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.

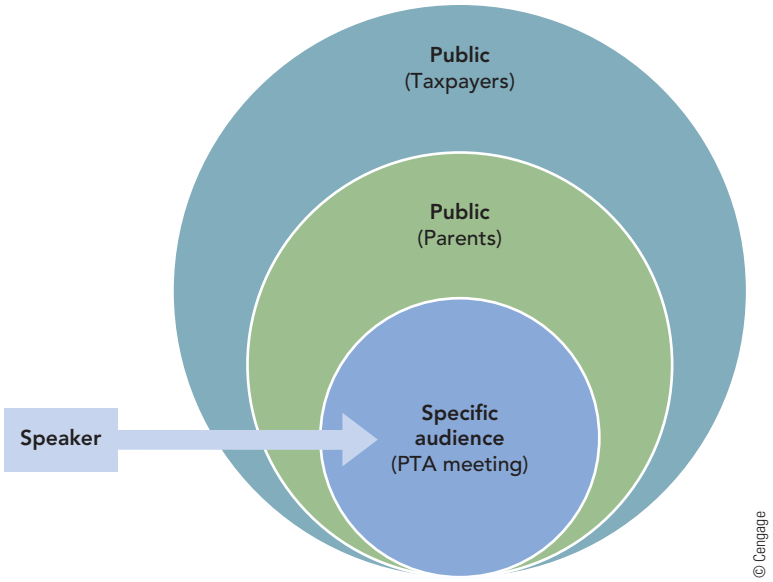
- Who are the most common listeners? Why?
- Are these situations usually face-to-face or electronic? Why?
- Which ones are easiest? Most difficult? Why?

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

FIGURE 1.1
Audience members belong to more than one public.



adaptation Adjusting a topic, arguments, and presentation to fit a particular audience.

public A group of people who share a common set of concerns.

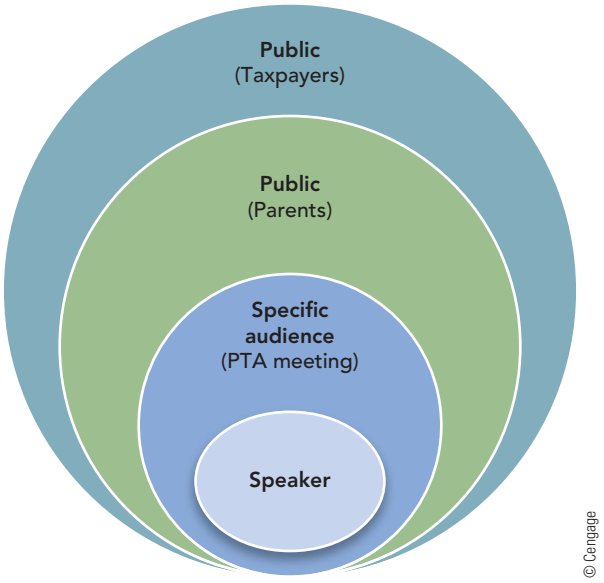
are talking to, speakers adjust their topic and presentation to their audience. **Adaptation** is one of the central concepts of rhetorical communication.[1]

Is the audience ever more than just the people in the room with the speaker? To explain why it is called *public* speaking, we have to consider the concept of a **public**, a group of people who share a common set of concerns.

In Figure 1.1, the speaker is attempting to influence or inform an audience whose members belong to more than one public. For example, the audience at a PTA meeting will be part of the public that cares about the fate of children as well as the public that pays taxes. If the speaker is making an informative presentation about the current state of student achievement in the district, she will have to think about a specific public in deciding what information is relevant and how to frame it.

Yet, the diagram in Figure 1.1 is incomplete. Why? Because it pictures the speaker as separate from or outside of the public. However, when you are speaking *to* an audience in public, you are speaking *with* an audience composed of fellow members of your public. The speaker portrays herself and the audience not as opposed to each other ("I care about one thing, and you care about something else") but, instead, as part of the same public ("Here is what *we* care about"), as shown in Figure 1.2.

FIGURE 1.2
The speaker and the audience both belong to the same publics.



Whether we're looking at informative, persuasive, or special-occasion speaking, we'll generally talk about the *public* as a way of talking about the context for an audience. This is necessary because speakers need to understand who the audience is if they're going to adapt their information to the audience. For example, if you were giving an **informative speech** on the idea of a taxpayer bill of rights, the public most likely would consist of "people concerned about tax policy." Or if you were giving a **persuasive speech** arguing for changes to make student loan programs more widely accessible, the relevant publics would be "people concerned about access to education" and "people who believe education is essential to the economic success of the United States." Even a **special-occasion speech**, such as a eulogy at a funeral, can be addressed to a public; if the deceased volunteered at the Humane Society, her friends will talk about how her accomplishments mattered to people who care about animals.

informative speech A speech in which the primary purpose is to educate the audience about a topic.

persuasive speech A speech in which the primary purpose is to change the audience's opinion about a topic or to encourage them to take a particular action.

special-occasion speech A speech made on the occasion of a life transition (such as a wedding) or at a professional event (such as introducing a speaker).

The concept of the public allows us to differentiate public speaking from advertising and other forms of private and personal communication (there is more about this in Chapter 3). The concept of the public provides a way for you to connect to an audience in an ethical and effective way by focusing on interests that concern them not just as students in a classroom but also as members of a broader citizenry. When you speak in class, you will be addressing a public only if the things you talk about are of interest to your audience members, not just as fellow classmates but also as members of a larger national public.

