

Public Speaking *Third Edition* and Civic Engagement



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Public Speaking and Civic Engagement

Third Edition

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PREFACE

A lot has happened since we published the first edition of *Public Speaking and Civic Engagement* in 2008. In some ways, the world has changed dramatically. We elected the first African-American president in U.S. history. We have endured the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression. New technologies and social networking sites have changed how we communicate, do business, and participate in civic life. There are now many different ways to be a “good citizen” because new patterns of communication and civic engagement have replaced “politics as usual.” Today, more and more young people are “getting involved” in ways unimaginable just a few years ago, both in their own communities and as part of national or even international political or social movements.

Of course, some things never seem to change. Even as we bring an end to the long war in Afghanistan, we see ominous new threats on the horizon—in Syria, Iran, and elsewhere around the world. Signs of economic recovery have been evident in recent years, yet a growing European debt crisis threatens to throw our economy back into recession. Meanwhile, we continue to debate health care reform, educational policy, environmental protection, immigration, and countless other contentious issues. At times, our political debates seem so heated and polarized that we cannot imagine them ending in agreement and compromise. Yet somehow our democracy survives the most vigorous, even passionate debates. Indeed, robust debate is necessary to maintain the health of our deliberative democracy.

As citizens, we have a responsibility to participate in debate and deliberation over issues of public importance. And that requires that we learn how to *communicate* with others—how to share our insights and ideas, how to listen carefully and critically, and how to deliberate with our fellow citizens. This book can help you become a better communicator *and* a better citizen. It will help you understand both the principles of public speaking and your rights and responsibilities as a citizen in a democracy.

WHAT'S NEW IN THE THIRD EDITION?

The third edition of *Public Speaking and Civic Engagement* retains the most popular features of the first two editions, but we have added several new features and updates, and we continue to strive for a more concise, accessible style throughout the book. Although the basic principles of effective speaking remain the same, we have revised and expanded our coverage of several important topics, including communication apprehension and critical listening. We have also updated examples, statistics, and other types of information throughout the book, and we have included still more material from actual student speeches. At the same time, we cut less useful or outdated material and eliminated some redundancies in earlier

editions. The result is a somewhat shorter book, yet one still packed with practical guidance and the latest information about the political, cultural, and technological developments that affect public speaking.

The most noticeable change may be that this new edition has one fewer chapter. In response to reviewer suggestions, we have eliminated the overlap in the first two chapters by combining them into one. The ethics of speech remains a central concern of the book, however, and we have added a number of new features and examples. In addition, we have clarified and emphasized more the learning objectives in each chapter. Users of earlier editions will notice other changes as well, including the following revisions:

Chapter 1:

- A more concise introduction to the role of public speaking in a democratic society, combining material previously in the first two chapters of the book
- A more upbeat discussion of the role of young people in American politics, taking note of a variety of different ways that young people “get involved” in their communities
- Updated examples from the presidency of Barack Obama, the 2012 Republican primaries, and other recent events
- A continued emphasis on the ethics of public speaking, with more concise discussions of ghostwriting, plagiarism, and other ethical issues

Chapter 2:

- A completely revised chapter integrating the basic principles of speaking and listening
- Increased emphasis on how to listen critically
- A new *Focus on Civic Engagement* feature about building a climate for peace through better listening
- A new article by former congressman Lee Hamilton on how to listen to politicians

Chapter 3:

- A new, more in-depth discussion of communication apprehension and speaking with confidence
- An expanded discussion of how communication apprehension can adversely impact academic and job performance, and an expanded treatment of factors that contribute to communication apprehension
- A new *Highlighting Communication Apprehension* feature describing college programs that help students manage their communication apprehension
- A new bulleted list of physiological reactions associated with speaking anxiety
- A new list of key questions speakers should ask about their audience and the occasion as they prepare to speak

Chapter 4:

- An expanded discussion of economic status as a consideration in audience analysis
- A new *Highlighting Religion and Politics* feature focusing on Mitt Romney's Mormon religion
- A new *Highlighting Audience Demographics* feature reflecting on what it means to be “rich” in America
- A new *Focus on Civic Engagement* feature about the role of group membership—specifically, union membership—in motivating people to get involved in politics

Chapter 5:

- An expanded discussion of the speaker's ethical obligations in choosing a topic

Chapter 6:

- Updated coverage of online searches and how to search more efficiently
- A revised discussion of utilizing library resources, particularly subscription databases
- New coverage of how to use online networks and social media for information gathering

Chapter 7:

- A new *Highlighting Specific Examples* feature, quoting a speech by Senator Richard Lugar on the need to ratify the “Law of the Seas” convention
- A new *Focus on Civic Engagement* feature, looking at the use of contrast in a story about the differences among candidates in the GOP presidential primaries

Chapter 8:

- Expanded examples illustrating how to promote clarity in organizing ideas
- A new example illustrating the categorical pattern of organization
- New examples of transitions and introductory devices, including previews, summaries, visualizing the future, and the use of quotations

Chapter 9:

- An expanded discussion of different types of outlines
- Clarification of the relationship between formal and keyword outlines
- Fresh information and statistics in all sample outlines

Chapter 10:

- A new feature, *Highlighting Active and Interesting Language*, showing how an advocate for the homeless made effective use of language to make his argument more emotionally compelling

Chapter 11:

- A new feature, *Highlighting Eye Contact*, about cultural differences relating to eye contact and gaze
- A new table listing patterns of eye contact that should be avoided
- A new table listing nonverbal behaviors to avoid when speaking
- Fresh new examples illustrating key principles of delivery

Chapter 12:

