Grant’s use of an appeal to ethos comes from his discussion on the company’s sustainability goals, which includes their core business beliefs and practices. According to Grant (2015) their company approach to business encompasses certain key principles including acting ethically and responsibility, while also embracing collaboration and transparency (p. 3). In the above statements, Grant is using the ethos appeal to attempt to persuade the target audience that he, and by extension his company, can be trusted because some of their main business practices focus on acting ethically and responsible while at the same time embracing transparency and collaborative work efforts.
An outsider with no additional information about this man or his company could witness these core business practices and perceive that this man, and by extension his company, are trustworthy and credible. These same individuals would also be under the impression that this man and his companies’ character conforms to traditional ideals about what makes up a good or trustworthy person. This can potentially problematic due to the reality of Monsanto’s actual business practices.

This use of ethos is also a good example of crisis communication, specifically apologia. As mentioned previously in this work, corporations utilize apologia to dissipate public animosity and restore social legitimacy during times of crisis. The use of ethos is used to dissipate public animosity caused by the potential damages of Roundup by explaining that Monsanto’s core business strategies involves acting ethically and responsibly.

As I noted previously, logos appeals deal with persuasive appeals that revolve around logic, reasoning, and facts. Most of the appeals to logic, reasoning, and facts come from Grant’s discussion on sustainability. Grant (2015) discusses how his company utilizes STEM to improve the lives and wellbeing of the people, environment, and communities in which they operate. STEM is an acronym that stands for science, technology, engineering, and math. Grant states, “By utilizing logic based tools such as math, science, and engineering, we have helped this company to improve the lives of farmers, protect water supplies, and improve the health of the soil in which crops are grown” (p. 1).

Grant also makes claims that his company is utilizing STEM to combat climate change. Grant says that by utilizing the logic and reasoning based tools, his company is now particularly attuned to face and deal with certain effects of climate change issues such as drought, shifting
pest infestations, and compromised harvests. These appeals to logos that are utilized by Hugh Grant in this artifact are interesting due to the fact that most of the logic, reasoning, and facts used within this artifact are based on questionable scientific claims and unjustified information. I provided information that arguably proves the previous statement correct after analyzing this particular artifact. The accomplishments of these goals are displayed in a certain way that would make any unknowledgeable individual think that these statements are based on unquestioned scientific facts. Next, I discussed the appeals to pathos that were used in this particular artifact.

As I noted, appeals to pathos involves persuasive attempts at triggering audience emotions such as happiness, sadness, satisfaction, pity, or fear. Grant’s use of pathos based appeals focuses primarily on triggering the target audience’s emotions regarding fear and happiness. Grant’s use of pathos appeals to the fears of certain individuals. Grant claims, “The world’s population is growing at an alarming rate and soon the planet will not be able to support the growing population in terms of making sure everyone has enough food and fresh water for survival” (p. 5). Grant also states that certain aspects of climate change are cutting into the food supply, which exacerbates the shortages caused by the population issue. After attempting to induce fear into the consumer, Grant provides is views on how to fix these issues. Grant directly states, “Based on these population and climate change predictions, I have dedicated my company to meeting the demands of the growing population and the changing environment,” (p. 5). Grant then stresses the need to combat certain aspects of climate change that harm the production of crops and other food sources.

Grant is clearly playing on the fears of the average individual by making assumptions that without his company’s efforts our society would not be able to adequately supply food because of population and climate change issues. Grant also uses pathos appeals to play on the happiness
based emotions of the uninformed consumer. Grant makes several claims that his efforts and the efforts of his company has drastically improved the lives of a variety of farmers and other individuals located in the areas in which Monsanto operates. For example, Grant (2015) states that one of their main goals as an organization is to improve the lives of five million resource-poor American farmers by the year two thousand and twenty.

Another example of this happiness based emotional appeal comes from Grant’s discussion on human rights. Grant claims that one of his company’s main and long-held goals is respecting and protecting the dignity and rights of every person involved with Monsanto. Obviously, all of these rhetorical statements would invoke happy or fear based emotions to the uninformed majority. Again, this can potentially prove very harmful since most of the claims made by Hugh Grant are grossly exaggerated or just blatantly false. I go into more detail about these potential dangers after completing the final step of the rhetorical analysis, which is to identify the visual elements used in this particular artifact. I now proceed by discussing the second canon involved with this type of analysis, which is arrangement.

Again, arrangement focuses on how the particular artifact was organized. In terms of this first artifact, it was organized into two parts. The first part is Monsanto CEO Hugh Grant’s mission statement and general facts about the company’s core beliefs or values. The second part is Monsanto’s sustainability report which includes information about all of the good they are doing for the environment. Now that I have discussed the second canon, I proceed by discussing the third canon which is style. Style focuses on the way in which an artifact is delivered and it focuses on such things as clarity and use of evidence. In terms of clarity, this particular artifact is very clear in laying out the rhetorical claims it is attempting to make. For example, the audience should be clear about how this company acts in ethically and responsible ways, and their efforts
their organization has made in terms of sustainability. In terms of evidence, there were no specific examples of evidence to support the primary claims made in this artifact. For example, no evidence was given on how the specifics of how this company improves the lives of farmers or how it improves the quality of the soil in which crops are grown. Since this artifact was entirely text based, the fourth canon delivery does not necessarily apply. If anything, this artifact was delivered via text based messages located on their website. Now that I analyzed the canons that apply to this artifact, I proceed by identifying the potential impact of this artifact or the potential impact of the rhetoric used in this artifact.

The rhetorical claims made in this artifact could have several potential impacts on the given audience. Grant’s use of ethos, specifically his claims about his company’s core business beliefs and practices. These ethos based claims attempt to persuade or convince the audience that this company acts in ethically and responsible ways and that they also embrace such principles as transparency. This could have specific impacts on the audience. These impacts could involve the audience being persuaded to buy this company’s products or to just support this corporation in general.

