CENGAGE

Third Edition

Public Speaking

Choices and Responsibility

William M. Keith and Christian O. Lundberg

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Public Speaking: Choices and Responsibility
Third Edition
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Preface

The ability to engage an audience with skill, elegance, and clarity can have a decisive impact in our lives. The difference between success and failure in academic work, personal relationships, and your career path often depends on the ability to create compelling speeches. Even though future success is a good reason to cultivate skill in public speaking, it is not the only reason—it is also important, for all of us, that we speak in public in ethically and argumentatively sound ways. In an increasingly polarized, globalizing, and information-saturated world, students who become more engaged, informed, and responsible public speakers may well be among the last and best hopes for our civic and democratic life together.

Training in public speaking is about more than simply talking—it is about learning to listen, to understand an audience, and to evaluate the motives and reasons behind arguments. In an era of hyper-partisan politics and creeping disillusionment with public discourse and the political system, our best resource may be a return to the ancient arts of rhetoric and public speaking. These arts can teach us how to really listen to, respond to, and respectfully engage with our fellow citizens. This book seeks to remake an art with ancient roots for modern times, or, in more contemporary terms, to remix an ancient beat for the information era.

We wrote *Public Speaking: Choices and Responsibility* because we believe that public speaking matters profoundly to our personal and collective futures. This text embodies our vision of civic-minded yet practical public speaking that is accessible, easy to engage, and relevant to our students. In contrast to many approaches to public speaking, which present only a catalogue of tips and techniques for giving a speech, we have attempted to create a simple framework for helping students learn to be better public speakers. Our framework is compact, simple, and easy to teach and learn. The essence of teaching public speech is in helping students to make informed choices about how to approach a speaking situation, and in helping them to see and take responsibility for the implications of their choices.

The third edition of this book continues the focus from the first two editions on making choices and taking responsibility. But we have sharpened our approach to this theme based on feedback from our readers and instructors. We have revised the chapters to reflect contemporary concerns, especially with respect to: how we might best live together in a democracy alongside those with whom we disagree; how we might learn ways of speaking that build the foundations of civic life; and how we can help one another to separate constructive argument from "fake news." For anyone paying attention to public discourse after the 2016 U.S. presidential election, it's obvious that the quality and standards for public speech are now in permanent dispute. What students need is a way to understand and navigate these problems, not a cursory list of do's and don'ts. This edition of the book focuses on reclaiming one version of democratic *civility* and positioning students to evaluate *fake news* as a response to our current situation. The version of "Democratic Civility" that is woven through this book is about much more than being superficially nice, and it recognizes the ways that demands to "act appropriately" or "speak respectfully" can also be used to silence legitimate democratic dispute.

Civility, as we will point out, is not a code or set of rules—it is a motive. Civility, in this classic definition, does not mean being quiet or being polite: the radical origin of civility, built into the very fabric of our constitution and the larger rhetorical tradition, is that civil

speech is speech that is offered for the good of the city. Civil speech is speech that aims at making things better, it aims to hear a more complete set of voices, and it enjoins us to think about arguments on the basis of their merit, whether it is grounded in abstract data, logical argumentation, or derived from personal experience. The point, then, of a model of civil conversation is not to police or set the acceptable bounds of disagreement, it is to train those who would speak and listen in public to do so for the good of the whole. This sense of civility—one far richer than saying who has permission to speak and dictating how they ought to do it—is about an approach to speech that makes room for the perspective of people who are different from us, and it demands that we listen to them for the sake of thinking about the best means of governance *for all of us*, *without exception*. This does not mean that any argument goes, but rather that each argument in public ought to be tested against a vision of the good of the whole, and offered on grounds that themselves take into account the warp and woof of democratic life. It involves the hard work of building relationships that tolerate deep value differences, yet that not only allow for communication, understanding, and persuasion, but that anticipate that if we speak and listen well, we might come to a solution that is not perfect, but also that represents the best of our collective decision-making, and that embodies the outcome that is the best possible compromise in the context of a multi-cultural, value differentiated, interest bound democracy. We don't all have to agree—in fact, we shouldn't. But we do have to find a way to make our disagreements productive and meaningful opportunities to understand each other and explore issues. Training in public speaking can help us do just that: it is an act of faith in the ability of each one of us to talk to and be heard by our fellow citizens, a goal toward which we must aim precisely *because* it feels so achingly distant from us. It is a practice of hope that anticipates, despite the evidence to the contrary, that if we were to learn to speak and listen, we might be able to find the good and the beautiful in the imperfections of democratic life, and the wisdom in the speech of our fellow person.