- A new *Highlighting* feature on *Prezi*, an increasingly popular alternative to PowerPoint
- New material comparing different methods of delivery and new advice on how to handle the question-and-answer period following your speech

Chapter 13:

- A new outline illustrating the spatial pattern of organization
- An expanded discussion of devices for capturing and maintaining your audience's attention
- A new annotated speech illustrating the principles of informative speaking, "Preparing Students for Community Involvement"

Chapter 14:

- New examples from the 2012 State of the Union address, the Republican presidential primaries, the shooting of Representative Gabrielle Giffords, and other recent news events
- An updated *Focus on Civic Engagement* feature on the efforts of former presidents Bush and Clinton to promote civil discourse

Chapter 15:

- Clearer definitions and updated references to online sources on reasoning and fallacies

Chapter 16:

- New examples of vivid language and rhythmic phrasing in famous ceremonial speeches

Chapter 17:

- A new *Focus on Civic Engagement* feature on *A Crucible Moment*, a report from the U.S. Department of Education calling for a national effort to improve "civic learning" in colleges and universities
- An expanded and updated discussion of study circles and town hall meetings
- A new feature, *Highlighting Leadership*, with practical tips for running more efficient and productive meetings
- A new list of the various "task" and "building and maintenance" roles that group members might enact as members of a committee or other deliberative group

OUR APPROACH AND THEMES

Three convictions continue to guide our approach to *Public Speaking and Civic Engagement*:

- We believe that public speaking is not just a valuable personal skill but also an important part of engaged citizenship in a democracy. You will deliver many speeches in your life, but the most important will be those you deliver as a citizen.
- We approach public speaking as a collaborative partnership between the speaker and the audience. No speaker can succeed alone—the audience is crucial to the planning, delivery, and outcome of the speech.
- We view public speaking as more than a set of performance skills. Truly successful speakers have ideas or information worth communicating. They think critically and reason soundly, and they are not just effective speakers, but also careful and critical listeners, engaged citizens, and ethical human beings.

The Speaker as Citizen

Preparing a classroom speech should be no different from planning a speech for a business conference or a town hall meeting. The classroom is a public space, and your fellow students are citizens. You should treat a speech to your classmates as seriously as you would a speech to any other group of co-workers or citizens.

In treating public speaking as a type of civic engagement, this book encourages you to develop an ethic of active participation. It urges you to read widely and reflectively, and it holds you responsible for becoming well informed about your topic. As you begin to seek out opportunities to speak in public, you will learn to listen critically yet also to respond in a spirit of mutual respect and cooperation. You will learn to speak persuasively, but you also will be encouraged to join *with* your fellow citizens in a spirit of inquiry and common cause. As you work with others to find solutions to our common problems, you will come to understand what it means to deliberate “in good faith.”

The emphasis on civic engagement makes this book different from many public speaking books. Some books treat public speaking as a tool of personal success—a skill that you need to “beat the competition” or climb the ladder of success. We approach public speaking as something more than that. Emphasizing ethical and civic concerns, we view public speaking as an essential tool of democratic citizenship. Protected by the First Amendment to our Constitution, our right to free speech distinguishes us from citizens in totalitarian states and empowers us to govern ourselves. In this book, speech is treated as a means for defining our purposes and identity as a nation, discussing the choices we face, and resolving the differences and disagreements among us. Even ceremonial speeches are treated as important expressions of our democratic culture and traditions. Your course in public speaking will contribute to your personal and professional success. But the best reason to study public

speaking is that it will help you become a better citizen. By becoming a better speaker, you will be better prepared to participate in civic life.

The Speaker-Audience Partnership

This book does not treat the audience as something to be changed or manipulated, but rather as an active partner in the communicative process. From the earliest stages of planning a speech to the question-and-answer period that may follow, your listeners will be important to your success. You need to consider your listeners' needs and interests in tandem with your own. You need to ask these questions: What are my listeners' priorities and concerns? How can I persuasively advance my own ideas while still respecting their values and beliefs? Am I open to being influenced by my audience even as I try to persuade them? What can I do to promote a genuine spirit of democratic deliberation in which my audience and I have a shared interest in finding common ground?

When considering your audience, it is important to recognize that our society is now more diverse than ever before. Your audience may consist of people of all genders, races, and religions. It may even include people from other parts of the world. At the very least, your audience will have widely varying interests and values and hold differing political or religious opinions. Respecting this diversity is crucial to connecting with your audience. In this book, we recognize the challenges of communicating in an increasingly diverse society, yet we also stress the need for people to come together in a spirit of dialogue and collaboration. If we hope to find solutions to our common problems, we need to communicate effectively and work together to realize our shared goals.

Respecting the speaker-listener partnership is more than a practical necessity; it is an ethical obligation. Ethical speakers keep in touch with the audience's needs, concerns, and welfare, even as they pursue their own purposes in speaking. In *Public Speaking and Civic Engagement*, we treat the speaker-listener partnership as both a practical necessity and an ethical responsibility.

The Citizen-Critic

By studying public speaking, you will become not only a better speaker but also a more careful and engaged listener—one who pays close attention when other people speak and thinks carefully about what they are saying. In our mass-mediated society, we can point to any number of speakers who try to fool the public with a “slick” delivery or deceptive, even manipulative speeches. As a student of public speaking, you will learn to recognize and resist the techniques of these demagogues and propagandists. You will learn to be a more critical consumer in the “market-place of ideas.”