Grant’s use of logos could also have specific impacts on the audience of this particular artifact. The use of logos that I am referring to are Grant’s explanation of the acronym STEM. Grant’s use of this rhetorical appeal could persuade the audience that this company improves the environment and the lives of farmers across the United States. Again, this use of logos can have certain potential impacts on the audience of this particular artifact, specifically farmers that are interested in Monsanto. Farmers that receive these appeals to logos could be persuaded to buy this companies products or to seek assistance from this company. This is true especially if any of these farmers are in need of assistance that Monsanto claims they can help with. Basically, this
rhetorical appeal could impact farmers that are in need of help to seek out this company and their products. It could also draw more support or audience members to this company, specifically individuals that are interested in supporting or helping the environment.

Again, Grant’s use of pathos could have their own impact on the audience of this particular artifact. The specific use of appeals to pathos that I am referring to are Grant’s claims that the population is growing at an alarming rate and that soon the planet will not be able to support the growing population. The way in which this appeal could impact the audience is that it could cause different levels of fear, especially in individuals that are concerned about the growing population issue. Again, this could persuade the audience to support the actions of this particular corporation, especially those individuals that are concerned about the growing population issues. Now that I have followed the steps of the neo-Aristotelian analysis, I provide examples of visual elements that were used in this artifact to enhance the persuasiveness of the claims made in this artifact.

There are two uses of visual elements that are relative to this particular artifact. I have provided images of the visual elements below.
Figure 1: Monsanto design illustrating multiple crops

The first is a fairly large motto that says growing better together. This motto is made up of pictures of people, certain crops, and insects. This is clearly used to illustrate and enhance Grant’s claims that they are working hard to improve the lives of everyone involved with this organization. The other use of visual elements comes from a picture of Hugh Grant that is located right next to his company’s main mission statement.

Figure 2: Photograph of Monsanto CEO Hugh Grant
This was not the most persuasive use of visual elements, since this particular picture does nothing to strengthen his arguments that he is credible and trustworthy. Grant does not even appear to be smiling in this picture and he presents himself using a flat affect. I suppose the argument could be made that Grant is displaying a small smile, which could enhance the ideas that he is a friendly and caring individual. Upon review of this particular artifact, I now provide factual information that contradicts most of the rhetorical statements used. This information reveals the reality of the situation and information surrounding this particular artifact.

The previously mentioned rhetorical statements provide information that is contradicted by reality and scientific information. First, Hugh Grant claims that his company works hard to improve the lives of farmers. Secondly, he claims that Monsanto to improves the quality of the soil in which crops are grown. I briefly touched on this information during the previous discussion on Monsanto. I begin by explaining how Monsanto does not help most farmers, and in fact, they make the lives of many farmers quite miserable.

Hugh Grant makes several claims that his company is working hard to improve the lives of millions of farmers across the United States. This claim is dubious. The reality is Monsanto acts in ways that are questionably ethical, borders on the harassment of farmers, and contaminates the crops and lands of numerous farmers that refuse to conform to the demands of Monsanto. For example, organic farmers are being run out of business by the Monsanto Corporation and their so-called helpful business practices (Amalinckx, 2015; Bartlett & Steele. 2008). However, Monsanto designed their genetically modified products in such a way that made it easy for their products to contaminate other farms. Once these other farms were contaminated, they are forced to sell their crops at a lower cost, which significantly hurts organic farmers financially. Monsanto also sent certain agents to illegally trespass on these farms to test for their
companies genetically modified products (Kazeem, 2016). Once these tests came back positive Monsanto would sue these farmers in an attempt to take their land and precious resources. For a long time, Monsanto won many of these cases. This caused many of these farmers to lose substantial amounts of money and even loss their land and other properties.

Jim Gerritsen, president of the Organic Seed Growers and Trade Association, is finally making efforts to seek justice against the company that has harmed countless farmers across the globe (Brino, 2016). Gerritsen and many other farmers are taking their cases to the Supreme Court due to the unbelievable court decisions of certain local courts. Gerritsen made several claims against Monsanto during these court hearings that reveal the reality of the relationship between Monsanto and most farmers. Gerritsen (2013) states that he and the other farmers involved with this case are not Monsanto customers, they do not nor did they ever ask for Monsanto’s seeds or genetic technologies, and they do not want their trespassers on their land.

Gerritsen (2013) continues by claiming that he and the other farmers never asked nor wanted the contamination of their crops. They do not want to have to defend themselves from aggressive assertions of patent infringement because Monsanto refuses to keep their pollution on their side of the fence. Gerritsen concludes his discussion by claiming that many farmers have been forced to stop growing certain crops to avoid genetic contamination and lawsuits from Monsanto, and that these farmers want justice for the damages they have caused. Grant’s second claim is that the soil in which Monsanto crops are grown is not harmed.

Grant made several claims that Monsanto is primarily focused on sustainability and that they have moved away from dangerous products. Grant claims that there new business practices improve the quality of soil in which crops are grown. In reality, one of Monsanto’s most recent
creations Roundup Ready crops are causing direct damage to the soil in which crops are grown (Strom, 2013). Monsanto’s creation of Roundup ready crops are actually damaging the soils in which crops are grown as well as the crops themselves. Roundup ready crops along with the heavy and required use of Roundup are draining the nutrients and minerals from the soil and the actual crops themselves (Kazeem, 2016). This makes crops and the soil itself unhealthy. This also means that the entities that consume these crops are not getting the nutrients or minerals one would expect from similar none GMO crops. The main cause of these complications comes from the main ingredient of Roundup and Roundup ready crops, which is glyphosate. Bøhn et al., (2014) discusses how that some Roundup ready crops and crops grown with Roundup had significant nutritional and mineral deficiencies. This complication is reportedly becoming more serious with each consecutive crop cycle. This information shows that Monsanto is not improving the quality of the soil or the crops grown in the soil. In fact, this company is doing the direct opposite of what their rhetorical messages imply.