The point is that when you speak to an audience, you are also usually speaking to a public, or to some slice of the general public, either directly or indirectly. You are not simply engaging a collection of individuals with differing opinions (though you are likely doing that), but you are also engaging a group of people who have some shared interest or motive for listening, who are engaging with you in the light of some specific event or occasion, and who will go out from that speech with a potential change in perspective. The motive could be a grade or the need for clarity on an issue; the event could be an assigned speech or a pitch for a business idea; and the change in perspective could range from a minor tweak on how your audience thinks about an issue to a full-on change in their values. But, regardless of the people, topic, and occasion, every time you speak you are speaking to an audience, and are influencing—in small or large ways—the way that they relate not only to you, but to the idea of public speaking and public conversation. That means that to speak well in public, you need to consider the full range of implications of your speech, and you will want to make speech choices in that light.

SPEAKING IS ABOUT MAKING CHOICES

It may seem a little strange to think about speaking as making choices. Isn't speaking just saying what you're thinking? If you reflect for a moment, though, you may realize that you often are sure of what your thoughts are only as you are saying them, and you may say them differently depending on the person you're talking to.

In creating a speech, you make **choices** about what to say. Two thousand years ago, when public figures in classical Greece and Rome wanted to give a speech, they might turn to a rhetorician (called a *logographer*, or "speechwriter") to figure out how to compose and deliver the speech. Now, most of us do this for ourselves. Ancient rhetorical practice was organized around the canons (sets of rules or principles) of rhetoric, which broke the process of speaking into five parts: (1) Come up with content, (2) organize it, (3) choose words for it, (4) memorize it, and then (5) deliver it.

choices In public speaking, the choices are about topic, information and arguments, organization, visual aids and other supporting materials, and type of delivery.

We teach public speaking a little bit differently now, and in this book we propose a simplified and updated model that focuses on the choices you will need to make to give a successful speech.

First, *preparation*: How will you prepare your speech? What do you want to say? What information and arguments will you use to support your claims? How will you organize

the speech and move from point to point? What words, images, or technology will be needed in creating a compelling experience for the audience?

Second, *performance*: How will you deliver or "perform" your speech? What tone, pace, and gestures will you use? You will have to make sure that you speak clearly, loud enough for the audience to hear, and you will have to eliminate distracting speech and body tics. Few speeches are memorized nowadays, but you will have to decide how to master the information in your speech and create materials such as notecards or slides that allow you to deliver it.

delivery The act of making a speech to an audience.

When you think of public speaking, performance, or **delivery**, probably comes to mind first. Images of shaking knees, sweaty palms, and a nervous stomach are common, but effective preparation can result in more comfortable performances. Preparation means planning the best way to present your message so the audience will respond favorably. You will have to think about the audience's interests in this topic and in listening to you talk about it. You also will have to think about the audience expectations and predispositions. Finally, you will have to give the audience a stake in what you are saying by providing an opportunity for the members to participate. They may respond by asking questions, and you should have a strategy for dealing with their questions, but you also should give them an opportunity to participate by changing their beliefs and/or actions as a result of your speech.

Preparation

The moment when you stand up and give your speech may not be the most important, or even the most difficult, part of the process. Although the performance components may trigger the nerves that make your stomach shaky as you think about giving a speech, the *preparation* that goes into deciding what to say is more difficult and probably more important than the performance. Great delivery with nothing much to say isn't effective communication. We all admire and enjoy a great performer, and sometimes we assume that a musician's or an actor's talent is responsible for the impressive concert or play. Actually, no matter how talented, the artist has invested a huge amount of careful preparation into creating that compelling event for the audience.

TRY IT!

PREPARATION CHOICES CHECKLIST

Run through the following checklist when you are preparing a speech:

- How do I want to structure the speech?
- What arguments do I want to use?
- What kinds of research will be most helpful to do and to present to the audience?
- What sources and ideas will the audience find most credible?
- Am I taking into account possible objections or rebuttals to my arguments?
- What is the product of my preparation? A memorized speech, notes, images? And how should I use them?

The most crucial part of speaking may well be the thought that goes into it. Why? First of all, good delivery depends on good preparation; the preparation that you put into your speech beforehand may be one of your best defenses against feeling nervous about, or even overwhelmed by, public speaking.

Speaking should be *communication*. You should say what you think, or better yet, you should present the best information and your most thoughtful opinions about our subject

matter. In contrast to acting, which involves saying someone else's words, public speaking is speaking your *own* mind. In the case of an actor, it's unclear exactly who is communicating to the audience. The writer? The actor? A combination? In public speaking, it's all about you. You are both writer and "actor." So, although the way you give a speech may be a kind of performance, you should think of speaking as a process that allows you to say what you think to someone in particular.

Deciding what to say implies making some important choices based on your opinions and on the materials and tools that are available to you: ideas, arguments, images, words, and metaphors. This means that you have to put work into preparing your speech, a process we call invention. As an illustration, let's look in more detail at the kinds of choices speakers make when they prepare speeches that inform and persuade an audience.

MindTap®

Watch the video and answer the comprehension questions.

Informing

Many times as a speaker, you are trying to convey information to an audience. Sometimes you are in the role of an expert, sometimes a sort of teacher; in other cases you are more like the messenger delivering the news, like a reporter. In each case, you are trying to get information across to the audience clearly and effectively.

Some people mistakenly assume that if you know what you're talking about, you'll automatically be clear, but that's not necessarily true. Think back to some of your least favorite teachers. They may have been experts, but they may not have been very good at communicating their knowledge.

Why is that? How can expertise and good communication be two different things? It happens because communication is not only about the knowledge in the speaker's head but about the audience as well. Audiences can't understand things they don't understand. That seems obvious, but many speakers disregard it. To explain or clarify something, you have to assume that the audience doesn't understand it already, and then choose to explain it in terms of the actual current knowledge of this group.