Our democracy rests on the assumption that ordinary citizens are smart enough to govern themselves. Yet it is not always easy to distinguish between sound, well-reasoned arguments and speeches carefully designed to distract or mislead us. Part of your responsibility as a citizen is to learn *how* to distinguish between good and bad arguments, between speeches that contribute something valuable to public discussion and those that serve only the selfish interests of

the speaker. By studying public speaking, you will learn to listen carefully and think critically about the speeches you hear. You will learn how to evaluate the quality of a speaker's evidence and reasoning. You will study ethical principles that have been part of the study of speech for centuries, and you will become familiar with famous speeches in history that both promoted and violated those principles. In short, you will become a “citizen-critic”—a careful and informed listener who holds all who speak in public to high intellectual and ethical standards.

SPECIAL FEATURES

Public Speaking and Civic Engagement offers a number of distinguishing features designed to make the book an engaging teaching and learning tool.

A Unique Approach

A strong introductory chapter establishes the unique framework of the book by highlighting the connections between public speaking and democratic citizenship. From the start, you will be encouraged to think of public speaking not just as a tool of personal success, but also as a way to serve others in a democratic society. The introductory chapter also sets a strong ethical tone for the book, introducing the theme that public speaking entails certain responsibilities beyond your personal interests: the responsibility to become well informed on your topic, for example, and to respect those who sincerely disagree with your views. The book includes chapters on all the topics typically addressed in a public speaking textbook, including communication apprehension, audience analysis, organization, and style. Yet throughout the book, the focus on civic engagement is sustained by an emphasis on the ethics as well as the techniques of public speaking and by historical and contemporary examples of both responsible and irresponsible speakers.

Among the unique chapters of the book are those discussing the various *types* of public speaking. Distinguishing persuasive from informative speaking in terms of the situations that “invite” persuasion, the book defines *public controversy* and discusses a speaker's *burden of proof* in various situations. It also discusses different ways to prove your claims and to make reasonable arguments based on sound evidence and reasoning. At the same time, it sustains a strong emphasis on the ethics of persuasion, distinguishing between responsible persuasion and the manipulative and deceptive techniques of the propagandist or demagogue. The book also offers the first serious treatment of ceremonial speaking as a mode of civic engagement and community building, and its chapter on communicating in groups focuses on town hall meetings and other deliberative forums. In these chapters and throughout the book, the emphasis is not only on how to prepare an effective speech but also on the importance of being a committed and responsible speaker. That is what makes this book unique: it combines sound instruction in the techniques of public speaking with a sustained emphasis on the ethics of speech and the importance of public speaking and civic engagement in our democratic society.

Focus on Civic Engagement

Most chapters include boxed special features showcasing real-world examples of politicians, celebrities, students, and ordinary citizens who have made a difference by speaking out or otherwise getting involved in the civic life of their community or their nation. These stories about real people— young and old, famous and not so famous—are designed both to illustrate course concepts and to inspire students to get involved themselves.

Highlighting Key Concepts

Extended examples of key concepts such as ethos, visual literacy, critical listening, fallacies, and cultural diversity are illustrated through special “highlighting” features throughout the book.

Annotated Speeches

Nearly half of the book’s chapters conclude with an annotated speech that offers critical commentary and analysis. Each speech deals with a substantive issue and provides a real-world illustration of civic engagement. The speakers include political figures, celebrities, students, and ordinary citizens, and the speeches cover a range of issues such as global climate change, health care reform, and the role of young people in politics.

FOCUS ON CIVIC ENGAGEMENT | “Granny D” Gets Involved

In 1995, a newly proposed law regulating campaign financing, the McCain-Feingold bill, failed to win congressional approval. In New Hampshire, 85-year-old Doris Haddock decided to do something about it. Incensed that some congressional leaders had stated that the American public didn’t care about the issue, Haddock—or “Granny D,” as she became known—decided on a dramatic gesture to attract attention to the issue and gain support for reform.

After getting into shape by taking long walks around her hometown of Dublin, New Hampshire, Granny D set out to walk across the country to rally support for campaign finance reform. On January 1, 1999, she began her walk in Pasadena, California. By the time she arrived in Washington, DC, on February 29, 2000, she was 90 years old and had walked 3,200 miles. In Arizona, she was hospitalized for dehydration and pneumonia. Near the end of her journey, she faced heavy snows and had to cross-country ski for 100 miles between Cumberland, Maryland, and Washington.

All along the way, Granny D gave speeches and urged public support for campaign finance reform. When she reached the nation’s capital, she was met by more than 2,000 people, including representatives of various reform groups and several members of Congress. Many of these supporters walked the final miles with her.

Granny D is widely credited with helping to push the final bill into law. Al Gore, in adopting a finance reform plank in his campaign platform during the



Doris Haddock, better known as “Granny D,” talks about campaign finance at the State House in Concord, New Hampshire, on April 20, 2000. Haddock, of Dublin, New Hampshire, walked from California to Washington, DC, to promote campaign finance reform.

HIGHLIGHTING LISTENING AND LEADERSHIP

Listening has been linked to effective leadership in the business and professional world as well as in the public arena.

- Leadership experts, such as Ronald Heifetz of Harvard University, point out that the foundation of good listening is “curiosity and empathy.” Excellent listeners are able to look beyond the speaker’s verbal and nonverbal messages and uncover the underlying argument beneath the disagreement or conflict.
- Former Chrysler CEO, Lee Iacocca (credited with saving Chrysler from bankruptcy in the 1980s), emphasizes the strong link between motivating employees to give their best efforts and listening to their ideas, questions, and concerns. Even if the “system” labels someone as “average or mediocre,” they may truly excel simply because someone has “listened to [their] problems and helped [them] solve them.”

well as local government officials as they talked with her about “their concerns and aspirations for the families and communities.”

- Col. Eric Kail, the course director of military leadership at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, argues that a good leader is empathetic—he or she connects with others by listening carefully to what they have to say and resists the temptation simply to wait for them to pause to speak.
- In 2009, President Obama traveled to London for the first time during his presidency. He expressed a balanced commitment to advancing ideas and listening thoughtfully and responsively. He had come, he said, “to listen and not to lecture.”

