

## PW 202 Project 1

### Rhetorical Analysis of Denny's Diner - Emily Claus

#### Introduction

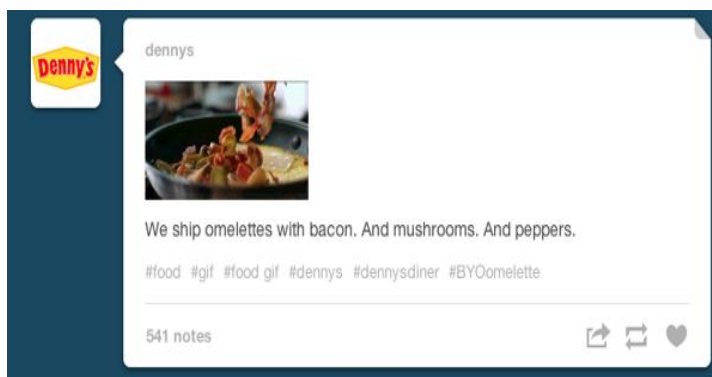
The organization I chose to audit was the very popular and well known diner, Denny's. The organization is devoted to making great food for the general public at reasonable costs, with exceptional customer service. Denny's is well known for their breakfast foods, but they serve lunch and dinner as well. They are known as an "All American" diner and serve everyday people who are looking for a good meal.

As a whole, Denny's rhetoric appeals were quite impressive in my opinion. Denny's has taken a new approach to advertising and trying to persuade people to eat at their restaurant. While typical food marketing brands will try to sell you with professionalism, prices, and very up front ads, Denny's takes an alternative route.



#### Appeal #1, Social Media - We are just like you!

Without any doubt, Denny's strongest use of rhetoric within their marketing isn't any of the usual suspects. No television commercials, billboards, or ads they produce will even compare to the amount of rhetoric and appeals one will find within their social media accounts. Throughout Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and Tumblr, Denny's has established a name for itself in appealing to the public with pathos persuasion by adapting the lingo, following the trends, and attempting to mimic the actions of users on these sites to appeal to their chosen target audience, the users of social media, which is inclusive of all ages, genders, and races. Within that spectrum though, Denny's is mainly aiming for the typical, everyday American. The most famous of all of these accounts, is the Denny's Tumblr. This particular account has become quite famous on the site, and has reached the point where other bloggers will write about Denny's, make jokes about it, send them fan mail, and interact with them as though they were just another friend. How was Denny's managed to accomplish such a feat? How have they managed to take a marketing scheme of a business and make it "cool" and liked by all these people? It seems to be the only ad/marketing ploy users do not respond negatively to. Take the image on the right for example. It's clearly an ad, but the phrasing they use does not shout "buy this" or "try this" like most would. It writes, "We ship omelettes with bacon. And mushrooms. And peppers." *This* right here is a



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huge use of rhetoric. The word “ship” in the sentence is referring to the verb “shipping”, which means to want to people to end up in a romantic relationship together. Shipping is one of the most popular things you can do on Tumblr, and here Denny’s is adapting that lingo and attempting to appeal to all of these Tumblr users who are blogging about their ships, and obsessing over them. They are trying to convey that, “Hey! We are just like you!” But notice in the hashtags at the bottom of the post, Denny’s adds what the meal is called and where to find it. It is subtle, but it



works wonders. Soon Denny’s is posting memes and writing nonsense (which tends to be the typical lingo on this site), to appeal to the users. In this next image, it’s clear that people have noticed, and are curious. While the blogger isn’t exactly praising them, what has Denny’s managed to accomplish? *People are talking about them, blogging about them, noticing them.* How does Denny’s respond? With a meme that was incredibly popular at the time this post was created. Not only are they responding to a customer, but they once again adapted the lingo of the users to appeal to them. Another *huge* example of rhetoric. It’s incredible how easily this diner manages to assimilate themselves

within this site. No one seems to notice or care about the fact that it is so clearly a marketing ploy, because it’s funny and people are thinking, “Denny’s is just like us!” In the image below, the fruit of Denny’s labor is made clear. This person not only noticed the Denny’s restaurant they may never have otherwise noticed, but then immediately thought of their Tumblr account. But Denny’s does not say