The second issue that will come up repeatedly in this textbook is "fake news." While originally this term emerged in 2015–2016 to describe propaganda masquerading as news, it has evolved (legitimately or not) to become the term for "news I don't agree with." Our basic perspective here is what we would call a "rhetorical realism": all news is motivated by an impulse to tell a story in a certain way, and it is not helpful to say that news that confirms our biases is real, while news that confronts our biases is fake. Some sources, some data, and some arguments are better than others, and students need to understand the basic techniques behind persuasive discourse to separate the wheat from the chaff. Instead of saying news is either fake or it is not, we believe that students need to think in more complex ways about the relative credibility of news sources by evaluating arguments, looking for fallacies, and more importantly, talking about evidence in front of an audience, and engaging in a principled back and forth about credibility. Our belief is that if students understand processes of framing and persuasion in speech, if they experience the incentives in a speech to bend and cherry-pick data, and if they get a taste of the habit of testing the veracity of claims in the grist mill of public discourse, they will be better equipped to think about the motives that make all news partial, and therefore, will be able to think about, engage with, and frankly, read a richer diet of media than they typically do. Obviously, there are lots of things you don't like, or that don't fit your favored political narratives, which are still true. The crucial skill is to figure out which news items are trustworthy in a world of news in which legitimate news organizations (which may make mistakes, but do not, by design, deliberately spread falsehoods) vie with sources that look superficially very similar, but—by design—spread intentionally false "facts" and "stories" to create a fog of confusion that makes it very difficult to trust much of anything.

Finally, we have integrated the ancient insights of the rhetorical tradition with cutting-edge research in modern rhetorical theory, social, and even hard sciences, highlighting the intersections between them in a new Remix feature interspersed throughout the chapters.

NEW TO THIS EDITION!

- Civility, as an ethical and functional dimension of public communication, dominates Chapter 2, as well as being emphasized throughout the text.
- Discussions of "fake news," and what it means to speakers, are woven into the text at points where students need to think about doing research or critically evaluating it.
- A section covering a variety of "lightning talks" in non-academic venues is now in Chapter 13, helping students see how to practice their skills outside of the course context.
- Discussion of story and poetry slams closes out Chapter 13, opening up a set of speaking formats very different from the public speaking class, but with a closely related set of skills. The hardest thing to learn in the context of a college course is delivery – it just takes practice, and between lightning talks and slams we hope that you will think about continuing to practice, building skill and comfort in being in front of a group.
- The Remix features have been revised throughout to incorporate the latest research and thinking on these important topics.
- New and revised MindTap interactive activities will lead students to a more dynamic awareness and comprehension of chapter content, including more emphasis on civic engagement.

We are excited about each of these additions to the third edition. We believe that these changes will enhance and extend our original focus on making choices and taking responsibility as the core of public-speaking pedagogy. We provide readers with a broader range of tools drawn from ancient insights, classical rhetorical theory, and research in persuasion. An expansion of these tools augments the core insights of the first editions. This expansion is significant because more choices increase the possibilities that a speaker can competently employ to analyze and learn to implement.

For us, "making choices" means seeing every public speech as a collection of decisions that starts with inventing a topic, moves through effective research, organization, and delivery, and ends with successful interaction with an audience. "Taking responsibility" means owning your choices, both by making them intentionally and by accepting the obligation to be responsive to the audience. With these two concepts forming the core of this book, we believe we have provided a set of guiding principles that ties many of the best insights of public speaking pedagogy together around a central theme and that satisfies the demands of the current generation of students for broader civic and social engagement.

The style of the book also reflects our concern not only to engage students but also to inspire them to use their voices to make a difference in their communities, future workplaces, and the broader public sphere. Many of our examples are directly relevant to students' everyday lives; others are drawn from issues that occupy the front pages of newspapers, websites, and social media sources. In both cases, our goal is to provide students with examples that are relevant and engaging and that demonstrate the importance of public speaking to the broader health of civic life.

To create a text that is intuitive, easy to teach and learn from, and engaging to students, we have placed special emphasis on significant themes. In the introductory chapter we emphasize the world-changing power of public speech, and we introduce students to our central concepts of making choices and taking responsibility for them. Our goal is to "put the public back in public speaking" by introducing students to the idea that every speech targets a specific strategic goal (informing or persuading an audience, for example) and simultaneously forms a part of the larger public conversation around issues important to each of us.

In addition, students need to understand that this is also the best approach to speaking in professional and business contexts. Speeches here have to be well argued and researched and clearly organized, just like those in the civic context. If a "public" is a group of people

with a common set of concerns, there are publics both internal and external to any business or organization. The basic skills of good choice-making can be applied to nearly any context.

Chapter 1 is devoted to help get students up and speaking, and more important, to give them a basic understanding of the choices that go into an effective public speech. We provide a brief, early overview of the process of creating and delivering a public speech. Perhaps most significant for many first-time speakers, this chapter tackles the issue of communication apprehension head-on, offering effective introductory advice for dealing with public-speaking anxiety.

Because this book is so centrally concerned with responsible speaking in personal, work, and public contexts, Chapter 2, addressing ethics, is the first substantive chapter of the book. We believe our approach to ethics will resonate with contemporary students because, instead of simply producing a list of do's and don'ts, we provide a set of principles for thinking about ethical public-speaking practice as an intrinsic element of every communicative interaction. We always have the option of relating to people ethically – or not. Making the choice to be ethic requires both the intention and some skills. The chapter treats all the standard topics in an ethics chapter—including properly citing sources, accurately representing evidence, avoiding deception and prejudicial appeals—but it does so in the broader context of encouraging students to think about the health and quality of the relationship they are establishing with their audience.