Sources: From Andrew D. Wolvin, “Listening Leadership,” *International Journal of Listening* 1.9. Copyright © 2005 by *International Journal of Listening*; from Eric Kail, “Leadership Character: The Role of Empathy,” <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/guest-issues/posts/leadership-character-the-role->

NOTRE DAME COMMENCEMENT SPEECH

President Barack Obama

Sunday, May 17, 2009, Notre Dame, Indiana

When President Obama was invited to speak at the University of Notre Dame, critics of his stand on abortion, among them some students, a number of Catholic bishops, and outside anti-abortion groups, staged protests on the campus and spoke out on the national news. Their contention was that a Catholic university should not honor a leader who held views contrary to official Catholic doctrine. The university and a large majority of students, however, approved of the president’s visit. This controversy formed the backdrop against which the speech was given.

Thank you, Father Jenkins, for that generous introduction. You are doing an outstanding job as president of this fine institution, and your continued and courageous commitment to honest, thoughtful dialogue is an inspiration to us all.
Good afternoon, Father Hesburgh, Notre Dame trustees, faculty, family, friends, and the class of 2009. I am honored to be here today, and grateful to all of you for allowing me to be part of your graduation.

THE PRESIDENT BEGINS WITH AN ORALIQUE REFERENCE TO FATHER JENKINS’S REFUSAL TO GIVE UP PRESSURE TO WITHDRAW THE INVITATION, EXPELLING IT COURAGEOUSLY AND SUPPORTIVELY OF PROGRESS.

OVERVIEW AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Public Speaking and Civic Engagement

1.1 Discuss what it means to be a “good citizen.”

The Rhetorical Tradition and the Ethics of Speech

1.2 Explain how the rhetorical tradition relates to civic engagement.

Deliberation and Demagoguery in the Twenty-first Century

1.3 Distinguish between ethical persuasion and demagoguery.

The Responsible Citizen-Speaker

1.4 Discuss the legal and ethical obligations of the responsible citizen-speaker.

Pedagogical Features in Each Chapter

Within the text, we provide a variety of pedagogical features that clarify and reinforce the material or summarize key points. Specifically, each chapter contains:

- An *Overview* and numbered Learning Objectives to emphasize key topics addressed in the chapter
- *Previews* to give readers a map of the material in each section of the chapter
- *Real-world examples* to illustrate, highlight, and clarify principles discussed
- A *Summary* to reiterate the chapter’s core concepts
- *Questions for Review and Reflection* to help students review the ideas presented in each chapter and to assist them in test preparation

At the end of the book, a Glossary defines key terms and technical language appearing throughout the book. Another useful pedagogical tool, Questions for Application and Analysis, can be found in the Instructor’s Resource Manual.

Instructor and Student Resources

Key instructor resources include the following:

- Instructor’s Manual and Test Bank (available at www.pearsonhighered.com/irc; instructor login required) ISBN: 0205931448
- PowerPoint Presentation Package (available at www.pearsonhighered.com/irc; instructor login required) ISBN: 0205931456
- Teacher Training Video
- MyTest online test generating software (available at www.pearsonmytest.com; instructor login required) ISBN: 0205931464
- Pearson Public Speaking Video Library

For a complete listing of the instructor and student resources available with this text, please visit our online catalog at www.pearsonhighered.com/communication.

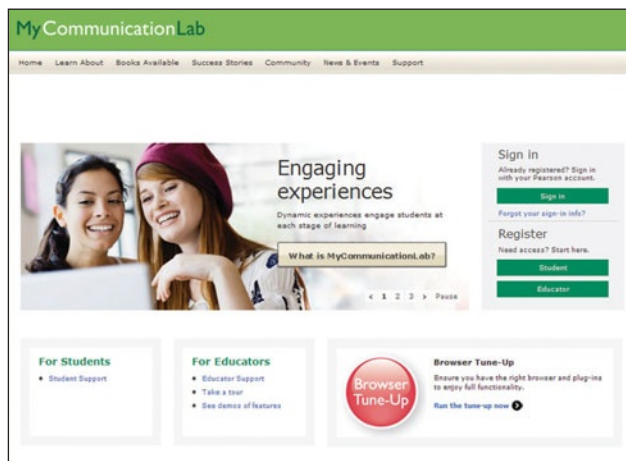
Service-Learning Resources

For those interested in approaching the course from a service-learning perspective, the Instructor’s Manual includes a sample syllabus for a service-learning approach to public speaking. The manual also suggests activities and assignments for a service-learning approach to the course and provides a list of organizations, Web sites, and other resources on service learning.

MyCommunicationLab®

Our MyLab products have been designed and refined with a single purpose in mind—to help educators create that moment of understanding with their students.