Making Choices: Example 1 Suppose you are faced with explaining a new university regulation to a group of students on your campus. The university has decided that "any drug or alcohol-related tickets or arrests involving students will have academic repercussions." Right now, you, the reader, (like the hypothetical audience) are probably wondering what that means—"repercussions?" As a speaker, you have some choices:

- First, you have to decide what your role will be. Are you speaking on behalf of the university or as just a student?
- Even though you'll cover the same information in either case, if you're speaking as a student, you'll highlight benefits or consequences for students, including yourself. If you speak on behalf of the school, you may feature the reasons for the decision and what it means for the school.
- Depending on which way you go, you'll change the order of points (probably putting the ones most important to the audience last), and you'll change any charts or illustrations you use because these highlight the things that will be most memorable for the audience about the information.

Persuading

Sometimes we want more than just to have the audience understand us; we want them to believe or do something. By *persuasion*, we mean all of the ways that speakers can attempt to influence audiences, from informing them about a topic to arguing that they should change their beliefs or inspiring them to action. All of these are "persuasive" in the sense of attempting

to influence the audience. Even in an informative speech, speakers adapt it to the audience, trying to make sure that the audience not only understand but also care about the information.

Making Choices: Example 2 You probably are so used to making choices about what to say that you don't realize that you are always choosing what to say and how to say it. As a simple interpersonal example, suppose you'd like to get your friend Brian to go to a movie with you on a Friday night. You start with "movie" and "Brian," but from there you have a lot of choices. You have to decide whether you think he automatically will want to go to a movie or if you'll have to convince him. If you're going to convince him, you'll consider what would motivate him. Is he looking for a relaxing time after a hard week? Is he bored with his job and looking for excitement? Does he enjoy dinner before a movie, or does he like a big bucket of popcorn with his flick? You might research what movies are playing, and you may choose one based on what kind of movie Brian likes. Or you may try to convince Brian to see the movie *you're* interested in. If Brian were someone you didn't know well, you might have to approach the request more formally; with a fairly close friend, you can be more informal.

Without realizing it, all of these choices may flash through your head before you decide to say to your friend, "Hey, bud, want go and check out the midnight showing of *Donny Darko*? You know you love that flick, and we can grab some food afterward." Your process for public speaking will be similar: You need to interpret the audience and purpose (whom you're talking to and what you want from that audience) and, as the next example shows, there are always choices about that interpretation.

Making Choices: Example 3 Let's say you have been asked to give a presentation to the city council asking for a change in the zoning laws for a skateboard park. Your audience consists of the city council members, who will vote on your proposal. So, what are your choices? You probably don't need to know much about the city council members personally, because they probably don't make zoning decisions based exclusively on their being a man or a woman or white, Asian, or Hispanic. Their decisions are more likely based on their functions as city council members: interpreting the law and serving the public interest. What you want to say about your topic is determined to a large extent by what you want to convince them to do, but your approach to these council members and how you want to persuade them requires some strategic choices.

Why should the city council change the zoning laws? Because it will benefit you and your friends? Naturally, you think that it will, but will that move city council members? Probably not. Can you argue that it benefits them? Yes, but be careful: You're not talking about benefiting the council members personally but, rather, you're arguing about their *role* as council members: They should care about benefits to the city. How would the new park benefit the city? Presumably it will generate some tax revenue and perhaps some part-time employment.

However, because council members have to think about the good of the city, they'll have to consider two problems: What if noise from the park bothers the neighbors or skaters get rowdy? You'll have to address those issues clearly, or you can't expect the council to take you very seriously. As you decide what to argue, you also should think about language choices. You might think about how you want to address the members ("Sir" and "Ma'am" versus "You guys"), and about how you want to describe the skate park. Will it be in terms that get them visualizing it ("Imagine all these kids exercising and staying out of trouble") or in terms that support your argument ("Data on skateparks show they're good civic investments")? You might use analogies to national or state parks. You may even think about how you'll dress for the occasion—will it be in skater clothes or something more formal? You'll have to consider which would be better, and why. Skater clothes might show that you're in touch with the future users, but something more formal might show that you should be taken seriously.

THE SPEAKING PROCESS: PREPARING AND PERFORMING

Now that you have an idea about a public speaker's choices, let's look at the actual process. What do you have to do to give a speech? It's useful to see preparation as having two parts: the analysis and the "writing" of the speech. First, you will have to *think*—analyze—what you want to say in the particular situation for your particular audience. Then you will have to *create* a speech that is well organized, is crafted for maximum effect, and has good supporting arguments. After that, you're ready to *speak*; you will have to deliver the speech in such a way that it not only will be listened to but also will be heard and acted upon by the audience. Here's is a brief outline of the process:

Prepare:

- ***Choose a topic:*** What things are important to you that you would like to say to your audience?
- ***Audience:*** Who will be listening, and what is their interest in the topic?
- ***Goals:*** What do you want the audience to do, either by learning, acting, or changing beliefs?
- ***Arguments:*** What claims, propositions, or ideas would you like the audience to believe?
- ***Research:*** How will you support your arguments with evidence, statistics, quotes from experts, and other materials that lend credibility to your case?
- ***Organization:*** How will you put your points together to have a clear pattern that is easy for the audience to follow?
- ***Words:*** How will you phrase your ideas to be both clear and compelling to the audience?

Perform:

- ***Delivery:*** What choices will you make about performance of the speech? How will you act (for example, will you make an effort at eye contact?), and what choices will you make in verbal style (tone, pitch, rate, emphasis, clarity) to make sure that your speech has maximum persuasive effect?
- ***Anxiety:*** What strategies and techniques will you use for managing your nerves?
- ***Speaking Aids:*** Do you need any visual aids? What purpose will they serve? What technology is available? How can you integrate these into your speech?