To be ethically sound and strategically effective, good public speaking should begin and end with thinking about the audience. In Chapter 3, we discuss how thinking about the audience influences speakers' choices and how to take responsibility in composing and delivering speeches. Not only do we talk about skills at the core of good public speaking—for example, analyzing and adapting to the audience—but we emphasize thinking about public speaking as an opportunity for engaging the audience in a conversation around issues of personal and public concern. Our goals in this chapter are to take advantage of the current sentiment among students, promoted in colleges and universities, for greater public and civic engagement and to demonstrate to students that in addressing a specific audience, they also are making their views known in the context of a broader public conversation.

For the model of public speaking as a part of a broader public conversation to be successful, we believe a public speaking text should present more than just the best ways to speak to an audience. Thus, Chapter 4 addresses how we should listen. One of our goals is to help students become better audience members and more responsive speakers by emphasizing the role of active, critical, and ethically sound listening. We include detailed advice on eliminating impediments to good listening, taking good notes, and giving constructive feedback. But perhaps more notably, we believe that privileging listening in the public speaking classroom is a pivotal first step toward improving the quality of public conversation in that it emphasizes paying attention to the claims of others as a necessary part of participating in a robust and respectful public conversation.

In the next three chapters we move from a basic framework for making choices and taking responsibility in public speech toward a practically oriented treatment of how to make effective choices in selecting a topic and purpose (Chapter 5), doing effective research (Chapter 6), and organizing your ideas and information (Chapter 7). Chapter 5 provides students a practical rubric for making good topic choices that best balance their interests, their goals for interaction with the audience, and the nature of the public-speaking situation. We provide easily implementable solutions for picking a topic area, defining a purpose, generating a thesis statement, and focusing the speech in light of the occasion and character of the audience. A culture of search engines and social media has fundamentally changed the way in which students relate to information, and any public-speaking pedagogy worth its salt has to take into account this sea change in information culture. Chapter 6 faces head-on the unique challenges of researching in a digital world, providing students with a detailed guide to navigating a research context that is substantially more challenging than it was even a decade ago.

Again emphasizing the central role of making choices and taking responsibility, this chapter on research provides a detailed, easy-to-follow, step-by-step protocol for designing a research strategy. Because contemporary students do research primarily online, we start with a discussion of all the research options available to them and provide concrete instructions for searching the Internet and other sources effectively. Given the changes in student research practices, we place heavy emphasis on methodical searching, including designing and keeping track of search terms, and on focusing research efforts amid the near-avalanche of online sources from which students can choose. Because today's student often struggles with what to use and how best to use it, we devote parts of the chapter to evaluating the credibility of sources and to thinking critically about the role of evidence in the composition of a good speech. Chapter 7 teaches students how best to integrate their claims, arguments, and evidence in a lucid and compelling format that engages an audience effectively. This chapter on organization presents a rubric from thinking about introductions, signposting, the body of a speech, and a good conclusion. Instead of simply offering a catalogue of possible speech formats or deferring to the nature of the topic for inventing an organizational pattern, however, we discuss organization as a choice that, like any other, entails specific advantages and drawbacks. Thus, students should come away with a set of resources for developing a capacity for critical thinking about organizational choices.

Chapters 8 and 9 deal with verbal style and delivery, applying the same basic framework for making choices and taking responsibility that we have woven throughout the text. Chapter 8 addresses the best of the rhetorical tradition's reflections on lively language use, borrowing from a wide range of contemporary and pop culture discourses to discuss effective choices for the use of figures and tropes, including treatments of repetition, contrast, comparison, substitution, exaggeration, and personification. We conclude this chapter by reflecting on the ways the speaker's topic and the occasion might serve as a guide to the style choices good speakers make. Chapter 9 extends this same line of thinking to choices in delivering a speech. To help students negotiate these choices, we discuss various types of delivery—from memory, from a manuscript, extemporaneously, with the help of a presentation aid, and so on. We conclude this chapter with discussions of how best to practice and effectively handle audience interaction.

We follow physical delivery with a detailed and visually rich Chapter 10, which applies the principles of choice and responsibility to the use of presentation aids. Whether the student is using a static visual aid such as a chart, moving images, an audio clip, or presentation software, applying the basic framework of choices and responsibility can provide helpful insights. This chapter includes an integrated section on how to give a demonstration speech, which by its nature has a multimedia element. It concludes with a pragmatic, detailed discussion about integrating presentation software into a speech without leaning on it as a replacement for good public-speaking practices. Here we discuss a number of messy but critically important practicalities that go into the effective use of presentation software, including how to think about delivery with presentation software, how to practice with and use presentation software in the classroom, and how to develop a backup plan.

Chapter 11 focuses on informative speaking, beginning with thinking about how our contemporary context and news media in particular have changed the way we think about information. More than ever, the culture broadly, and our students specifically, have begun to think about the notion of "spin" in presenting information. Our goal in this frame is to help students think about responsible choices for presenting information in a way that is clear, well organized, and useful for the audience. The chapter returns to the theme of topic selection to deal with the unique challenges of picking a good informative topic, and then moves on to discuss techniques for informative speaking and the set of choices a speaker might make to ensure that information is helpful for the audience.

