

Ethos, Pathos, and Logos in Movies

Ethos Examples:

- **Black Panther**

The 2018 film Black Panther is the highest grossing superhero movie of all time in the United States. Ironically, it was the Black Panther's enemy, Erik Killmonger, who put the movie's sense of ethos into action.

He couldn't help but wonder why the country of Wakanda wasn't utilizing its vast resources to help the rest of the world. He makes the case that Wakanda has a moral obligation to do so, even if his means aren't exactly ethically sound (which is where things get interesting).

- **Eye in the Sky**

Turns out Helen Mirren can play the Queen of England and a British army colonel. In Eye in the Sky, Mirren's character orders a drone strike to take out a group of terrorists in Kenya. However, moral judgments come into play when a young girl enters the kill zone. Is one girl's life worth the payoff that comes with the extinction of a terrorist cell?

Of course, the implications extend beyond an innocent, young girl and a band of terrorists. The moral dilemma surrounding modern warfare, particularly drone strikes, is the central theme of the film. Mirren's character may take out the target, but it'll come with a steep price.

Plenty of characters in the film lean on their sense of ethos to make their case for and against the drone strike.

Pathos Examples:

- **The Lion King**

The loss of a parent is one plan of attack that is often utilized by Disney. Mufasa's death in The Lion King is possibly the most well known case. To make the scenario worse though, we witness his father's death at the hands of his own brother, Scar. Simba unknowingly then places his trust in Scar. We are instantly emotionally connected to Simba by feeling terrible that he has lost his dad and outraged that Scar is playing it off. While The

Lion King is well known, I think the saddest loss of a parent is seen in Fox and the Hound (loose interpretation of parent and loss here). I am left with tears in my eyes multiple times through out this movie.

- **Cinderella**

There is also the often used situation of the absence of one parent or both. The classic example of this is Cinderella. As the audience, we express sympathy toward Cinderella for the harsh treatment she receives from her stepmother and stepsisters. We have no choice but to root for her prevail by marrying the prince and her stepmother's demise. There are several other examples of this in Lilo and Stitch, The Hunchback of Notre Dame, The Little Mermaid, Aladin, Beauty and the Beast, Snow White, The Jungle Book, and more.

Logos Examples:

- **Laws of Attraction**

In Laws of Attraction, Pierce Brosnan and Julianne Moore depict two powerful New York attorneys. As such, they spend their days dealing with cold, hard facts. However, they also develop feelings for one another, despite their bitter rivalries in the courtroom.

When Brosnan's character approaches Moore's character - in an effort to draw them closer together - he applies logic to his appeal. He highlights the fact that they're both smart, spend a lot of time together, and have common interests.

Meanwhile, she shares solid logic in her rebuttal too. She cites statistics on the failing institution of marriage. They are, after all, divorce lawyers. Turns out, Aristotle was right. You can even apply logos to matters of the heart.

- **The Matrix Trilogy**

You probably wouldn't be surprised if somebody labeled the Architect from The Matrix as a highly logical fellow. And, of course, one would use the word "fellow" loosely as the Architect is a highly specialized computer program that simply takes on the human essence during his encounter with Neo, as played by Keanu Reeves.

When meeting with the Architect, you were met with cold, emotionless, super analytical intelligence - nothing more, nothing less. He explains the logic of the situation and how he has been able to sustain the matrix for so long. It's safe to say if any "person" would embody strict logos, it would be the Architect himself.