John Ewing/Portland Press Herald/Getty Images

Responsible public speakers approach different audiences in different ways. A town council meeting is different from a classroom and from half of Congress.

To preview how the chapters of this book will walk you through these steps of the speaking process, we'll use the example of Danielle, who is trying to figure out how to give a speech persuading other students to donate blood. Each part of speech preparation involves a set of choices, and Danielle needs to recognize both *what* her choices are and *how* to make them responsibly. First, the analytic part of preparation: Think about who your audience is, and your goals regarding this audience.

Your Responsibilities (Chapter 2)

First, Danielle has to orient herself to what we'll call the *ethical* dimensions of this speaking situation. She needs to ask herself what her relationship is to her audience. Does she want to get donations and doesn't care how she gets them? Even if Danielle isn't willing to lie to get people to donate, she still might employ half-truths or misleading statements. This stance toward the audience shows a lack of rhetorical or communicative responsibility, because it divides Danielle from the audience ("I'm persuading *you*"). A more responsible approach would create a context in which Danielle and the audience together are coming to understand the mutual benefits of blood donation ("*We* need to do something about the local blood shortage"). Before Danielle can start thinking about what to say, she needs to clarify what she intends to do with, or to, the audience in this situation.

Your Audience (Chapters 3, 4)

Now Danielle must think about the nature of her audience. She can think about her audience in general terms, especially the obstacles that might prevent members from being blood donors already. Some students are busy with schoolwork plus jobs or family or all three. Other students may be uninterested. Either way, Danielle knows that her speech has to be entertaining and informative, and that it must give the audience a reason to show up at the blood donation station and be poked with a needle for little or no compensation.

After she takes these general issues into account, she might think more specifically about the actual group she will address: Is it a random sampling of students in a course, a volunteer group, or a campus social group? At this point, Danielle will need to think about why people are in the audience in the first place and then to think about how she can use the picture of the audience that she is developing to motivate them to give blood. Finally, she'll probably realize that a couple of specific fears about blood donation might come into play with any audience: Some people are afraid of blood, and some people are horrified by needles. She'll have to take those fears into account at some point in her speech. In addition, some people fear (wrongly) that they can get a disease just from giving blood.

Her issue—the blood supply—is one that concerns us all, so it is a *public* issue. What kind of public is her audience of college students relative to the issue of blood donation? Despite all the differences in students (older, younger, urban, rural, male, female), can she find a common characteristic that gives them a reason to say yes to blood donation?

Here is where Danielle's rhetorical creativity comes in. She can *describe* the audience to themselves. They are busy college students, yes—but they also are people who might get sick or injured and need some blood at the hospital. "Potential blood-bank users" may not be how the students think about themselves, but it's a true description, and it's relevant to Danielle's purpose: It transforms the audience into a public, with a mutual interest in blood donations. Another possible public would be "people who value public service." Many college students either fall into this group or wish they did, and Danielle can give them the opportunity to perform a public service.

Danielle will have to speak in a way that helps the audience listen and to *want* to listen. This includes the use of tone, pacing, and transitions to keep the audience involved. Danielle also will

gmarc/iStock/Getty Images

Is there a difference between a student asking other students to donate blood and the Red Cross asking for donations?

have to present arguments in a balanced way that takes into account the needs, expectations, and predispositions of the audience. She also will have to present herself as a person who is open to and respectful toward the opinions of the audience members. She will have to give all the evidence needed for them to make an informed decision, and to provide concrete steps for them to take if they choose to donate blood. Finally, Danielle should allow the audience time to ask questions, if this is appropriate, and to answer the questions in a clear, engaging, and nonconfrontational way.

Your Goals (Chapter 5)

Danielle has to assess the situation. In this case, she already has a topic (sometimes that's not the case). What are her goals? She should clearly distinguish between her personal goals (what she wants to accomplish) and her goals with the audience (what she wants her speech to accomplish). She can't just say, "Hey, donate blood, because if I get in good with the blood bank people, I'm set for an internship, and that would be a big résumé booster." That's her personal goal; she will benefit if she can get more blood in the blood bank by recruiting more donors. Her goal *with the audience* would be to persuade the students to donate blood voluntarily through the campus program. But this goal has some inherent challenges: Why donate blood on campus for a few cookies when you might be able to get money somewhere else for selling your blood *plasma*. Danielle would like to get students to want to show up at one of the campus sites. She doesn't have to control or manipulate them or make them into better people; she just has to get them to see why it would be right to donate. Danielle wants to choose a goal that is appropriate not only to the situation but also is defensible.

CREATING YOUR FIRST SPEECH

Once Danielle has made some tentative decisions about her audience, her goals, and the audience's relationship to her topic, she will start creating her speech, the second part of preparation.

Informing and Arguing (Chapters 11, 12)

For Danielle to persuade her audience, she'll have to provide information about blood donation and, for this specific situation, reasons why students should donate, and then she'll have

argument A claim backed by reasons—logic and evidence—in support of a specific conclusion.

to choose the best reasons. (Her choices here will both determine and depend on her research, as discussed in the next section.) These reasons will be the **argument**, in which the conclusion is, "I should donate blood." Arguments give reasons and evidence, and Danielle has several choices. She can choose examples as evidence:

> **Here is a person who was saved by donated blood.**

She can make public arguments:

> **Donating blood is an important public service.**
> **You or someone you love might be in an accident some day, and you want to make sure the local hospital has a ready supply of your blood type.**

She also can present arguments based on emotion:

> **When one of your family members is hurt, there's nothing more comforting than knowing that there's an army of volunteers there to support you, even though they don't know you because they were willing to give the gift of their blood.**

Danielle should brainstorm many arguments from which to choose the ones that the students in her audience are most likely to understand and that connect to them the best. She may have to confront the realization that her reasons for donating blood may not be the same as the audience's reasons. She can choose to use any, all, or none of the following brainstormed reasons to make her case:

- It's fun!
- You can help others.
- You have an obligation to help.
- The blood bank needs you.
- Other people will need your help.
- Sick people need your help.
- It's easy.
- You'll feel great about yourself after you do it.
- There's no risk in giving blood.
- What if you needed blood?