The second part of this rhetorical analysis will focus on the second artifact that I have selected. The second artifact that I analyzed involves Monsanto’s response to the polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) scandal that took place during the nineteen seventies. While PCBs were discontinues in the United States in the 1970s, they continue to pose environmental problems today (Koberstein, 2016; Tangel, 2016). As with the previous section, I follow the steps of the neo-Aristotelian method of rhetorical analysis for this particular artifact. I then identify the use of visual elements used to enhance the rhetoric that was used. Following that I provide contradictory information that shows the reality in contradistinction to the rhetorical claims made in this artifact.
Like the previous artifact, I begin with the first step of a neo-Aristotelian analysis, which is to identify the context of this particular artifact. This artifact includes both a written statement as well as a short video that explains the history of PCBs and what the company did once they learned that the product was causing damage to people and the environment. There is no listed author for this information nor could I get a specific answer from the customer relations employees. I was told by one of these employees to just use the name Monsanto for the author of this work. The purpose of this particular artifact was to provide information about the actions taken by the Monsanto Corporation in response to the PCB crisis of the nineteen seventies.

The target audience for this particular artifact could potentially include two groups of individuals. The first group could be any individual that was affected by the PCB crisis that wanted to know what the company was doing in order to fix the situation. The second group involves any individual wanting to know information about PCBs and the company’s response to the related crisis from Monsanto’s point of view. The context surrounding this particular artifact involves damages to humans and the environment that were directly caused by the introduction of PCBs to the world. Some of the more serious issues surrounding this artifact involve serious birth defects caused by the contamination of PCBs in breastmilk. I continue by proceeding to the second step of this particular analysis, which is to actually analysis the given artifact. Again, this involves analyzing the four canons mentioned above. The first canon is invention, which involves identifying the use of rhetorical appeals (ethos, pathos, and logos) that were used to convince the audience of the author’s rhetorical claims.

Much like the previous artifact, this artifact relies on a combination of all three rhetorical appeals in order to persuade consumers of their arguments. Monsanto (2002) makes several attempts to persuade the audience of their perceived good character and trustworthiness in this
particular artifact. One of the most interesting and fundamental examples of this can be found in both the written synopsis as well as the video of PCB information. The major appeals to ethos that are utilized in this artifact involve the “current” Monsanto distancing their actions from that of the “other” or “former” Monsanto. Basically, this company is trying to enhance its own perceived character and credibility by blaming the crises involved with this artifact on that of the “other” or unrelated company (See Figure 3). Monsanto states, “The former Monsanto made PCBs in Anniston, Ala. and Sauget, from the 1930’s to 1970’s” (p. 1).

![The former Monsanto Company](image)

*Figure 3: Graphic showing the former Monsanto rhetorical device*

Additionally, during the video a text box appears with the following information. The text box reads, “The former Monsanto company, who shared a name with today’s Monsanto, began making PCBs in the nineteen thirties” (Monsanto 00:23). The main example for why the “old”
Monsanto is different from the “current” Monsanto is that now Monsanto is one hundred percent focused on agriculture (See Figure 4).

I find this to be exceptionally interesting, mainly due to the fact that the company has continued with the same questionable business practices that has resulted in several similar crises based situations in the past. The only difference is now that they are causing problems and environmental damages within the agricultural industry.

In fact Monsanto is now being sued by many countries and individuals for damages caused by their most recent products. However, an unknowledgeable individual may see this perceived distinction as something that strengthens the character and credibility of the “new” Monsanto. By shifting the blame away to essentially an entirely new corporation can arguably create an entirely new history for their current corporation that is free of any crises or scandals.
This combined with previous information about sustainability can be quite persuading in terms of judging the intentions and beliefs of this corporation. Certain consumers that are unaware of the actions of the “former” Monsanto could also be persuaded to buy this corporation’s products based on this perceived credibility as well.

This use of ethos is perhaps the most interesting example of apologia found in these artifacts. Again, apologia is used in response to a social legitimation crisis in which an organization seeks to justify its behavior by presenting a compelling, counter account of its actions. In this case, Monsanto is attempting to justify its behavior by completely removing themselves from this particular crisis. The way in which they attempt to do this is by blaming the actions involved in this crisis on that of another corporation that happens to share the same name as the current unrelated company.

Another main way that Monsanto relies on appeals to ethos in this particular artifact is by making certain claims about the actions they took in response to the news that PCBs were causing harm to both individuals and the environment. Monsanto (2002) states, “Once our company was informed of the dangers associated with PCBs, we immediately and voluntarily stopped manufacturing and producing PCBs” (p. 1). These claims were used in an attempt to persuade the audience of their perceived trustworthiness by making it seem like they acted immediately and on their own accord once they learned of a crisis relating to their company was beginning to unfold. An individual that was uninformed about the reality of the situation would assume that a company that immediately and voluntarily stopped creating and producing products that harmed human lives as well as the environment had a moral character and could be trusted in the future to avoid similar mistakes. I proceed by identifying the appeals to logos that were utilized in this particular artifact.
The main use of appeals to logos come from Monsanto’s claims about conducting scientific studies in order to determine that PCBs were harmful to both humans and the environment. This example of logos based rhetoric can be found in both the short video and the text based synopsis of PCBs. For example, Monsanto (2002) states, “after certain reports came out that PCBs were being discovered in the environment our company invested in additional scientific studies to help resolve the issues” (p. 1). Monsanto claims that these studies lead their company to voluntarily stop producing and selling PCBs. The video also makes claims that Monsanto’s scientists confirmed the dangers of PCBs which led to them immediately halting production of additional PCBs. A text box appears on the screen which reads, “Monsanto scientists and others confirmed this, and the company announced it would voluntarily stop selling PCBs” (Monsanto 00:52). These findings and claims made by Monsanto were supposedly based on scientific and factual based studies. Again, thinking that a company independently spent money on studies that concluded that their products were dangerous, and then immediately stopped making said product could prove to be quite persuasive to an individual that does not know both sides of this particular story.