MyCommunicationLab is an online homework, tutorial, and assessment program that truly engages students in learning. It helps students better prepare for class, quizzes, and exams—resulting in better performance in the course—and provides educators a dynamic set of tools for gauging individual and class progress. And, MyCommunicationLab comes from Pearson, your partner in providing the best digital learning experiences.



www.mycommunicationlab.com

MyCommunicationLab Highlights:

- **MediaShare:** This comprehensive file upload tool allows students to post speeches, outlines, visual aids, video assignments, role plays, group projects, and more in a variety of file formats. Uploaded files are available for viewing, commenting, and grading by instructors and class members in face-to-face and online course settings. Integrated video capture functionality allows students to record video directly from a webcam and allows instructors to record videos via webcam, in class or in a lab, and attach them directly to a specific student and/or assignment. The MediaShare app is available via iTunes at no additional charge for those who have purchased MediaShare or MyCommunicationLab access.
- **The Pearson eText:** Identical in content and design to the printed text, the Pearson eText lets students access their textbook anytime, anywhere, and any way they want—including downloading to an iPad. Students can take notes and highlight, just like a traditional text.
- **Videos and Video Quizzes:** Videos provide students with the opportunity to watch and evaluate chapter-related multimedia. Many videos include automatically graded quiz questions.
- **Personality Profile:** PersonalityProfile is Pearson's online library for self-assessment and analysis. Online resources provide students with opportunities to evaluate their own and others' communication styles. Instructors can use these tools to show learning and growth over the duration of the course.
- **Study Tools:** A personalized study plan, chapter assessment, key term flashcards, an audio version of the text, and more provide a robust range of study tools to focus students on what they need to know, helping them succeed in the course and beyond.
- **Class Preparation Tool:** Finding, organizing, and presenting your instructor resources is fast and easy with Pearson's class preparation tool. This fully searchable database contains hundreds of resources such as lecture launchers, discussion topics, activities, assignments, and video clips. Instructors can search or browse by topic and sort the results by type. Personalized folders can be created to organize and store content or download resources, as well as upload your own content.

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In 1952, William Norwood Brigance, a professor of speech at Wabash College, published his ground-breaking text, *Speech: Its Techniques and Disciplines in a Free Society*. In it, he wrote:

Democracy and the system of speechmaking were born together. Since that early day we have never had a successful democracy unless a large part, a very large part, of its citizens were effective, intelligent, and responsible speakers. Today, as twenty-three centuries ago, a system of speechmaking is imperative for preserving democracy.

Brigance's philosophy inspired our writing of *Public Speaking and Civic Engagement*, and it is to his memory that we again dedicate this book.

MIKE HOGAN
PATTY ANDREWS
JIM ANDREWS
GLEN WILLIAMS

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Democratic Citizenship and the Ethics of Public Speaking



OVERVIEW AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Public Speaking and Civic Engagement

- 1.1** Discuss what it means to be a “good citizen.”

The Rhetorical Tradition and the Ethics of Speech

- 1.2** Explain how the rhetorical tradition relates to civic engagement.

Deliberation and Demagoguery in the Twenty-first Century

- 1.3** Distinguish between ethical persuasion and demagoguery.

The Responsible Citizen-Speaker

- 1.4** Discuss the legal and ethical obligations of the responsible citizen-speaker.

What does it mean to be a “good citizen”? For some, it means voting in elections, donating money to political candidates, or making “statements” about their political views by displaying bumper stickers or yard signs. For others, citizenship means getting involved in their local community, perhaps raising money for a worthy cause or joining with neighbors to clean up a local park. Whatever citizenship means to you, it involves sharing ideas with others and talking about important issues and controversies. In other words, being a citizen means *communicating* with others. Throughout history, the ability to communicate effectively has been not only the mark of great leaders but also an important skill for ordinary citizens.

This book is dedicated to helping you become a better speaker—and a better citizen. It offers practical advice about preparing and delivering speeches in a variety of public settings. Beyond that, it discusses the responsibilities of citizenship, including your ethical obligations to your fellow citizens and to your community. In the process, we will introduce you to a number of people—both famous and not so famous—who have made a difference by “speaking out.” We will also teach you how to recognize and resist the techniques of demagogues and propagandists—those who use the power of speech to manipulate and deceive others. When you complete your course in public speaking, you will have the confidence and skills necessary to participate fully in civic life. More than that, you will have a better understanding of what it means to be a “good citizen.”

PUBLIC SPEAKING AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

1.1 Discuss what it means to be a “good citizen.”

Preview. *As you read this, you may be a full-time student, a business major, or a student who hasn’t yet decided on a major. You are many other things as well. You are a daughter or a son; you may be a single parent, a United Methodist, a part-time employee, a movie buff, a sports fan, or a camp counselor. We all play many different roles in life, but we all have one thing in common: we are citizens in a democracy. Our country’s future depends on how well we perform that role. As citizens, we have a responsibility to get involved in the civic life of our communities, and we need public speaking skills to do that effectively.*

In Foxborough, Massachusetts, a local resident named Phillip Henderson organized a group of neighbors to fight plans by a fast-food chain to build a new franchise on an environmentally sensitive site. Henderson’s group, the Quality of Life Committee, fought for seven years to stop the development, and the disputed land is now part of a 19-acre protected wetland and wildlife preserve.¹ In Washington State, Pete Knutson, the owner of a small family fishing operation, organized an unlikely alliance of working-class fishermen, middle-class environmentalists, and Native Americans to protect salmon fisheries in the Pacific Northwest. Standing up against powerful special interests, Knutson’s alliance pushed for cleaner streams, enforcement of the Endangered Species Act, and an increased flow of water over regional dams to help boost salmon runs.²

“Getting involved” is not something just older Americans do. All across America, college and even high school students have been making a difference by participating in politics or other sorts of civic or service activities. In one survey, two-thirds of the respondents between ages 18 and 30 said that they had volunteered

their time, joined a civic or service organization, or advocated some public cause in the past three years.³ In 2002, the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) found that more than 40 percent of young people surveyed had participated in a charitable event, and more than half had boycotted some product “because of the conditions under which it was made.”⁴ In its 2006 survey, CIRCLE again found young people “involved in many forms of political and civic activity,” including voting, grassroots organizing, or volunteer work. More than 70 percent of the young people surveyed said they “followed what’s going on” in government and public affairs, and more than a third said they had volunteered or participated in “political discussions.”⁵