What will help her choose among these reasons? She'll need to select the arguments that are most effective with the specific audience/public she has chosen to address. Even if there are many good reasons to do something, they aren't equally good to everyone. If she has chosen to address her audience as college students, which of these arguments will mean the most to them *as* college students? The ones about idealism? Community? Ease of giving? We'll return to these questions in the chapter on persuasion (Chapter 12) and discuss how reasoning will help make this choice.

Research (Chapter 6)

Once Danielle has chosen lines of argument, she'll have to do some research to find the facts and information that will fill out her reasoning. She could, of course, just get up and freestyle her speech, but this would be a failure of her responsibility to her audience. To become thoroughly informed, Danielle needs a research strategy: She needs to figure out where the best sources are and then read enough of the literature on blood donation to make some reasoned conclusions. To do this, she must have an organized approach to research that evaluates multiple perspectives instead of just cutting and pasting from a discussion board or a wiki.

Danielle has an enormous variety of sources to choose from: interviews, news stories, pamphlets, journal articles, web pages, Wikipedia, books, and so on. But she needs to choose her sources carefully and allow the audience to evaluate their credibility. She also needs to use the research responsibly, offering as full a picture of the facts as possible. Her speech will be more effective if all the statistics are from credible sources, such as the American Red Cross (ARC)

or the American Medical Association (AMA), rather than from something like www .saveavampiregiveblood

Good research makes Danielle more credible, and it can give her more choices about how to present her reasoning. But most important, research fulfills the trust she wants the audience to place in her. If she says that donation is safe, she must have the research to back that up.

Organizing (Chapter 7)

Once Danielle has chosen her arguments and assembled research to support them, she is ready to choose how to organize her speech. This happens at two levels. First, she has to decide the best order for her two or three main arguments. Perhaps civic duty is her strongest argument, but if people fear disease or needles, she may have to focus on that argument first, to clear away misunderstandings. Otherwise, audience members may not be able to hear her powerful arguments about civic duty because they're thinking, "Wait! Isn't this dangerous?"

Second, she has to decide how to structure the body of the speech. What is the best order for her points? If the most important point goes last, which one *is* most important? How are the points related to each other? Their relationships (for example, just another reason or cause and effect) will help her choose clear transitions between the points, which will help the audience understand her argument more precisely.

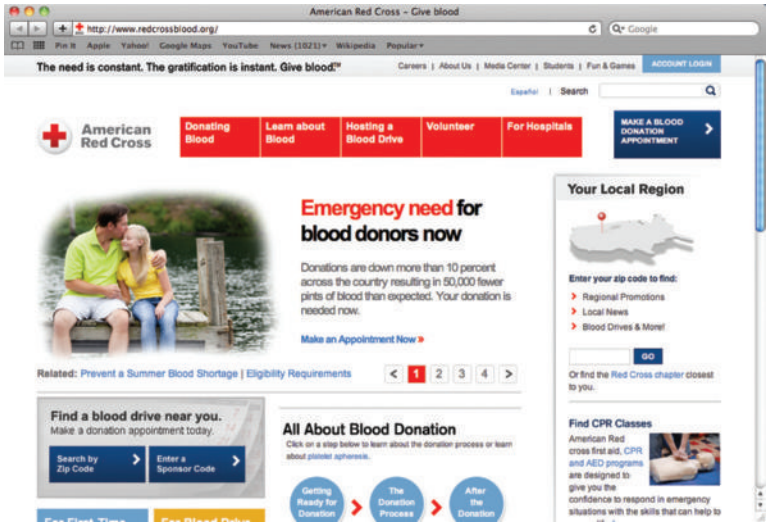
She also has to decide how to **frame** the speech in the introduction and the conclusion. The introduction, in a sense, will introduce the audience members to themselves and also set the tone for the speech while previewing the arguments. The conclusion will bring the arguments together in an appeal for action.

frame The context of relevance to the audience, for the information or arguments of a speech; often articulated in the introduction and conclusion.

The first few sentences basically lay out the relationship between speaker, audience, and topic. Look at some possibilities and what they are likely to mean to the audience:

1. If you give blood, I could win a prize in a competition that my sorority is having.
   Meaning for audience: The blood donation is a means for the speaker to benefit.
2. If you give blood, the survivors of the recent disaster will do much better.
   Meaning for audience: The donation will help others.
3. If you give blood, you'll feel great about yourself, proud of your engagement.
   Meaning for audience: The donation will help the audience members.

Danielle must choose a frame that will effectively *introduce* her arguments to the audience, so it has to be consistent. Introduction 1 wouldn't work with a speech that was mainly about altruistic reasons for audience members to give blood. In a speech focusing on how blood



American Red Cross

Persuasive speakers know that they must rely only on credible sources to back up their words. The American Red Cross website, for instance, is a reliable source for the information about blood donation.

donations help others, the conclusion would have to support the frame by providing a vivid example of someone whose life was saved or improved thanks to donated blood.

Finding the Words (Chapter 8)

An important set of choices involves the words that Danielle will use when she speaks. Not every single word, but the key terms that connect her and the topic to the audience. For example, what is the subject of the speech? It's about blood (which is intrinsically gross to a lot of people), and she's asking her audience to do something with the blood. But what? Is it

a donation?
a gift?
a contribution?