There is one particular instance of an appeal to pathos necessary to discuss. This appeal involves Monsanto’s reasoning for why PCBs were a good thing for human well-being. During the video, information about PCBs and how they solve certain fire-based issues was discussed. After this, a text box appears that reads “PCBs were used to stop certain electrical fires, and by selling PCBs, Monsanto probably saved a lot of lives” (Monsanto 00:39). In this artifact, Monsanto actually used the sentence that they “probably” saved a lot of lives by introducing PCBs into the world. I found this to be an obvious attempt to play on the emotions of unknowledgeable individuals. I think it is important to identify the use of crisis communication
that can be identified in the examples of rhetoric that were discussed above. It seems that
Monsanto completely relies on shifting the blame to others in times of crisis. A strong example
of this comes back to the use of the term the “other” Monsanto in order to shift the blame away
from their current business practices. I could not find one example were Monsanto made a
specific and genuine apology.

A smaller example of an appeal to emotions comes from how Monsanto is working hard
to improve lives. Monsanto (2002) claims that the “former” Monsanto’s business practices are
not a part of their current company’s business practices. Instead, Monsanto states, “Their new
business practices are focused on improving the world via the agricultural industry” (p. 1). Again
they are trying to separate themselves from these crises by stating that now they are only
involved with proving lives and the environment. This can be seen as an attempt to play on the
emotions of unsuspecting consumers. Now that I have analyzed the rhetorical appeals used in
this artifact, I proceed by identifying information regarding the second canon which is
arrangement.

Again, arrangement involves how this particular artifact was organized. This particular
artifact is organized into two distinct parts. The first part is a video that depicts the history of
PCBs. The video begins with why PCBs were used, and used by explaining the regulations
which led to them being banned in the United States. The second part is a timeline that also
depicts the history of PCBs. Specifically the actions that the “former” Monsanto Company took
in response to the related crisis throughout the years that this crisis took place. Now that I have
identified the ways in which this particular artifact was organized, I proceed by analyzing the
elements of the third canon which is style.
As I have stated, style focuses on such things as clarity of the arguments and the use of evidence used to support these claims. In terms of clarity, for the most part, the claims made in this particular artifact should be clear to the given audience. However, there could be an issue with clarity that some audience members may have. This issue comes from the distinction made between the “former” and “current” Monsanto. It is not entirely clear why the “current” Monsanto would go through the trouble of defending the actions, in detail, of another unrelated company. In terms of evidence that was provided, Monsanto does provide pieces of evidence to support some of their rhetorical claims made in this artifact. The main use of evidence comes from Monsanto’s discussion of the scientific studies that they conducted to conclude that their products were dangerous, which led them to voluntarily and immediately stopping the production of PCBs. Much like the previous artifact, this artifact does not have any spoken words in it. This means that the fourth canon delivery does not necessarily apply. Now that I have completed the first two steps of this analysis, I proceed by discussing the third step of a neo-Aristotelian analysis, which is to analyse the impact of the rhetorical statements used in this artifact.

Each use of a rhetorical appeal that can be found in this artifact could potentially impact the audience in their own way. In terms of ethos, the statements regarding the distinction from the “former” Monsanto with that of the “current” Monsanto could have the biggest impact on the given audience of this particular artifact. This use of an appeal to ethos could impact the audience in certain ways. For example, these statements could persuade the audience that the “current” Monsanto is in fact not responsible for the crisis related to PCBs. This could mean that the audience would be persuaded to put faith in the “current” Monsanto or buy their products since they were not related to the damages caused by PCBs. This could also impact individuals
that are seeking compensations caused by damages related to PCBs. These individuals would have no one to blame since the “current” Monsanto is not responsible and the “former” Monsanto is no longer in existence.

In terms of logos, the claims about the scientific studies Monsanto conducted could potentially have the biggest impact on this particular audience. However, it is important to note that these impacts would be in regards to the “former” Monsanto since the “current” Monsanto went through the trouble of making the distinction. This impact would involve enhancing the audience’s feeling regarding the “former” Monsanto. This is true especially for any audience members that were negatively affected by PCBs. These individuals could be appeased or made to feel better about the situation by Monsanto’s claims that they invested in their own studies to confirm the dangers which led them to stopping the production of said product.

In terms of pathos, Monsanto’s claims about how they probably saved lives by using PCBs could impact the audience in terms of enhancing how the audience feels about this particular corporation. Once the audience was informed of this information related to PCBs, they could be persuaded that PCBs were a necessary invention that saved lives, and that the crisis was unavoidable. As with the other artifact, I proceed by identifying the use of visual elements. As can be seen, the text and video artifacts are accompanied by numerous photographs, adding a visual rhetorical element to their arguments.

The video does not have any verbal comments in it. Instead it uses text boxes accompanied by soothing and peaceful pictures of people at work, the uses of PCBs, and different shots of trees and other undamaged environmental based pictures. They also use pictures of the EPA building when they made claims that PCBs had to be used until something
else could be used in its place. (See Figure 5) The entire video is accompanied by very soothing and relaxing music, which I admit enhances the effectiveness of the rhetoric being used. Overall, the use of visual elements for this particular artifact does enhance the rhetoric that is being used to some degree. I proceed by providing factual information that contradicts most of the rhetoric used in the second artifact. This will show the reality of the situation versus the reality that Monsanto’s rhetoric is creating.

![Figure 5: Monsanto’s EPA rhetorical strategy](image)

There are two examples of rhetoric, which mainly pertain to how Monsanto responded to the crisis mentioned above, that I find essential to bring into question. The first example that I analyzed are the statements regarding how Monsanto immediately stopped the manufacturing and marketing of PCBs once they learned of the potential dangers of said product. The second example deals with the scientific studies that Monsanto scientist conducted that concluded that
their products were in fact dangerous which led to them voluntarily halting the production of PCBs. I think it is interesting to note that this “new” company is attempting to defend the actions of the “old” and unrelated company while simultaneously trying their best to distance themselves from one another.

Again, the first rhetorical example that I will be discussing involves claims that Monsanto immediately stopped the marketing of PCBs once the potential dangers were brought to their attention. I have found some strong evidence of contradictory instances involving this particular crisis that I will now discuss. On the same webpage as the short video and the synopsis of PCB information there is a timeline that outlines the actions taken during the time it was involved with the production of PCBs. On this timeline (Monsanto, 2002) it states that in nineteen sixty-six the company and others started to study the potential dangers of PCBs. Following that it states that in nineteen seventy that the studies concluded the dangers and that Monsanto informed its customers of the potential dangers. Finally, the timeline says that in nineteen seventy-seven that Monsanto voluntarily ceased all PCB production.