Chapter 12 updates Aristotle's three modes of proof—logos, ethos, and pathos, or rational argument, the speaker's character, and emotional appeals—to give students concrete guidance

in composing and delivering an effective speech. Though our inspiration is ancient, we draw from contemporary examples to provide a basic framework for thinking about how best to convince modern audiences through appeals to reason, character, and emotion. This chapter places special emphasis on processes of reasoning, not only to help students give better speeches but also to help them sharpen their critical thinking skills.

Chapter 13 concludes the text by focusing on other types of speeches and speech occasions. Even though a first course will focus appropriately on basic informative and persuasive speeches, with classmates as the main audience, students will encounter many other speaking situations in the world, and these will present new communication challenges. We believe the skills to meet these challenges will be extensions of the skills already learned. Students can easily learn to give effective and compelling speeches at life transitions and ceremonial occasions.

So we believe we have produced a public-speaking curriculum that:

- is comprehensive, but systematically organized around a coherent system for making good speech choices and taking responsibility for them
- is simple to learn and to teach, always returning to the themes of making choices and taking responsibility
- is rich in practical advice and concrete detail for composing and delivering speeches
- is focused on the biggest struggles and conceptual issues faced by public-speaking students
- is an effective reworking of ancient arts for the modern world—faithful to the best insights of the rhetorical tradition but responsive to the contemporary student in its use of examples, composition and delivery practices, and style
- puts the civic and relational character of public speaking in the foreground of choice making

We have included a number of instructional features to advance these goals. We have tried to compose a visually engaging book, with images that match the diversity and vitality of contemporary public culture. Each chapter begins with a vignette that ties students' actual work to the content of the chapter in story form and ends with review and discussion questions. We also have included two major kinds of interactive features in the text to keep students engaged. Try It! presents an exercise students can do while reading the text, providing an immediate opportunity for hands-on practice with the concepts in the book. Instructors can use the Try It! boxes for in-class work, group work, think-pair-share exercises, or homework. The second feature, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), channels the spirit and style of its online inspiration. FAQ boxes anticipate and answer students' questions about various parts of the text, providing a brief interlude for thinking beyond the immediate curriculum and toward some of the bigger questions implied in learning public speaking.

MindTap® AMPLIFY COMMUNICATION SKILLS WITH MINDTAP

Strong communication skills are critical to securing and succeeding in careers. In fact, it's the number one skill employers look for in potential candidates. *MindTap for Public Speaking* empowers students with the ability to prepare, practice, and present their speeches in a safe and secure environment. For instructors, MindTap allows a unique online learning experience with an integrated eBook, quizzes, flashcards, and interactive video activities. MindTap also includes high value resources like:

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With ***YouSeeU***, students can upload video files of practice speeches or final performances, comment on their peers' speeches, and review their grades and instructor feedback. Instructors create courses and assignments, comment on and grade student speeches, and allow peer review. Grades flow into a gradebook that allows instructors to easily manage their course from within MindTap. Grades also can be exported for use in learning-management systems. YouSeeU's flexibility lends itself to use in traditional, hybrid, and online courses.

Outline Builder

Outline Builder breaks down the speech preparation process into manageable steps and can help alleviate speech-related anxiety. The wizard-format provides relevant prompts and resources to guide students through the outlining process. Students are guided through topic definition, research and source citation, organizational structure outlining, and drafting note-cards for speech day. The outline is assignable and gradable through MindTap.

Speech Video Library

Speech Video Library gives students a chance to watch videos of real speeches that correspond to the topics in *Public Speaking: Choices and Responsibility.* Each speech activity provides a video of the speech; a full transcript so viewers can read along; the speech outline—many in note-card and full sentence form and evaluation questions so students are guided through their assessment. While viewing each clip, students evaluate the speech or scenario by completing short answer questions and submitting their results directly to their instructor.

RESOURCES FOR INSTRUCTORS

Public Speaking: Choices and Responsibility, Third Edition features a full suite of resources for instructors. These resources are available to qualified adopters, and ordering options for student supplements are flexible. Please consult your local Cengage Learning sales representative for more information, to evaluate examination copies of any of these instructor or student resources, or to request product demonstrations.

Instructor's Resource Manual. The Instructor's Resource Manual provides a comprehensive teaching system. Included in the manual are suggested assignments and criteria for evaluation, chapter outlines, and in-class activities. PowerPoint slides also are included.

Cengage Learning Testing, powered by Cognero. Accessible through cengage.com/login with your faculty account, this test bank contains multiple choice, true/false, and essay questions for each chapter. Cognero is a flexible, online system that allows you to author, edit, and manage test bank content. Create multiple test versions instantly and deliver through your LMS platform from wherever you may be. Cognero is compatible with Blackboard, Angel, Moodle, and Canvas LMS platforms.

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PART 1 FUNDAMENTALS OF GOOD SPEAKING

CHAPTER 1

PUBLIC SPEAKING

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Explain why public speaking is powerful and worth mastering
- Contrast the public and civic dimensions of public speaking with other types of communication
- Define the special responsibilities of a public speaker
- Identify the stages and choices necessary to compose and deliver a speech
- Describe communication choices at each stage of the speech creation process

CHAPTER OUTLINE

Overview

To become an effective speaker, first you'll want to understand a few basic principles about public speaking as a communication activity. This chapter will give you an overview of the communication process, highlighting the difference that public speaking can make in your life and in the lives of the people listening to you. You will learn about the process of composing and delivering a public speech, focusing on the variety of choices you have to make when you give a speech. Finally, to get you started on the process of composing and delivering a speech, we will walk you through the basic elements of speech preparation, which are the topics of the subsequent chapters.