Of course, these words have similar meanings, but they have slightly different implications. *Contribution* suggests a group effort, whereas *donation* makes the blood sound equivalent to money (and the common metaphor for the place where the blood is stored is a blood "bank"). *Gift* is an emotionally and culturally charged term that seems more personal than the others; people who have never made a donation or contribution in their life know all about gifts. The best word depends on the frame of the speech and the choices Danielle has made about her arguments.

As another example, what words could Danielle use to say that blood donation is a "good" thing?

worthy	excellent
valuable	honorable
necessary	helpful
commendable	admirable
splendid	cool
marvelous	really fine
precious	awesome

This may seem like too many choices, but spending some time choosing the three or four key terms in the speech will help you get the parts of your speech to hold together. In addition, it can help set the tone of the speech. Notice, for example, that the choices at the end of the list are much more informal and slangy than the earlier ones. In some situations, this might be appropriate; in others, it might not be—depending on the choice of audience and frame.

Language choices can go well beyond vocabulary, as we'll see in Chapter 8. These include uses of language such as metaphor and other tropes. An exciting or appropriate metaphor, such as Martin Luther King's "I've Been to the Mountaintop," can easily pull together an entire speech and help the audience not only understand it but remember it as well.

Suppose that Danielle has decided that the best frame and audience for this speech is that students should see themselves as members of a larger community and take some responsibility for what happens in that community. One choice that would help her to express this idea vividly to the audience would be a figure of speech that makes the plastic bag of donated blood a symbol for community itself—"This is community in a pint-sized bag." The complexities of public health problems and the volunteer blood donation system can be reduced to the image of the bag itself, allowing students to imagine their connection to the larger community when they imagine the bag. Rather than being scary or icky, the bag of blood becomes a symbol of hope and commitment.

GIVING YOUR FIRST SPEECH

Danielle, like most people, imagines that the hardest part of the process is delivering the speech. As we'll discuss later, that's probably not true—though it's true that people worry about it the most!

Delivering the Speech (Chapter 9)

Many of Danielle's choices about delivery involve how she will prepare and practice the speech. She'll have to decide if it will be extemporaneous (spoken from notes) or written out and either read or memorized (the more difficult options). Once she decides on a type of preparation, she'll have to practice it, either by herself or in front of a small, friendly audience, thinking especially about staying within her allotted time.

Of course, delivery matters. Danielle will want to deliver her speech clearly, not too fast or slow, and with appropriate feeling and emphasis. In Chapter 11, we'll talk about how to practice your speeches and refine all these elements.

Overcoming Anxiety (Chapter 9)

Anxiety probably will be a problem for Danielle, as it is for everyone, including some of the most seasoned speakers. Though we will address this topic in greater detail in Chapter 9, for your first speech in public speaking class, you can remind yourself that your classmates are in the same boat as you, and you can focus on all the preparation you have done and just let the speech give itself.

Presentation Aids (Chapter 10)

Danielle knows that her audience will appreciate visual images or media accompanying her speech. She may decide to bring some pictures or to use a program such as PowerPoint to highlight important points, display graphics, and show images. First, she will have to consider a number of logistical issues, especially whether the setting is media-friendly. Danielle will have to decide just how image-rich she wants her presentation to be. If she uses too many images, props, or slides, the audience may feel either overwhelmed or distracted from what she is trying to say. If she relies too much on the images or media, she is at risk of letting the media use her instead of using the media to enhance her speech. She will have to decide which images and text enhance her message and which ones drown it out. We will discuss these issues at length in Chapter 10, with the goal of giving you some ways to manage visuals in your speech.

If all this seems like a lot to think about in preparing a speech, keep in mind that we'll give you techniques for breaking the process into easy, manageable steps. Moreover, if Danielle does all these things, she will not only have the confidence in her speech that she needs to counteract her anxiety, but she is also likely to give a powerful and effective speech. Even better, Danielle's speaking abilities will improve with every speech that she composes using this process—as will *your* speaking abilities. The skills that Danielle is honing in making a speech about giving blood will help her in the future, preparing her to make the kind of speeches that will change her personal history for the better, and perhaps make a difference in the lives of those around her.

MAKING RESPONSIBLE CHOICES

Let's bring together the concepts and processes of this chapter. What you learn in a public speaking course is how to make good communication choices and how to take responsibility for them. Our aim in this book is to expand your choices in speaking and give you more and better ways of making those choices, enabling you to take responsibility for them.

Good Speeches Are the Result of Choices

What's a *good* speech? When the speaker is free from nervousness? When it gets big applause at the end? Most people imagine that a good speech has something to do with getting what you want or transmitting information properly or getting the audience to think as you do. Although these outcomes may happen, they don't by themselves define good communication.

"Good communication" is a bit ambiguous because it is pulled between choices that are *practically* good (effective in persuading your audience, getting what you want in the short run) and choices that are good because they are *responsible* (what you would want if you were in the audience). The best communicators make choices about how to write and deliver a speech that are both practically effective and ethically responsible. *Responsible* and *ethical*, for this context, are intertwined—taking responsibility for your choices is an ethical stance. Thus, your communicative ethics are revealed in the choices that you make in crafting a persuasive speech as well as the choices that you make in terms of your orientation to your audience (the kind of relationship are you creating with them as you step up to speak).

There are many possible good relationships with an audience. They always depend on the specific case, and a good persuader can tell the difference between an appropriate and an inappropriate approach. So, good rhetoric, or good communication, actually is fairly straightforward (though not simple in practice). It's about making choices and being willing to take responsibility for them. The responsible and ethical speaker chooses the appropriate goals for the audience and situation and the appropriate means to achieve those goals. In this sense, the story of Danielle serves as an example of what a speaker has to do to give a good speech: making the best choices for the audience and the situation.