Beiles (2000) provides numerous company memos from Monsanto, letters from concerned and negatively affected consumers, as well as additional information that contradict most of the claims made on this timeline. According to Bieles, Monsanto was concerned enough about the dangers related to PCBs to begin studying its potential effects as early as nineteen thirty-seven. This contradicts the claims by Monsanto suggesting the corporation was not aware of any potential dangers until the late nineteen sixties. Beiles (2000) also provides an example of company polices that developed as a result of the dangers related to PCBs. These polices involved providing protective gear and clothing to employees that worked with manufacturing PCBs, and these employees were also encouraged to wash off after handling PCBs. Again, this
contradicts Monsanto’s claims that it was unaware of dangers associated with this product until the nineteen seventies.

Beiles (2000) also provides certain messages to the company from concerned customers complaining or inquiring about certain health concerns, as well as damages to water supplies and other environmental entities that were potentially being harmed by PCBs. Beiles (2000) claims that some of these complaints were brought to Monsanto’s attention as early as nineteen forty. All of this information contradicts the claims made by Monsanto that they immediately stopped manufacturing PCBs once they were informed of potential dangers related to their products. In fact the information provided would imply that Monsanto was aware of dangers for several decades before they were forced to stop the manufacturing of PCBs. Beiles (2000) company memos that show how Monsanto attempted to downplay or even falsify the studies relating to PCBs.

Monsanto made claims that in 1966 they began to study the effects of PCBs along with others, then, based on the results of these studies, warned their consumers and voluntarily stopped making PCBs. Beiles (2000) provides information that contradicts these statements. According to Beiles (2000) Monsanto was aware of the dangers relating to their products to a great degree in the late nineteen fifties. A company memo claimed Monsanto probably had the most extensive collection of information relating to PCBs. However, Monsanto did conduct additional studies in the mid nineteen sixties. As Beiles reveals in her work, these additional studies were conducted for the soul purpose of downplaying the severity of other scientists’ research. Beiles (2000) provides a memo from a Monsanto researcher that urges the employees to make the government, state, and university scientist studying PCBs to prove that their conclusions are absolutely true, but to avoid as much confrontation as possible. The memo also
urges causation because Monsanto’ scientists cannot defend against all of the other scientific claims, but they can prove that some exposure to PCBs is okay in small concentrations.

Monsanto did in fact conduct certain studies in response to the PCB scandal mentioned above. However, as I have shown, these studies were to downplay the work of actual scientists. These studies were meant to keep consumers in the dark about their product so that they could continue to manufacture PCBs as long as they were able. In fact Beiles (2000) provides other examples of company memos made by Monsanto that stressed how important it was to slow down the regulation of PCBs. This author then provides examples of several cases of individuals suing Monsanto for knowingly allowing all of the damages to happen. Monsanto never admitted any guilt, but was forced to pay millions of dollars in damages. It was not until the EPA came out about the dangers of PCBs that Monsanto was forced to stop manufacturing them.

The information provided portrays a different version of the events that took place during the PCB crisis. Monsanto made several rhetorical statements implying that they were unaware of any dangers associated with their product until the nineteen seventies. They claimed that Monsanto worked hard to uncover these dangers and then immediately and voluntarily stopped producing them for the good of the consumers. Based on other sources as well as internal corporate memos, it is clear that these statements are not entirely true. I have shown how that Monsanto knew about potential dangers relating to their product for several decades before deciding to inform the consumers. I have also shown how that these so called studies were utilized to downplay the actual threat of dangers so that they could continue their work. It would seem that Monsanto did the complete opposite of immediately and voluntarily stopping the production of this product. Now that I have examined certain rhetorical examples relating to the historical artifact, I now turn to the third and final artifact under consideration.
“Who Is Monsanto” is a three minute video located on the corporation’s YouTube channel. This video deals with how Monsanto is improving the world and the lives of farmers with their business practices. Just like the other artifacts, I begin with the first step of a neo-Aristotelian analysis, which is to identify the context of this particular artifact. Following this, I proceed with the second step of this type of analysis, which is to actual analyze the artifact. Again, this involves identifying the four canons related to this artifact. I then identified and discussed the impacts of the rhetorical statements made during this artifact. Following this, I identify the use of visual elements that were used to enhance the rhetoric in this video. Finally, after identifying the visual elements, I provide contradictory information that pertains to some of the examples of rhetoric that can be found in this artifact. I proceed by identifying the context for this particular artifact.

The author of this artifact, much like the previous artifact, is simply the Monsanto Corporation. This video was uploaded to the Monsanto Company YouTube page in March of 2016. The purpose of this video is to inform the world and its customers about information regarding who Monsanto is and what they do. The bulk of this information focuses on the ways Monsanto is improving the world and the lives of millions of farmers. The audience for this artifact can be potentially unlimited, as it is published on the social media based website YouTube. Anyone that has searched for anything agricultural or chemical could potentially see this pop up on their YouTube feed. Other audiences could include any individual actively seeking information about the company and their relationship with farmers. Lastly, farmers that are looking for information about Monsanto could be a potentially large audience. Again, since this video is published on a site such as YouTube, the potential audience for this particular artifact is quite large.
There is a great deal of context and outside factors affecting this particular artifact. Remaining consistent with their history, Monsanto’s latest invention, the various Roundup products, have come under scrutiny for the potential damage it is causing to humans and the environment. In fact, as noted, they are currently dealing with numerous lawsuits from other countries and farmers that are affected. Now that I have identified the rhetorical situation for “Who Is Monsanto”, I proceed by analyzing the four rhetorical canons utilized in this artifact, beginning with invention.