INTRODUCTION: WHY LEARN PUBLIC SPEAKING?

MindTap®

Read, highlight and take notes online.

Caution: The contents of this book can be dangerous. Dangerous—but also powerful. Whether used for good or for ill, speech is one of the most powerful forces in human history. Sometimes it has been used to unite people around a common democratic goal—for example, to advance the cause of civil rights. Other times dictators have used speech as a powerful weapon. But however it is used, speech can change the world. More important, *your* speech can change *your* world in big and small ways.

The principles we'll introduce will help you give better speeches in almost any context, even when your goal is modest. They will help you learn to be a better public speaker—clearer and more persuasive, but also more engaged, responsible, and well reasoned.

We often hear that public speaking is just about clear communication. It is in part, and people sometimes assume that anyone can do it without much effort or thought. But performance counts too—actually getting up and talking in front of other people. You may be surprised to find out by the end of this course, however, that getting up and speaking in front of other people can be the easy part. In this book, we would like to introduce you to the range of skills that go into preparing, producing, and delivering a speech, skills that will make you a more effective advocate for yourself and for the people and ideas you care about.

You may not be in this course to change the world: Many students take a public speaking course because it is required. But taking this course, working through this book, and adopting your instructor's advice on how to be a better public speaker will make you more successful not only in class but in your everyday life and beyond the classroom.

You are about to become part of a tradition that stretches back thousands of years. So stick with us. We hope to convince you of the power of words, of the world-changing capability that each of us has if we learn how to develop and use it responsibly.

Whatever brought you to this class, public speaking is necessary not only for your education and career but also for your life and for the health of our democracy. We will argue that *speech is powerful* and that *speech matters*.

REMIX

What's a Remix?

Public speaking is not only an ancient art. It is also a topic of study for people in a number of modern fields. Studying it well requires that you read and think through a "mashup" of sorts, incorporating timeless insights about speaking with fresh new angles on the art of speech. So what are we remixing here? In these boxes we will remix the tradition of public speaking by including recent work on public speaking topics from social sciences, the humanities, and even from the sciences. We'll also include some sources for further reading if any of these ideas grab your attention.

SPEECH IS POWERFUL

rhetoric Term for the study of how language, argument, and narrative can persuade an audience.

The study of public speaking began in ancient Greece. For the Greeks, public speaking was part of the broader field of **rhetoric**, the study of how words could persuade an audience. In the modern world, many people associate public speaking with manipulation, and the term *rhetoric* with "empty talk." They may say, "Let's have less rhetoric and more action." Although it is true that talk is sometimes empty, good speech also can be a form of action, motivating people to make important changes in the world. To see why, the first thing to understand is that because speech is powerful, *your* speech can be powerful.

The Power of Public Speaking to Change the World

One of the first people to write about the power of public speech, the Greek philosopher Gorgias of Leontini, claimed that "speech is a powerful lord." Twenty-five hundred years later, abundant evidence supports Gorgias's insight. Speech and speeches have been used to both good and bad ends. They have introduced and converted many to the world's great religions. They have helped to elect presidents and overthrow dictators. They have begun wars and ended them. Winston Churchill's and Franklin Roosevelt's speeches rallied the British and U.S. populations during World War II. In the 19th century, Elizabeth Cady Stanton spoke out to make people aware of the rights of women. In the middle of the 20th century, the speeches of Martin Luther King showed people in the United States how to think differently about civil rights and issues of race and racism.

We need the power of words *to speak a better world into existence*. Speech, used effectively, should motivate us to make changes on our campuses, in our communities, and as a nation. It also should help us make better decisions about the kinds of changes we make. We need the ability to speak with clarity and conviction, but we also need to be able to listen with attention and respect to other people's viewpoints. Thus, one of the biggest challenges of our time is to learn how to speak in a way that generates cooperation and insight, and that avoids division and narrow-mindedness.

But what can learning how to speak well do for you? After all, you probably will not be in the position of addressing the nation in a time of war or convincing Congress to change a law. The point of this course is not to change you into an Elizabeth Cady Stanton, a Winston Churchill, or a Martin Luther King.

FAQ *Why start by talking about the Greeks?*

We have inherited many ideas about communication and its relationship to public life from ancient Greek and Roman (also called "classical") practice. The founders of the United States used them as models; many classical principles and terms they developed are still useful and relevant. For example, in Chapter 12 we'll examine persuasive appeals in speaking through the lens of the classical distinction among *ethos*, *logos*, and *pathos*.

The Power of Speeches to Change Your World

Even though speeches can change the world, common sense tells us that they also can make a big difference in your individual history. Every day, people speak in courtrooms, boardrooms, and classrooms to persuade others of their points of view or to inform others about things they need to know. A good speech can make all the difference in winning a lawsuit, pitching a business idea, or teaching people about something that might change their lives significantly. And, ultimately, that is the point of this book: Because speech is such a powerful tool, we should learn to use it as effectively and as responsibly as we can.