Taking Responsibility Means Respecting the Audience

Rhetoric and persuasion get a bad name when they are used irresponsibly—when the means or the goals disrespect audiences, ignore their interests, or treat them as less than fully rational participants in the process. There's a simple way to prevent these abuses: Be ready to take responsibility for your choices. Imagine, at any point in a speech, someone in the audience asking, "Why did you say that? Argue that? Use that metaphor? Organize your speech that way?" If you can give an answer, you're taking responsibility. If you can't, you're not living up to the requirements of public persuasion.

Many people find ways to reject responsibility for their own talk. Here are a few:

- Well, I don't know why I said that—it seemed OK to me.
- Oh, I hoped you weren't going to notice that.
- One of my sources argued that, so why not?
- It seemed like the only way to do it.
- The material just seemed to require this presentation style.
- Everybody does it this way.
- It's just conventional to say that—who cares?
- It's the truth.
- There isn't any other way to say it.

If you're not taking responsibility, either you don't respect your audience or you don't care about being effective. Respecting the intelligence of the audience and treating potential points of disagreement respectfully is an important part of persuasion and will make your speech more successful. As we pointed out earlier, the "public" part of public speech is connected with the best ideas of democracy, and democracy requires respect for disagreement.

Summary

Let's put it all together: *public* and *speaking*. Public speaking is powerful because it means communicating with other people in a way that respects their interests and also holds open the possibility of change. Speech changes society and can change your life as well. Public speaking addresses other people not only as individuals but also as members of a public, as fellow citizens in a democracy, as people motivated by common interests. Public speaking is deliberative, which means that the goal of a public speech is to create knowledge, to make better and more well-informed decisions about issues of common concern. Finally, public speakers make choices and take responsibilities for their choices; they make choices about content, organization, words, delivery, and visual aids to create a compelling speech.

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Demonstrate your speech skills by preparing, practicing, presenting, and providing feedback.

Questions for Review

1. Why will it benefit you to become a better public speaker?
2. Why does public speaking matter?
3. What's the relationship between preparation and performance?
4. What are the elements in a good public speech? What does a speaker have to think about in preparing a speech?
5. What does the idea of "public" mean in public speaking?
6. What is communication? What distinguishes public speaking from other types of communication?
7. How is public speaking related to democracy and to civic life?
8. How can speakers take responsibility for their choices?

Questions for Discussion

1. How do you think public speaking will make a difference in your life, both as a speaker and as an audience?
2. Can the connection of public speaking to democracy extend to everyday speeches, especially in business and personal settings?
3. What are examples of irresponsible speech? What are the negative effects of irresponsible speech?
4. In your opinion, what makes a speech succeed or fail? What makes one speech persuasive and another speech fall flat?
5. Do you think the idea of a public is relevant in our current political and social situation?

Key Concepts

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Practice defining the chapter's terms by using online flashcards and take the chapter quiz.

adaptation
argument
choices
delivery
democracy
frame
informative speech
persuasive speech
pluralism
public
rhetoric
special-occasion speech
stakeholder
unity

CHAPTER 2

SPEAKING FOR THE COMMON GOOD: THE ETHICS OF THE RESPONSIBLE SPEAKER

david hancock/Alamy Stock Photo

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Explain what civil communication is, and why it is ethical
- Understand what civility is and what it is not
- Summarize the main reasons why civility matters to public speaking
- Identify various civility fails speakers can make
- Apply the seven principles of civic responsibility to your own speeches
- Define plagiarism and explain how to avoid it

CHAPTER OUTLINE

Overview

In this chapter, you will learn why civility matters in public speaking, and how ethical choices in speaking need to be grounded in concern for the greater good. This chapter will help you be more aware of the practices that contribute to or detract from civic relationship-building with your audience. It will help you make choices based on mutual responsibility and good reasons rather than on manipulation and deceptive arguments. We will address the implications of deceptive, biased, and poorly reasoned speech as well as provide positive principles to help guide your public speaking choices. And we will discuss how you should deal with the problem of what kind of evidence best supports public discussion, with a specific focus on the phenomenon of "fake news." We will also address the issue of plagiarism, or using other people's work without giving them proper credit. Finally, we will discuss how to create and deliver speeches that contribute to an ongoing conversation with your audience. You may want to revisit this chapter as you work through the book.

INTRODUCTION: WHY CIVILITY MATTERS IN PUBLIC SPEAKING

Many Americans share the view that we just don't know how to talk to one another reasonably anymore. A recent study by the AP-NORC Center for the Study of Public Affairs at the University of Chicago found that 74% of Americans believe that civility is on the decline, and more than two-thirds of us think that political campaigns have become much less civil than they were in the past.[1]

Speaking well in public means speaking for the common good—for the good of all your listeners, and with an eye toward speaking in a way that assumes responsibility for improving your community. Civility is an idea that has been employed in all kinds of ways: sometimes for the good of the community, and other times as a weapon to silence dissent. In this chapter, we want to take care to say what we think civility is and what it is not. In doing so, we would like to propose that you shouldn't think about civility as a set of rules, codes for polite speech, or a way of preventing people from expressing views that they hold

passionately in the ways that they would like to express them. Rather than a set of rules or codes, we think that civility is an attitude and a habit. Civility is the attitude that holds that when you speak, you speak for the good of the audience, and is the habit that good speakers employ of thinking about and taking responsibility for the effects of their speech on their audience.