The Challenges of Democratic Citizenship

Unfortunately, not all Americans feel the need to “get involved.” Over the past half century, barely half of all eligible Americans have bothered to vote in presidential elections,⁶ and the United States continues to trail most of the world’s democracies in voter turnout.⁷ Young people historically have been especially apathetic about voting. After the 26th Amendment lowered the voting age from 21 to 18 in 1971, turnout among Americans aged 18–24 steadily declined over the next two decades, from 52 percent in 1972 to only 36 percent in 2000.⁸ Other indicators of **civic engagement** have also declined over the past half century because fewer people have been paying attention to the news, attending public meetings, working for political causes, signing petitions, writing to their elected representatives or local newspapers, or speaking at political meetings and rallies.⁹ By the mid-1990s, 32 million fewer Americans were involved in these sorts of activities than was the case just two decades earlier.¹⁰

Yet there are hopeful signs of civic renewal in America. As scholar Robert Putnam has observed, the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, at least “interrupted” the downward trend in “political consciousness and engagement,” increasing the public’s interest in political affairs to levels “not seen in at least three decades.”¹¹ This spike in political awareness was evident in the 2004 elections, when Americans voted at the highest rate since 1968.¹² In 2008, voters again turned out in record numbers, with 131 million Americans going to the polls to elect the first African-American president in U.S. history. That represented 61.6 percent of the nation’s eligible voters, according to George Mason University political scientist Michael McDonald—a level of civic engagement not seen since the 1960s.¹³ Still more

A crowd of young people participate in a get-out-the-vote rally. The rally reflected the increased participation of young voters in the 2004 and 2008 elections.



evidence of a revival in civic engagement is evident in recent surveys of incoming college freshmen that reveal the highest level of political interest since the 1960s.¹⁴ Today's young people not only vote more than young people 20 or 30 years ago,¹⁵ but according to some political scientists, they also have embraced new norms of “engaged citizenship” that are more inclusive and more deeply rooted in democratic ideals than the duty-oriented norms of their parents or grandparents.¹⁶

Young people are making a difference all across America by working for political causes or by “getting involved in civic activities or volunteer work in their local communities. Some college students even give up their spring breaks to help others. According to Break Away, a nonprofit group that organizes “alternative” spring breaks, nearly 65,000 students from across the country spent their spring vacations in 2009 building homes, tutoring migrant farmworkers or inner-city kids, working with homeless people, or participating in other sorts of volunteer or community service.¹⁷

Some of the credit for these positive trends must go to the many schools, charitable foundations, and civic groups that have launched new initiatives to promote engaged citizenship, particularly among young people. For example, the Saguaro Seminar, which is an ongoing initiative of the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, is working to develop “far-reaching, actionable ideas to significantly increase Americans’ connectedness to one another and to community institutions.”¹⁸ At the University of Texas, the Annette Strauss Institute for Civic Participation has a similar mission: “(1) to conduct cutting-edge research on how civic participation, community understanding, and communication are undermined or sustained and (2) to develop new programs for increasing democratic understanding among citizens.”¹⁹ Another initiative, Project Pericles, provides funding to colleges across the nation to improve their community-service efforts and to “make civic engagement a part of the curriculum in every department.”²⁰ And at the more than 1,100 colleges and universities affiliated with Campus Compact, millions of students have been involved over the past 20 years in a variety of civic and community-service projects.²¹

By volunteering to help others, you can have an immediate, tangible impact. Perhaps that explains why so many young people prefer community service over more “traditional” political activities, such as supporting political candidates or signing petitions. According to CIRCLE, many of today’s college students are “turned off” by the “spin” and “polarized debate” of electoral politics, and they seek more “open and authentic” ways to participate in civic affairs. In comparison to Generation X, today’s so-called Millennials are more politically active and aware. Yet many are tired of the “competitive and confrontational atmosphere” of electoral politics and are finding new ways to “get involved.”²² Still, if you really hope to make a difference, you can’t ignore traditional politics. Many of the problems we face today—including the problems that most concern young people, like the high cost of a college education—are, in the final analysis, *political* problems.

The Engaged Citizen

So we come back to our original question: what does it mean to be a “good citizen”? And what can *you* do to help make the world better? We’ve already suggested part of the answer: *get involved*, whether that means voting in the next



presidential election, speaking out at a local town hall forum, or volunteering to help others in your community. In recent years, more and more young people are voting, and there are indications that at least some young people are turning to the Internet more frequently for political news and information.²³ But there is more to being a “good citizen” than just voting or being well informed. If you really hope to “make a difference,” you need to *communicate* with others, and you need to understand what it means to communicate *responsibly*.

“Getting involved” in politics does *not* mean that you must be loud or combative, like some of the political activists and commentators we see on TV. As political scientist Morris P. Fiorina has suggested, those people seem “completely certain of their views; they are right and their opponents are wrong.” They view all who disagree not just as misguided or misinformed, but as “corrupt, stupid, evil, or all three.”²⁴ Most of us are not so sure of ourselves, and we take more moderate, middle-of-the-road positions on complex issues. For most of us, politics is not about scoring points or defeating some enemy; it is about finding solutions to difficult problems. It is about working together to advance the “common good.” This is not to say that we should ignore or silence those who feel passionately about some issues—those whom sociologist Eric Hoffer once called “true believers.”²⁵ But while “true believers” have played an important role in American history, giving voice to the powerless and calling attention to injustices that were being ignored, our system of government ultimately depends on accommodating a diversity of voices and finding compromises on tough political issues. As Fiorina concludes, the “less intense and less extreme” voices in politics should be given *at least* as much weight as those of the passionate activists. Not only would that “lower the decibel level of American politics,” but it also would focus attention on more “mainstream concerns.”²⁶

Of course, some people might engage politics or other civic activities just to advance their own selfish interests. It looks good on a résumé or a college or job application to be “involved” in one’s community. But civic engagement is about more than career advancement. It is also a commitment to some cause greater than yourself. Wherever you get involved—in your school, at your place of work, in your town, or in a broader national or even international arena—you contribute to the *common* good. Everyone is better off when you get involved. *Somebody* has to take the lead in making our world better. Why not you?