The skills you will learn here also will make you a more effective speaker in your career. If you want to come across as the candidate to hire when applying for a dream job, being well spoken is a crucial part of your success. If you prepare well for the interview, thinking about how to present yourself as a fitting and capable candidate, if you perform well by speaking clearly and articulately, if you make a persuasive case, and if you invite the participation of the interviewers by fostering a good dialogue, you can be a shoo-in for the position. By the same token, if you pitch a business proposal to a supervisor, a client, or a lender, you will have to project an attitude of competency and meticulous preparation, as well as to speak articulately and build a relationship with your listeners.

The basic principles are similar for any speech, whether it is delivered on the Senate floor, in a State of the Union address, in a business meeting, or before a local community group. In each instance, you will have to plan carefully what you will say and how you will say it, and to build a relationship with the audience.

FAQ *Can speeches really change the world?*

Here are some speeches that helped to change the course of history. If you would like to learn more about any of them, access them online.

"Against Imperialism," William Jennings Bryan
"Acres of Diamonds," Russell H. Conwell
"Mercy For Leopold and Loeb," Clarence Darrow
"Farewell Address," Dwight D. Eisenhower
"1976 DNC Keynote Address," Barbara Jordan
"Inaugural Address," John F. Kennedy
"I Have a Dream," Martin Luther King
"Every Man a King," Huey Long
"The Ballot or the Bullet," Malcolm X
"Farewell Address to Congress," General Douglas MacArthur
"Pearl Harbor Address to the Nation," Franklin D. Roosevelt
"The Fundamental Principle of a Republic," Anna Howard Shaw
"Declaration of Conscience," Margaret Chase Smith

democracy A system of government in which people govern themselves, either through direct votes on policy issues (*direct democracy*) or by electing officials who deliberate and make decisions on their behalf (*representative democracy*).

Speaking Connects You to Others: Democracy in Everyday Life

A good public speech, no matter what the context, ultimately strives to reach the best ideals of **democracy**. If you have a dollar bill in your pocket, take it out. The Great Seal of the United States is reproduced on the back of the bill. On the left side is a pyramid inside a circle, and on the right side is a circle with an eagle in it. The eagle has a small scroll in its mouth. If you look closely, you will see the Latin phrase *E pluribus unum*, meaning "From many, one." The many people who make up the United States are all united—we are all in this together.

Democracy works, or at least we will be able to make it work, only if we recognize the fact that we are many people with substantial differences in opinion, race, class, sexuality, gender, religion, and belief. But we also strive to make from these differences a common identity, or at least a common commitment to democracy and the well-being of our fellow citizens.

FAQ *Can speeches really make a difference in my life?*

Here are some examples of the kinds of speeches that can change the course of your life if you deliver them effectively:

- The speech you give as an answer to the job interview question, "Tell us a little bit about yourself"
- The speech you give when you pitch an important business idea
- The speech you give when you are trying to persuade people in your community (for example, a town council or a neighborhood association) to change something in your community that should be changed.
- The speech you give when convincing a loved one to do something—to enter a long-term relationship, for example, or to support you in an important project
- The speeches you give to convince others to vote for a candidate or a law that affects your everyday life

FAQ *Can speeches really make a difference on campus?*

At most schools, the student government controls millions of dollars for student programs. In addition to university policy, what determines how that money is spent? Typically, elected members of the student government decide. How? They get together in a room and talk. If you are in favor of spending money on some activity or club, you'll speak up in favor of it. Here's a case where your ability to be clear and persuasive with your peers could change the quality of campus life for a huge number of students. No matter how strongly you believe in your cause, your speech is what will make your beliefs matter.

FAQ *What do pluralism and unity mean for public speaking?*

Pluralism means that our democracy is made up of people who are different—with different backgrounds, including differences of class, race, gender, sexuality, religious orientation, and geographical origins. But pluralism is more than just our different backgrounds. There is also difference in democracy because we have different ideas and beliefs.

Unity means that these differences are not disabling: We are all members of the same national public.

Public speaking, at its best, is about respecting that common commitment: Public speaking is about the **unity** of democracy. But it is also about respecting the **pluralism** of democracy—namely, that we have to speak and listen in a way that preserves the important differences that make each of us who we are.

Now you may be saying to yourself, "Wait a minute. I was hoping to get some communication skills out of this class that I could use in business, for my job." Actually, you will get that, and more. Successful and effective persuasion and informative speaking in politics, business, and even personal life can invoke the highest democratic values. Why? Because speakers who make good decisions consider the effects of their words on all **stakeholders**, or all the people who have something at stake in the decisions. Skilled speakers not only know how to adapt to their audience of stakeholders, but they also understand their audience's diversity.

The Conversational Framework

In this book we'll distinguish different approaches to communication, especially public communication. Speakers are never *just* informing and persuading; there is always a larger context that creates mutual responsibilities between speakers and their audiences. To sharpen the picture, let's compare advertising and democracy as contexts for communication. They represent fundamentally different approaches to public discourse and different ways of understanding this mutual responsibility.

unity Harmony among related parts.

pluralism The coexistence of numerous ethnic, cultural, political, or religious groups in one nation.

stakeholders The people who have something to lose or gain as the result of a decision or policy. They have an *interest* in that decision.