As I have stated, invention involves the rhetorical appeals that were used by the author to convince the audience of their rhetorical claims. For the most part, Monsanto relies on appeals to ethos and pathos in “Who Is Monsanto.” There are a few brief appeals to logos that involve how Monsanto uses scientific data to improve the lives of farmers. There are several examples of Monsanto’s attempts to persuade the audience of their perceived credibility and trustworthiness in this artifact. One of these examples comes from the videos discussion on the challenges and hardships that farmers are currently facing. This video (Monsanto 00:25) provides a list of issues that are currently facing. A woman then appears in the video and states, “This is the reason why we have twenty thousand employees around the world helping farmers with these issues and helping them work towards sustainable agriculture” (Monsanto 00:30). An unknowing individual learning that Monsanto works to improve the lives of farmers around the world could potential lead to the creation of certain perceptions that this company is credible and trustworthy.

Another example of an appeal to ethos comes from the videos discussion on providing healthy food to everyone. During the video, a woman comes on screen and states, “by helping farmers, they are helping to provide nutritionally balanced meals to the world” (Monsanto 1:15). The video then states that they know they do not have all the answers and that they know it is
going to be hard, but by working together they can accomplish their goals. Again, learning that a company is doing everything they can to provide nutritious meals to everyone around the world would create certain perceptions about this company’s credibility and trustworthiness. The final example of an appeal to ethos that I discussed comes from the “Who Is Monsanto” video’s statements on cucumbers.

During the video a man comes on screen and states, “if you want proof that this company helps farmers improve harvests than the audience should ask cucumber farmers” (Monsanto 1:46). The man continues, stating, “When a virus threatened to wipe out cucumber harvests this company created a new strain of cucumbers that was resistant to the virus” (Monsanto 1:55). By providing a source that can back up the claims made in this video is definitely an attempt to persuade the audience of this company’s credibility and especially their trustworthiness. Additionally, by providing this reference, they are attempting to enhance the credibility of all the other rhetorical statements made in this artifact. All of these examples of ethos appeals were used in an attempt to persuade consumers and even other farmers to support their company. Now that I have discussed the appeals to ethos, I turn to logos appeals utilized in this artifact.

There are a few examples of appeals to logos that I find necessary to discuss. The first major example comes from the videos discussion of population. A man comes on screen standing next to a graph and states, “Based on certain studies, the population is expected to grow a great deal by the year two thousand and fifty, and this is why it is imperative for people to know where there food comes from” (Monsanto 1:01). Later in the video a woman comes on screen and states, “By combing farmer’s data models with that of the research done by Monsanto they are working hard to meet the demands of the growing population” (Monsanto 2:28). This is certainly an appeal to logos, since the persuasive elements and claims in play are being based on
scientific data and facts. This could prove quite persuasive to a consumer with only this information.

The other example of an appeal to logos comes from the videos discussion on microbial seed treatments. A man comes on the video and claims, “The soil is a living organism who’s health is vital to sustainable agriculture” (Monsanto 2:00). Immediately following, a woman appears stating that, “They offer microbial seed treatments that improve soil health, and that these treatments were derived from other organisms in nature” (Monsanto 2:05). The woman then claims these seed treatments improve the quality of the soil in which crops are grown, which in turn, improves the quality of the crops themselves. It should be noted that earlier in the video a man comes on and says that science plays a major role in this company’s operations (Monsanto 0:51). This implies that all of the ways that they are improving the health of the soil is based on their scientific research. This is clearly another appeal to logos since they are basing their claims on scientific studies and advancements in technology. This could prove to be persuasive given these claims are seemingly backed up by science and logic. Now that I have examined the appeals to logos, I turn to analyzing the appeals to pathos utilized in this artifact.

This use of logos is a good example of apologia. During the time of this artifact, Monsanto was facing a social legitimation crisis related to their product Roundup and Roundup Ready crops potentially damaging the quality of the soil in which crops are grown. The way in which Monsanto attempts to restore social legitimacy is by explaining how they use advancements in technology to improve the quality and health of soil in which crops are grown.

There were several attempts to persuade the audience by playing on their emotions in “Who Is Monsanto.” Many involve Monsanto playing on the fears of the audience. For instance,
the first example that I discussed involves the videos discussion on the issues and demands that farmers are currently facing. A woman on the video (Monsanto 0:26) states that farmers are having difficulties supplying the world with food due to several issues such as weather, erosion, pests, and plant diseases. Later in the video, Monsanto (0:41) discusses how farmers have to feed one hundred and fifty-five people each compared to twenty-five people each in the nineteen sixties. These are clearly attempts to play on the fears of consumers that are concerned with the ever-growing population issue. They are also playing on the fears of the population concerns often. For example, man comes onto screen next to a graph (Monsanto 0:59) and begins talking about the expected population of two thousand and fifty. The man makes claims that providing enough food to support this growing population is a major crisis facing the world. Again, this company is trying to persuade the audience into supporting them by playing on the fears of those audience members that agree that the growing population is a major crisis.

Monsanto also plays on the other side of the emotional spectrum. After making appeals to pathos that play on the fears of the audience, the company then plays on the emotions of happiness and hope by providing potential solutions to the issues expressed in the video. After each use of pointing out the population crisis, someone says these are the reasons that Monsanto is working so hard, or this is how Monsanto is helping to counteract the problems caused by overpopulation. For example, after the discussion on the population issue, a man comes onto screen that makes claims that this company is helping farmers grow more food while using natural resources more efficiently (Monsanto 1:28). A woman then comes onto screen and says that their actions are making it so that insecticides and pesticides can be used less which helps preserve natural resources. Another example of this comes from the videos discussion on how this company and all of its employees around the world are helping to solve the issues related to
farmers that are mentioned above (Monsanto 0:30). Basically, the rhetoric relating to pathos attempts to persuade the consumer by first causing fear and panic and then offering solutions that bring hope to the given crises. Now that I have discussed the canon of invention, I proceed by analyzing the second canon, arrangement.

As I have stated, the canon of arrangement deals with how a particular artifact is organized. This artifact or video is organized into three parts. The video begins with a woman asking the question of who is Monsanto. The video then goes into information regarding the issues facing farmers and the world. The video ends by Monsanto discussing all of the ways that they are helping farmers with these issues and all of the ways that they are improving certain agricultural elements such as the quality of soil. Now that I have discussed how this particular artifact was organized, I proceed by analyzing the third rhetorical canon, style.