Even busy college students can make a big difference. At Penn State University, for example, the largest student-run charitable organization in the world raises money to fight childhood cancer with an annual dance marathon. “THON,” as it is popularly called, involves thousands of students in a variety of activities, from planning the event to the care and feeding of the dancers themselves. THON even has a communications committee for “Penn State students with a passion for spreading the word.” To date, this group of involved students has raised more than \$78 million to combat pediatric cancer. In 2012 alone, THON raised more than \$10.6 million.²⁷

The good citizen not only helps others but also strives to be well informed and thoughtful. In a democracy, you have a right to your opinion. At the same time, you have an *ethical* obligation to speak honestly, to know what you’re talking about, and to remain open to changing your own mind. Good citizens keep up with current events, and they recognize the difference between an informed opinion and one grounded in ignorance or prejudice. They take advantage of opportunities to



Participants in the 2012 Penn State Dance Marathon hold up signs bearing the grand total of money raised for fighting childhood cancer at that year's "THON": \$10,686,924.83.

the decision of your local school board or city council. Or by discussing political issues with your neighbors, maybe you will help change public opinion or influence the outcome of an election. You do not have to be a famous politician or a celebrity to make a difference. In the mid-1990s, Doris Haddock, an 85-year-old great-grandmother from New Hampshire, took it upon herself to improve the political process by campaigning for campaign finance reform. Testing both her public speaking skills and her physical endurance, “Granny D” (as her supporters and admirers called her) literally walked across America, speaking to thousands of her fellow citizens—a feat recalled in the following Focus on Civic Engagement. Whatever the results of your *own* ways of participating, it is important—both to you and our democracy—that you get involved. Before you do, however, you should first develop the knowledge and skills you need to “speak out” effectively and responsibly. The principles of effective and ethical speaking date back to ancient times, and they have been handed down to us in what scholars call the *rhetorical tradition*.

learn more about the issues, and they carefully weigh all the arguments before forming their own opinions. They may feel strongly about their views, but they respect the opinions of others. Good citizens—people of good will—can and will disagree, sometimes passionately. But they remain committed to free and open debate and to resolving their differences through democratic processes.

Perhaps by speaking out you will someday influence

THE RHETORICAL TRADITION AND THE ETHICS OF SPEECH

Preview. *Rhetoric is an ancient discipline concerned with the techniques and ethics of speech. The three traditions of scholarship and teaching in rhetoric focus on the knowledge and skills necessary for democratic citizenship:*

- The tradition of rhetorical theory that dates back to ancient Greece and Rome
- The tradition of rhetorical criticism, which emphasizes the critical analysis of public discourse in all its various forms
- The tradition of historical studies in public address, which focuses on the lessons we may learn from the speakers, speeches, social movements, and persuasive campaigns of the past

1.2 Explain how the rhetorical tradition relates to civic engagement.

Each of these traditions helps to define the ethics of speech in a democratic society, and those ethical rules must be kept in mind at every stage of the speech-making process.

The scholarly traditions of rhetorical theory and criticism have something important to teach us. In recognizing rhetoric as one of the oldest scholarly traditions,

FOCUS ON CIVIC ENGAGEMENT | “Granny D” Gets Involved

In 1995, a newly proposed law regulating campaign financing, the McCain-Feingold bill, failed to win congressional approval. In New Hampshire, 85-year-old Doris Haddock decided to do something about it. Incensed that some congressional leaders had stated that the American public didn’t care about the issue, Haddock—or “Granny D,” as she became known—decided on a dramatic gesture to attract attention to the issue and gain support for reform.

After getting into shape by taking long walks around her hometown of Dublin, New Hampshire, Granny D set out to walk across the country to rally support for campaign finance reform. On January 1, 1999, she began her walk in Pasadena, California. By the time she arrived in Washington, DC, on February 29, 2000, she was 90 years old and had walked 3,200 miles. In Arizona, she was hospitalized for dehydration and pneumonia. Near the end of her journey, she faced heavy snows and had to cross-country ski for 100 miles between Cumberland, Maryland, and Washington.

All along the way, Granny D gave speeches and urged public support for campaign finance reform. When she reached the nation’s capital, she was met by more than 2,000 people, including representatives of various reform groups and several members of Congress. Many of these supporters walked the final miles with her.

Granny D is widely credited with helping to push the final bill into law. Al Gore, in adopting a finance reform plank in his campaign platform during the 2000 presidential election, credited Senator John McCain, former senator Bill Bradley, and Granny D.

Granny D passed away on March 9, 2010 at the age of 100. In her final years, she remained politically active. In 2003, she launched a drive to register more working women to vote, and in 2004, she ran for the



Doris Haddock, better known as “Granny D,” walked from California to Washington, DC, to promote campaign finance reform. She went on to become a popular speaker around the country, and in 2004 she even ran for the U.S. Senate.

U.S. Senate herself. She may not have defeated New Hampshire’s incumbent senator, but she did win a respectable 34 percent of the vote.

Source: “In Memory of Granny D Political Activist and Senior Citizen,” www.grannyd.com/ (accessed January 16, 2012). ▀

we realize that the ability to communicate in public has long been considered an important part of democratic citizenship. By learning to speak in public and by developing a clear understanding of the *ethics* of speech, we develop what the ancient rhetoricians called **civic virtue**.