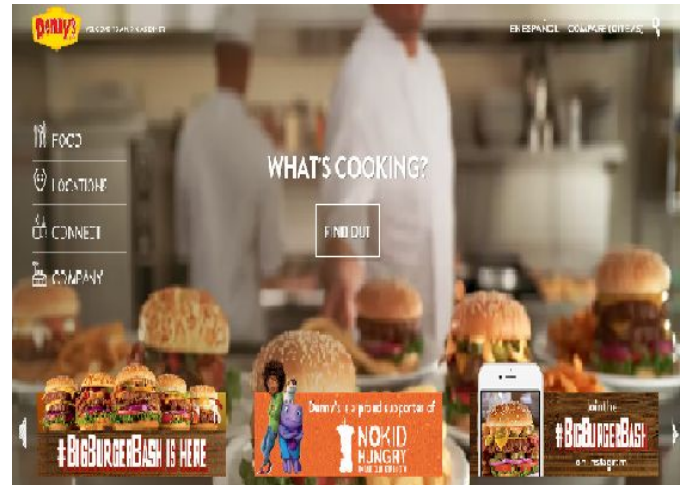


“thank you” or “we hope next time you’ll stop by”, instead they opt for a joke, keeping with the persona they have adapted. The memes, jokes, and adaptation of user lingo are all methods to persuade people that Denny’s is great and we should eat there. Their twitter tends to follow the same pattern, and clearly it’s working, considering Denny’s has 24 thousand more followers than their leading competitor, Ihop.

### **Appeal #2, The Website - Look at how delicious our food is!**

This appeal is a little more basic when it comes to the food industry. What better way to make people want to eat your food then to wave tantalizing images of your meals in front of them? It’s a standard approach, but once again Denny’s seems to add their own twist to the system. Go to any fast food restaurant’s website and you will get pictures of food here and there, but go to Dennys.com and you’ll find yourself bombarded by food. Denny’s entire background of their homepage is a video of their restaurant, showing people smiling and delicious food being prepared before your eyes. It’s nearly impossible for your eyes to not be drawn to look at this and watch the

video, since it literally takes up the entire screen. The video also show food preparation which is meant to give off the impression and persuade people that their food is fresh and clean, trying to stray away from the idea that their food is greasy like most diners and fast food places. This kind of pathos rhetoric is appealing to the senses - mainly sight, taste, and smell. If you look at the image below, which is a compressed version of their homepage, one can count about thirteen burgers at once, even on the mobile site where the format has been altered. It's intended to not only make you want a burger, but to showcase the variety of food they serve, and not just with burgers, but food in general, since Denny's is mainly considered a breakfast diner. The audience here is really anyone who uses a computer, and may look at their site before deciding if they should eat there or not. This version of rhetoric is different from the first in that it does not appeal to how you think and act in an attempt to get customers to like them, thus persuading them to eat at their diner. This appeal is the complete opposite. Here, a much more simplistic appeal is used, because who can look at delicious food and not get hungry, right?



### Appeal #3, Billboards and Ads - Throwing it all together!

This is an interesting topic, because it is essentially a combination of the first two appeals. The billboard obviously has a much larger audience, calling out to anyone who might drive by that enjoys breakfast food or the images shown on the billboard. Take this billboard for example, which shows a picture of a typical Denny's breakfast and says "Middle-Earth is coming to America's Diner, 11.6.12." The billboard is attempting to use the first kind of rhetoric that was discussed in the social media section. The billboard is referencing not only the incredibly popular *Lord of the Rings* series and the new *Hobbit* series that was set to premiere around that time. They are appealing to the fans of both series by associating the series with their restaurant. Therefore, not only would the audience be typical Americans, lovers of breakfast food, and people driving, but also any fan of these series. Notice, they also made the knife into a sword, another sneaky reference to *the Hobbit*. Just like they did on their social media, they are trying to say, "Hey look! We love the same things you love, and you can find them here at our restaurant!" The second kind of appeal discussed is also present on this



particular billboard. These things may seem subtle, but it's the kind of affect that can make the difference between going to Ihop or Denny's. But just in case their cool reference to two popular series was not enough to draw someone in, they have placed a image of their delicious eggs, bacon, and pancakes next to it. They are once again attempting to appeal to the senses, because if you're hungry, that image may just be enough to get you to pull over.

## In Conclusion

itsstuckyinmyhead ↔ dennys

Source: lunaorchid

dennys:

lunaorchid:

Will dennys madness ever end  
we know exactly what we are doing

#dennys is my favorite blog

3,175 notes

↗ ⚙️ ↻

What is it exactly that Denny's is doing though? Denny's tends to avoid upfront marketing ads in favor of more subtle, popular methods in an effort to appeal to a wider group of people. They invade social media spaces to adapt the lingo and trends of each site, in hopes of mimicking this

behavior to become more likeable and well known. Their website showcases their mouth watering food, while their billboards do both jobs at once. Their appeals tend to apply an pathos persuasion, using hunger, likes/dislikes, and the five senses to try to lure people into their diner. Pretty clever, right?