In advertising, a company is trying to sell something, to get someone to buy something. Ads target specific groups of people called market segments—men between 30 and 40, for instance, or working women who live in urban areas, or Twitter users. Advertisers are successful when sales increase; their responsibility to their audience is fairly limited, and communication is usually in just one direction.

In contrast, in the context of democracy, communication is among people or citizens "thinking together." Decisions should emerge as a result of the mutual exchange of arguments, information, and points of view. Democracy is big and messy; imagine it as an enormous system in which different ideas and arguments circulate, being expressed (and maybe changed) at many different points. Sometimes it's you and a friend talking about what the government should do about student loans; sometimes it's you reading a debate about student loan finances in the newspaper or on a website. Sometimes it's your roommate watching an argument being mocked on a satirical news show, and sometimes it's your parents attending a community meeting to hear what people say.

If you're paying attention, you are part of the larger public dialogue, and you might even be putting in your two cents. Even if you don't see yourself as particularly political, you might be surprised if you keep track for a few days of how often you think and talk about public issues; you can't help it—they matter.

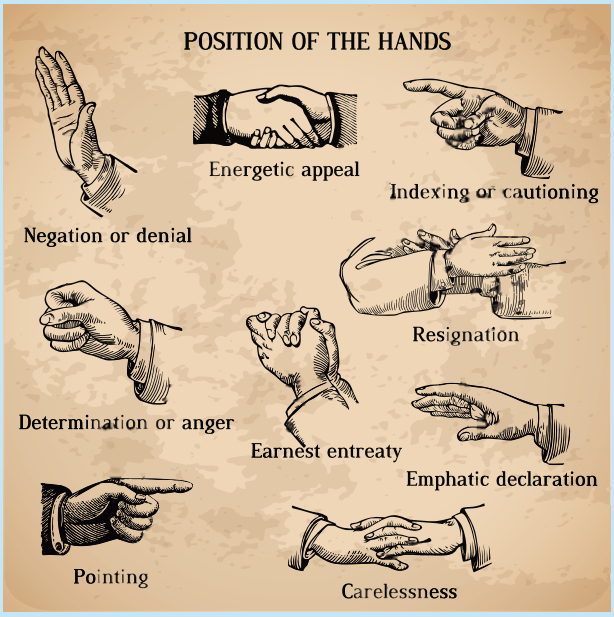
Clearly, this is very different from advertising. Democratic conversation, or dialogue, aims to solve problems, not to sell products. It involves everybody, not just a target consumer audience. To be successful, arguments have to be adaptable to men and women alike, older and younger, and of different races, religions, regions of the country, income, education levels, and so on. Advertising bypasses differences such as these by selectively targeting a smaller audience of people who have something in common.

Suppose a student is going to give an informative speech on a surprising or controversial topic, such as the campus need for transgender bathrooms. An advertising approach probably would start by defining the target market as the types of people most likely to be sympathetic to sexualities

REMIX

Public Speaking and Democracy

At one time, teachers taught public speaking courses by having their students memorize and deliver great speeches, learn ornate hand gestures, and focus in excruciating detail on pauses, tone, and vocal flourishes. If you were taking this class in the 1800s, you might have had to master hand movements to go along with a text that you were memorizing, and to do this, you might study something like this:



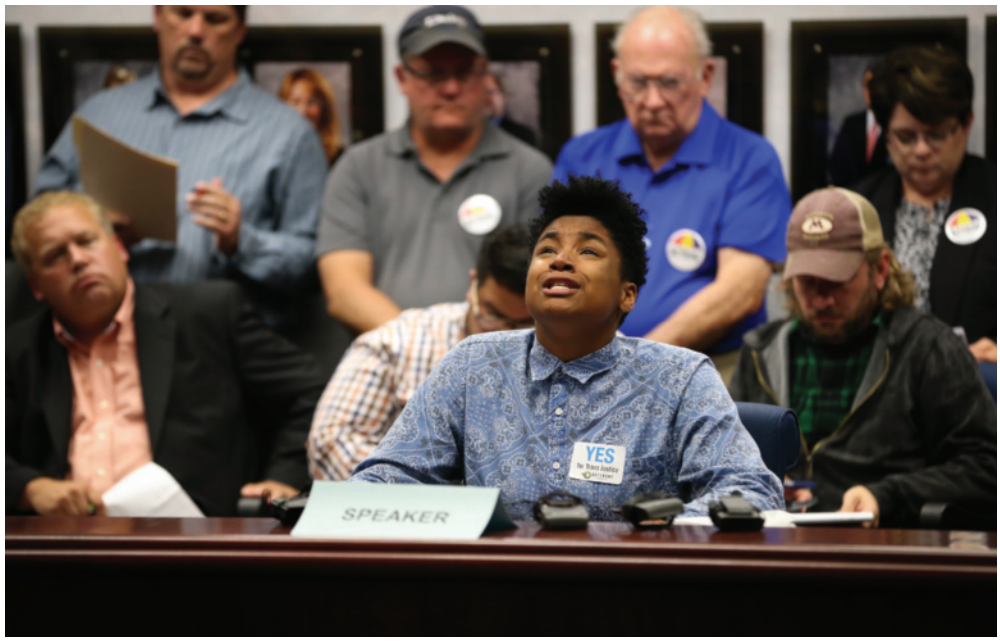
Woodhouse/Shutterstock.com

But starting around the 1900s, and continuing until today, public speaking has focused more on helping people to compose and deliver materials that they wrote, in a clear conversational manner. Why the change? Well, when education was the privilege of a small segment of society, knowing how to deliver a riveting version of a speech from ancient Greece might have been a useful skill. But now, public speaking instruction, including this book, focuses on the idea that the goal of public speaking is to help students find their voice so they can advocate for themselves and for the things that matter to them. This is part of a larger historical trend to see higher education as a good for a greater number of people and, by extension, to prepare more people for productive lives in the workplace and in the broader democratic sphere.

