

would like to have a dog. And believe it or not, the day before we left on this campaign trip we got a message from Union Station in Baltimore, saying they had a package for us. We went down to get it. You know what it was? It was a little cocker spaniel dog in a crate that he'd sent all the way from Texas, black and white, spotted. And our little girl Tricia, the six-year-old, named it "Checkers." And you know, the kids, like all kids, love the dog, and I just want to say this, right now, that regardless of what they say about it, we're gonna keep it.

This example of pathos tugs at every possible heartstring: puppies, children, warm paternal feelings, the excitement of getting a surprise package. All of these images fill us with empathetic feelings toward Nixon: our emotions are engaged far more than our reason. Despite never truly addressing the campaign funds issue, Nixon's speech was a profound success with voters, who sent enough dog food to feed Checkers for a year! And yet, history has come to view this part of the speech as baldly manipulative.

### Images and Pathos

You can often appeal to pathos by using striking imagery in your writing, so it's no surprise that images often serve the same purpose. A striking photograph, for example, may lend an emotional component that greatly strengthens an argument. Advertisers certainly make the most of photos and other visual images to entice or persuade audiences. In the accompanying example, which appeared in both the *New York Times* and the *New Yorker* magazine in 2000, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) makes a dramatic assertion, an appeal to pathos through both visual images and written text, as a call to support its organization. According to its mission statement, the ACLU seeks "to defend and preserve the individual rights and liberties that the Constitution and laws of the United States guarantee everyone in this country."

The headline below the pictures reads:

It happens every day on America's highways. Police stop drivers based on their skin color rather than for the way they are driving. For example, in Florida 80% of those stopped and searched were black and Hispanic, while they constituted only 5% of all drivers. These humiliating and illegal searches are violations of the Constitution and must be fought. Help us defend your rights. Support the ACLU.

The advertisement does not name the two men pictured, assuming the audience will recognize revered civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. on the left and convicted serial killer Charles Manson on the right. The headline at the top is an assertion that is bound to evoke a visceral response. The written text below the photos makes a series of logical appeals by pointing out that racial profiling accounts for the police stopping drivers on the basis of their race, and by offering statistical evidence from the state of Florida. The main appeal, however, is to pathos through the juxtaposition of a hero with a madman presented in a form reminiscent of a "wanted" poster.

**THE MAN ON THE LEFT  
IS 75 TIMES MORE LIKELY TO BE STOPPED  
BY THE POLICE WHILE DRIVING THAN  
THE MAN ON THE RIGHT.**



It happens every day on America's highways. Police stop drivers based on their skin color rather than for the way they are driving. For example, in Florida 80% of those stopped and searched were black and Hispanic, while they constituted only 5% of all drivers. These humiliating and illegal searches are violations of the Constitution and must be fought. Help us defend your rights. Support the ACLU. To learn more and to send your Members of Congress a free fax go to [www.aclu.org/racialprofiling](http://www.aclu.org/racialprofiling).

american civil liberties union  
125 Broad Street, 18th Floor, NY, NY 10004 [www.aclu.org](http://www.aclu.org)

### Humor and Pathos

Another way to appeal to pathos is through humor. Since we like to hear things that we already believe are true, our first reaction to anything that challenges our beliefs is often negative: we think "that's all wrong!" and get defensive or outright