Again, the canon of style deals with the language used in a particular artifact, and involves certain elements such as clarity and use of evidence. The author’s use of language in this artifact is used to express the need for the Monsanto Company. The author first selects specific instances of language that express all of the issues facing farmers and the world. The author then selects instances of language that express how the Monsanto Company is addressing these issues. A lot of instances of helpful language are used for this particular artifact. This use of language also makes the rhetorical claims being made in this artifact clear to the audience. There is also a good use of evidence used by the author of this artifact to support the rhetorical claims and statements that are being expressed. The use of evidence comes from the videos discussion about cucumber farmers and a disease that threatened to wipe of cucumber cops. A man on the video states that this company is using traditional plant breeding methods to improve harvests, and that to get proof of this, the audience should ask cucumber farmers. The man then
states that they used cross breeding methods to save cucumber crops from the disease mentioned above. Now that I have discussed information regarding the third canon, I will now proceed by analyzing the fourth canon, delivery.

As I have stated, delivery deals with how the speaker or author uses their body or gestures when delivering their rhetorical messages. For this particular artifact, there are multiple speakers involved with expressing the rhetorical claims of the Monsanto Corporation. In terms of body language, each of the speakers appear calm and collective when delivering their messages. Additionally, all of the speakers body language expresses a since of confidence. The speakers also use hand gestures during the entirety of the video. Most of these gestures come from the speakers expressing information related to the accompanied graphs or to gesture towards the graphs that are being displayed. For example, one of the speakers hold his hands close together then moves them further apart to express the growing number of people that farmers are required to feed. Now that I have discussed the canons related to this artifact, I proceed by conducting the third step of a neo-Aristotelian analysis, which is to analysis the impact of the rhetorical claims made in this particular artifact.

Again, the third step of a neo-Aristotelian analysis involves analyzing the potential impact of the rhetorical statements used in an artifact. I begin by analyzing the impact of the author’s use of appeals to ethos. In terms of ethos, the claim that could have the most impact on the audience would be the author’s discussion on providing nutritionally balanced meals to the world. The author claims that by helping farmers that they are helping to provide nutritionally balanced meals to the world. This claim could have potential impacts on this artifacts given audience. One such impact could be that the audience would be persuaded to support this company and buy their products. This is especially true for individuals that are also interested in
providing nutritionally balanced meals for the growing population. Another potential impact is that the audience would come to expect or even rely on the Monsanto Company to continue to help farmers so that the people of the world receive the nutritionally balanced meals that they require. Another potential impact on the audience would be that they could forgive any of this company’s past transgressions due to the good they are currently doing for the world.

In terms of appeals to logos, the statements regarding the microbial seed treatments could have the biggest impact on this artifact’s given audience. A women in the video states that this company offers microbial seed treatments that improve soil health, and that these treatments were derived from other organisms in nature. These statements could have potential impacts on the audience of this artifact, specifically the farmers that make up this audience. Farmers that are in need of soil improvement treatments could be persuaded to buy this company’s products given that this company improves the quality of the soil. Other farmers that are interested in improving the quality of their soil in the future could also be persuaded to buy this company’s products or support the actions of this particular company.

In terms of appeals to emotion or pathos, the claims regarding the issues facing farmers could have the most significant impact on the audience of this particular artifact. The first of these claims involve the issues facing farmers including the growing population problem. These claims could impact the audience by causing them to experience fears about these related issues. This could also mean that these audience members would support this company and buy their products based on these fears. This could be especially true after the author provides solutions to the issues expressed above. Again, the audience could be persuaded to buy this company’s products due to their work in solving these issues. This is especially true for audience members that happen to be farmers that are suffering from any of the issues addressed in this particular
artifact. This is also true for any audience members that have concerns about any of these related issues. I now proceed by identifying the use of visual elements that were used to enhance the rhetorical claims made in this artifact.

Since this artifact was strictly a video, there were lots of visual elements that were in play. I have provided examples of the visual elements that were used in this artifact below. See Figures 6-8)

![Milton](image)

**Figure 6: We love farmers**

The employees or actors in the video are all friendly looking in terms of appearance and they all spoke with a calm and collected composure. This could potentially enhance the persuasiveness of the rhetoric that is being used since all of the speakers appeared to be credible in terms of what they were saying.
The video makes great use of charts and graphs to accompany the rhetoric that is being said by the employees in the videos. Providing supporting visual pictures and graphs to the video can potential help to increase the persuasiveness of the rhetoric that is being utilized.
The video also made great use of visual elements when attempting to play on the fears of the audience. For example, when the video was listing the issues that farmers are currently facing there was an animated illustration that would appear for each one. This could potentially increase the fear aspect of this appeal to emotions.

The examples of rhetoric that I brought into question involves how this company improves the lives of farmers around the world, and how their actions are making it so insecticides are being used less and natural resources are being preserved. I have touched on Monsanto’s relationship with farmers a great deal in this work. Despite their claims, Monsanto is actually making lives more difficult for millions of farmers. I have provided several instances of supporting evidence that shows this company does not necessarily improve the lives of farmers. As noted, Monsanto is involved with numerous lawsuits and fines due to their relationship with farmers. However, this video made claims that Monsanto is improving the lives of farmers.
around the world. Providing contradictory evidence, Pulse (2015) states that currently there are thirty-eight countries around the globe that have banned Monsanto and its products from operating on their lands due to the damages that they cause. This number is growing as more information is brought to light regarding Monsanto and its products. Despite Monsanto’s best efforts, it would appear that many farmers around the world want nothing to do with this company. This is vastly different from the claims made in the rhetoric about how one of Monsanto’s main goals is to improve the lives of farmers around the world.