Watch the Video
"President Bush's Address
to the Nation" at
MyCommunicationLab

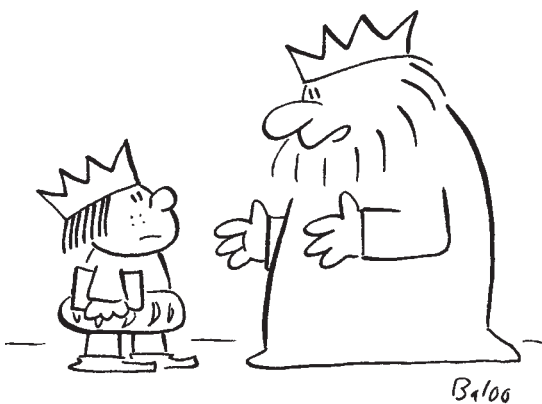
Speaking Responsibly

The study of speech dates back to ancient times, with some of the great Greek and Roman thinkers, including Aristotle and Cicero, counted among the earliest rhetorical theorists. In the classical tradition, personal ethics and civic virtue, or devotion to one's community and the common good, were the cornerstones of rhetorical education. For example, Isocrates, a Greek orator and teacher of rhetoric who lived from 436 to 338 BC, viewed the study of rhetoric not only as preparation for life and leadership in Athenian politics but also as a tool for creating unity out of diversity and defining the "public good." For Isocrates, rhetoric was more than a collection of techniques for persuading an audience. It was a source of the communal values and the moral standards that made democracy itself possible.²⁸ Similarly, the Roman rhetorician Quintilian described the ideal orator as "a good man skilled in speaking"—with the emphasis on the "good man."²⁹ Quintilian's ideal orator was more than an effective speaker. He was, first and foremost, a good citizen—a civic leader, a lover of wisdom and truth, a sincere advocate of worthy causes, and a servant of the community. For both Isocrates and Quintilian, responsible orators promoted the best interests of the whole community, not just their own selfish interests.

We must acknowledge the greater challenges of public speaking in the modern world. Unlike the ancients, we live in a diverse, multicultural society, and we must take account of changing social values, new information technologies, and the realities of the consumer age. But that does not mean we cannot still strive to be good citizens and ethical speakers—that is, people who assume the

responsibilities of leadership, tell the truth, believe sincerely in our causes, and engage in reasoned and ethical speech. In today's world, it is more important than ever that we rise above our own selfish interests and think about the larger public good. If we hope to resolve the difficult problems we face, we must learn to deliberate *together* and find common ground.

The classical rhetorical tradition still has something important to teach us: that public speaking in a democratic society must be grounded in a strong code of ethics and a commitment to the public good. The classical tradition suggests an approach to public speaking that emphasizes not the techniques of manipulation, but rather the character of the speaker and the shared interests of speakers and listeners. Now more than ever, we need citizens with civic virtue, citizens who know how to deliberate with their fellow citizens. That requires that



"Don't worry too much about math, science, or history — just make sure you get good marks in *rhetoric*."

we embrace the ideals of Isocrates and the virtues of Quintilian's ideal orator and *demand* that all who speak in public do so responsibly. And that is where the second tradition of scholarship and teaching in rhetoric comes in—the tradition of rhetorical criticism.

Thinking Critically

Today, citizens must be more than skilled speakers. They must also have the skills necessary to critically evaluate the messages of others. In the economic marketplace, we have consumer watchdogs who warn us against false advertising and defective products. But in the “marketplace of ideas,” we must learn to protect ourselves against those who may seek to manipulate or deceive us. We must learn how to recognize and resist illogical arguments, misleading or irrelevant evidence, and appeals to our emotions that short-circuit our thinking.

When should we believe that presidential candidate who promises change or that lawyer who publicly declares his client innocent? How do we decide who is speaking ethically—or who has some conflict of interest that might lead to deceptive or manipulative speech? By doing some research, we can often distinguish between advocates who are speaking sincerely and truthfully and those who are not. But often we must render judgments on the spot, without the benefit of research or time for reflection. In the day-to-day world of democratic life, we all must be **citizen-critics**,³⁰ ready and able to make our own judgments about who deserves to be believed—and why.

By studying public speaking, you are not only developing your ability to communicate effectively but also learning how to recognize misleading arguments, faulty reasoning, or inadequate evidence in other people's speeches. Demagogues, or speakers who employ “highly suspect means in pursuit of equally suspect ends,”³¹ abound in our media-saturated world. So it is important that we, as citizens, recognize and resist their attempts to mislead us. Should we believe that speaker who insists that the U.S. government is actually behind some recent terrorist attack? What about that politician who claims he knew nothing about those illegal campaign contributions? And should we listen to that preacher who insists that all “good Christians” must vote for a particular candidate? Studying the principles and methods of public speaking can help you decide how to respond to such appeals. It can also help you distinguish between a reasonable argument and an attempt to manipulate or deceive.

Obviously, not everything you read or hear is true, so you need to learn how to evaluate competing claims and arguments. Consider, for example, the debate over a national sales tax. Proponents argue that this tax would simplify the tax structure and impose exactly the same burden on all citizens. Those opposed to such a tax insist that it is grossly unfair, placing the greatest burden on those who can least afford to pay. How would you go about sorting out the competing claims of advocates on both sides of this debate? How would you evaluate all the contradictory testimony, statistics, and other forms of evidence? In short, whom should you believe? Students of public speaking learn to take nothing at face value. Becoming a citizen-critic means learning how to evaluate claims, weigh all the evidence, and come to reasoned conclusions based on a careful examination of the arguments on all sides of an issue.