The Rhetorical Situation

Audience + Exigence + Constraints = Fitting Response

Person(s) that the rhetor intends to address; Should have the ability to act in response to discourse; can change from intended audience to secondary audiences



That which motivates the rhetor to engage in discursive maneuver; motivation to speak, write, etc.; must be changeable (e.g. death is not a rhetorical situation)



Those factors which control the way a rhetor can respond (e.g. social norms/expectations; lack of resources; etc.)

Based on their analysis of audience, exigence, and constraints, the rhetor determines the best and most appropriate response to the situation.