9.16: The Focus of this Chapter

In this chapter I wanted to focus on how understanding the needs, values, beliefs and attitudes of the audience will help you plan an argumentative strategy that will make you more successful. The key ideas we examined were:

- Our beliefs and values lead to our attitudes which guide our behavior.
- We, as humans want to be comfortable and so we strive for stasis, or consistency, between our values, beliefs, attitudes and behavior.
- Only by first disrupting the stasis of our audience, can we persuade them to a new position.
- We can discover what motivates the audience of our argument by understanding their needs.
- Once we understand their needs, which may be different than our needs, we can “target” those needs to make a successful persuasive appeal.