An accompanying turn in public speaking, then, was to see the point of a good speech as more than just helping students really nail vocal flourishes or hand gestures, or to show how well they could recite ancient poetry. The new point of public speaking was to see it as the ability to communicate in one's own voice to an audience of peers—to other people who were also in public listening and speaking and talking about matters of common interest.

For more information, check out:

J. M. Sproule, Inventing Public Speaking: Rhetoric and the Speech Book, 1730–1930. *Rhetoric and Public Affairs*. 15:4. 2012



AP Images/The Star Tribune, Renee Jones Schneider

Zeam Porter speaks at a public hearing about a proposed transgender policy for high school sports. Porter identifies as transgender. Can just speaking up, and speaking out, make a difference to public discourse?

that are different from their own and would ignore everyone else. It's difficult to imagine, however, how the student would give a speech to a class and ignore many or most of the people in it.

In contrast, in a democratic conversation or dialogue, the speaker would begin by identifying the larger public issues that connect to the availability of transgender bathrooms: equality, civil rights, and the increasing acceptance of gay and transgender people. The speaker would be placing the issue of transgender bathrooms within larger discussions that have been going on for 10, 50, or maybe 150 years, portraying the issue as part of a larger conversation about civil rights or equality.

As another example, consider a speech about yoga. In a public speaking class, is it the speaker's job to "sell" yoga to her classmates? Probably not. But she could present the information she gained from her research on yoga in the context of public conversations about health, athletic performance, or even spirituality.

Our point here is that while you are learning many new techniques in public speaking class, such as outlining, research, and delivery, you also will learn new ways of understanding the kind of communication that makes up truly *public* speaking. It isn't quite like talking to friends about movies and music, and it isn't like a sales pitch. Public speaking is the adventure of taking your turn in one of the amazing ongoing public conversations that are happening right now.

In short, speech is powerful, and it matters in ways that you may not have thought about too much, but after taking this course, you'll never hear a speech the same way again. Now let's look at an overview of the actual process.

THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS

In this book, we'll often refer to communicating in the context of public speaking as *rhetoric*, but with a different meaning than you're used to. As we noted, today the term *rhetoric* is often negative and refers to discourse that is empty, insincere, and pompous. In its classical sense, however, rhetoric is about the art of speaking, and it requires at least three components:

- a speaker,
- a listener, and
- some means of sharing facts, ideas, reasoning and information between them.

There might be a conversation between two people or among several people, as in a group discussion. Or, as in public speaking situations, there might be one speaker and a large audience. Or the medium might change: One person writes a letter or an email to another, or a letter is published

Yan Yan/Xinhua/Photoshot/Newscom

Tai Lihua of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (left) joins a panel discussion in Beijing with the help of a sign language interpreter. Are the Deaf who use sign language truly speaking?

in the newspaper and is read by thousands of people. Even though the "speakers" and "listeners" are not physically present, we can still use the terms *speaker* (writer) and *listener* (reader) because the communication situations are parallel: In all of them, the speaker is trying to accomplish something with the listener, using language. Of course, there are also differences: Speakers in person generate nonverbal cues to meaning, and for writers, layout, design, and color can communicate more than the words say, or sometimes something different from what the words say.

For most of us, "speaking" involves opening our mouths and having audible words come out. But if you are Deaf, speaking means using your hands to create American Sign Language (ASL) or American Signed English. And what about the many of the public speeches that are written in advance, some existing only as texts? Many "speeches" inserted into the *Congressional Record*, for example, have never been spoken aloud. We mention ASL and written speeches to emphasize that "speaking" is a complex phenomenon and to encourage you to think about what speech is and how it is generated.

YOUR RHETORICAL SITUATIONS TRY IT!

Make a list of the most common rhetorical situations you engage in.

- Who are the most common listeners? Why?
- Are these situations usually face-to-face or electronic? Why?
- Which ones are easiest? Most difficult? Why?

THE *PUBLIC* IN PUBLIC SPEAKING

An audience is not the same as the people listening or reading by chance; people who happen to overhear a conversation are not the audience for the conversation. Audiences are made up of a variety of people, with different beliefs, values, and life experiences. And the speaker wants something from all of them—their attention, their patience, their comprehension, their openness, a change of mind, a change of action.

Much of the time, speaking (and writing) is not only an expression of the speaker's thoughts but is also, in an important sense, tailored *for* the audience. Speakers need to know something about their audience so they can adapt to the audience. Just as in ordinary conversation you say different things (or the same thing in different ways) depending on whom you