Similarly, Monsanto claims their Roundup products lessen the use of pesticides and herbicides. It is factual that Roundup and its key component glyphosate are good weed killers. They are also good crop killers. This is why Monsanto developed Roundup Ready crops that would not be killed by their own herbicide. Ironically, this video makes the case for Roundup Ready crops, a product that can survive the dangers of the corporation’s previous product. This would seem to me to not support sustainable farming. Second, their claim about less chemical use are false. According to Wilkerson (2015) a great deal of Roundup has to be added to the Roundup ready crops in order to get the desired effects. Wilkerson (2015) discusses that more Roundup has to be used each year because weeds and insects are becoming resistant to glyphosate and Roundup. This author predicts use is going to increase. This research contradicts Monsanto’s claims that fewer pesticides are being used while natural resources are being saved. If anything, natural resources are being potentially threatened due to the high amounts of glyphosate used in modern farming.
Discussion

As noted, a good corporate reputation is valuable for the continued existence of an organization. Rhetorical strategies are often utilized during crisis events to restore the public image of an organization (Benoit, 1995). Organizations will utilize numerous strategies to maintain a positive image with their various publics (Benoit, 2015). Monsanto uses a number of rhetorical strategies in the artifacts that I examined.

I have identified several of the rhetorical appeals that the Monsanto Corporation relies upon and utilizes while attempting to persuade the audience to support them. In the artifacts that analyzed it was revealed that Monsanto typically relies on a combination of all three appeals – ethos, logos, and pathos in terms of their rhetorical strategies. Monsanto and its chief executive officer make several attempts to establish or enhance their perceived credibility and trustworthiness throughout the entirety of these artifacts. One of the major ways is by explaining all of the so-called good it does for farmers and other individuals all over the world. Another way that Monsanto bolsters its credibility and trustworthiness is by explaining how swiftly and virtuously it responded to times of crisis, and how they acted on their own accord to deal with problems relating to their products. Finally, the corporation utilizes appeals to ethos by distancing itself from the “other” Monsanto that is unrelated to the current company.

As I have shown, most of these statements can be contradicted by the inclusion of outside information and scientific evidence. For example, Monsanto does not in fact improve the lives of farmers across the globe. In reality, many farmers want nothing to do with this company, and many countries have banned their products. Throughout these artifacts, Monsanto makes several rhetorical appeals through logos. Several claims were made about the scientific studies and research that go into improving the lives of humans and the environment. It is important to note
that these appeals were in reality based on questionable and inconclusive scientific studies. When studies were conducted by this company, they were used to slow down the research of nonbiased researchers. Monsanto’s rhetoric is creating an unrealistic portrayal, not based on unbiased and objective scientific studies. On the surface it would appear Monsanto is trustworthy and that they use to improve the lives of humans across the world. However, by conducting some basic research into Monsanto’s history, and examining non-Monsanto-based research, their credibility can be called into question.

Monsanto also heavily relies on appeals to pathos, mainly by playing on the fears of the audience. Monsanto makes several attempts to play on the fears of the audience by warning of the dangers of an increasing population, as well as the issues that farmers are currently facing. Monsanto plays on the emotions concerning happiness and hope by making persuasive claims that their company is working hard to counteract the population issues as well as the issues farmers are confronting. It is interesting to note that most of the dangers pointed about by Monsanto’s rhetoric are real. However, their solutions and their efforts to help farmers are arguably false and heavily exaggerated. The rhetoric utilized in these artifacts is used to attempt to create a reality in which Monsanto is trustworthy and can solve both the issues related to farmers and an ever growing population. The actual practices of Monsanto, however, suggest they should not be trusted, and they are actually the cause of many major issues faced by farmers and the environment.

Most of these rhetorical appeals also serve as examples of apologia in which Monsanto attempts to restore their social legitimacy. One of the primary ways that this company does this is by using rhetorical appeals that display all of the ways that they improve the lives of farmers. Another way that this company attempts to restore social legitimacy is by completely separating
themselves from a particular crisis. The way they do this is by blaming the crisis on that of another unrelated company that happens to share a name with the current company. Additionally, most of the rhetorical appeals utilized in these artifacts could have potential impacts on the artifacts given audience. The most significant impact involves the audience being convinced or persuaded to buy Monsanto’s potentially harmful products. This is especially true for farmers interested in Monsanto or farmers that are suffering from any of the issues that Monsanto’s rhetoric addresses.

The information that I have provided suggests that most of the rhetorical statements utilized by Monsanto are scientifically dubious or exaggerated. I have also shown they go to great efforts to hide the truth relating to these products during times of crisis. This information contradicts most of the company’s mission statements such as their promise of transparency. If anything, Monsanto goes to great lengths to be opaque.

**Conclusion and Notes for Future Research**

I have conducted a rhetorical analysis on three Monsanto artifacts, examining the use of rhetoric. Each artifact was created in reference to or during a time of crisis for the Monsanto Corporation. I have shown how Monsanto utilizes a combination of all three rhetorical strategies or appeals in an attempt to persuade consumers to support and buy their products. I showed that most of the appeals to logos were based upon unsupported information and dubious scientific research. By providing additional contradictory information, I presented how the reality Monsanto was attempting to create through its rhetorical strategies is different than the actual practices of the corporation. Again is important, especially considering Monsanto and its products are still harming both humans and the environment. Future research could observe the
rhetoric that is utilized by similar corporations in times of crisis to compare and contrast the use of rhetoric within different corporations. Additionally, it might prove useful to examine Monsanto’s rhetoric as a particular crisis is unfolding. For example, one could examine how rhetorical strategies are being used by a corporation during every stage of a particular crisis. This could provide additional information on how rhetoric develops as certain crises play out. Given that corporations continually talk with their various audiences and stakeholders, understanding the rhetorical strategies, needs to be a continual scholarly enterprise.
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• Assisted with customer complaints
• Prepared food
• General maintenance

Poor Richards: Fresh Deli, Johnson City, TN 2014
• Took orders
• Prepared food
• Served customers
• General maintenance
• Opened and closed deli
• Assisted with dissatisfied customers

Healthy Home INC, Chattanooga TN 2012
• Assisted with home inspections
• Helped repair damaged homes and property
• Assisted in the elimination of different molds
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