Defined that way, civility is not about respectability, politeness, or not ruffling feathers—sometimes civil speech requires that we say difficult things with passion and appropriate conviction. In other words, civility lies at the heart of what you are learning—it is what puts the "public" in "public speaking." Public speaking means that when you are addressing an audience, it isn't speech in a private setting, or even necessarily in a corporate one. Public speech is speech meant to address a more general public, the community of people who are invested in the common decisions we make and the governmental institutions through which we make them. Of course, that's simplifying a bit. None of us can address everybody simultaneously; our words circulate through friends and various kinds of media. Your speech might be observed/recorded by a news outlet, and might appear in a print magazine or newspaper, or on TV; or you might make a video that goes viral. Either way (as we'll see in the next chapter) you're addressing the people in the room as if they were part of a much larger public.

"Civility" and "civic" come from the words the ancient Romans used to designate their public life: *Civitas* was the collective social organization of the *cives*, the citizens of Rome; it was synonymous with the *res publica*, the "public matters" which give us the word "republic" and define the U.S. form of government. The Athenian Greeks called their city a *polis* /polees/, from which we get the word "politics," and their citizens *polites* /poleetees/. The Romans took this idea and turned it into the *civitas*—the city—and they created the idea of the "citizen," or one who lived in the city (or county or state or country) with you.

Civility was originally an ethical idea that indicated that when a speaker spoke, it was incumbent on them to do so for the good of the city, and to do it in ways that were most likely to create change that benefitted everyone. Of course, on one view this simply meant that civility was about being polite—a set of ethical norms, for citizens communicating with citizens, that would hold the society together. Civility was often contrasted with barbarism and savagery, the kind of society illustrated in the popular books and program *Game of Thrones*. But civility also meant that if you had something that you believed would benefit your fellow citizens (meaning people who live in the city with you, not necessarily implying any specific legal status) you were obligated to say it, even if it meant that others would think you were being impolite. That's the basic conflict that we have around civility in contemporary America. On the one hand, there are those who think that civility primarily means being nice. But that is a limited view of civility because the original definition of civility meant that you sometimes had to say things that were hard for your audience to hear. On the other hand, there are those who think that civility is just another excuse for saying who can and can't say things, and mandating how people say things. But *real* civility—that is speech for the good of the city—is about saying the right thing in the best way to create democratic change. So, for example, when anti-suffragists (people who were against giving women the right to vote) or opponents of civil rights said that it was impolite for women or people of color (or women of color for that matter) to presume that they deserved a political voice, they were acting uncivilly—they did not have the good of the whole community in mind. And, by extension, people who spoke out against injustice—regardless of their gender or race—were speaking with a civic-minded motive: to create a society where everyone's voice mattered in public life.

There is a balance that matters here. One of the big goals of getting you to start thinking about, and to practice speaking in front of (and listening to), others is that by doing this

you are learning how to make judgments about how to say what you want to say in the best way you can to persuade your audience, and with the goal of improving conditions in your community—in big or in small ways.

Of course, there are some behaviors and ways of speaking that work against civility, no matter how good the intentions behind them. Forms of speech that marginalize other voices, that rely on threats of violence or intimidation, or that distort public conversation because they are deceptive work against real civility. The create an environment where folks who live alongside one another in a community are less likely to listen, exchange ideas, or come to see other points of view. Incivility and aggression can be found across all media, and many of us avoid political discussions because we fear the aggression and disrespect that comes with an uncivil conversation. Or we may ourselves indulge in mockery or verbal abuse of people with different political stances, particularly in online settings. While individually these actions may not seem like a big deal, collectively they corrode our sense of belonging to a common project, a project of arguing over the best way to live. Hence, we have to explore how speakers become civil speakers

CIVILITY VERSUS RUDENESS TRY IT!

Make a list of examples of civility and rudeness, at least six to eight of each. What do you think all the examples of rudeness share in common? Are there times when "civil" speech could be perceived as rude? What is the difference between frank speech and rude speech? What does that tell you about communication? About what's important in communication?

Sometimes people talk about civility (or politeness) as if they were vague norms about being nice to each other. In the contemporary political climate, niceness does seem to be in short supply. But simply dismissing speech because it is not "nice" is dangerous too. To figure out how best to speak in the context of your community, we need to focus on the actual practices that advance the good of the community. These practices boil down to taking an ethical stance toward public communication—or, as we call it, public speaking. Each time you intentionally and skillfully take this stance, you help repair the fabric of our civic life. This practice entails speaking as charitably as the situation allows, listening as charitably as you possibly can, and addressing your ideas to an audience in the way that best ensures that they understand and can reflect on your points.

Being civil then becomes part of who you are, your ethos. What does this mean? Ethos is about the practices and habits of speaking through which you relate to an audience. The Greek term *ethos,* which is the root word for *ethics*, means both "character" and "habit." **Ethics** can be defined as the principles that govern people's actions, or as your habits of relationship to yourself and others. So, for our purposes, the question of ethics is really a question of ethos—it's not just about what you think or believe, it is about what you do.

ethics Rules, standards, or principles that govern people's conduct, or habitual moral behavior.

Ethics can apply to any area of life where we act in ways that affect others, but of course one such area is communication. Some of the ethics of communication and public speaking, the dimensions of civility, are probably pretty obvious: You should not fabricate quotations or facts; you should not misrepresent the sources that you quote; you should not intentionally mislead your audience; and you should not knowingly use weak logic or faulty arguments. Most people agree that these practices are ethically shaky, whether in day-to-day conversation,

in speeches delivered in or outside the classroom, or in other means of communication (such as writing, texting, or instant messaging).

In a classroom context, unethical speech can affect your grade, since your instructor will hold you responsible. But in any setting unethical communication practices can also harm your reputation, limit your effectiveness as a communicator, and damage your relationship with the people with whom you are communicating. What if you persuaded members of your audience to make a significant change in lifestyle based on shoddy evidence? What if this change harmed their health or well-being in some way?

When ethics in public speaking is based on the relationship between speaker and audience, the goal of public speaking becomes more than simply influencing or informing them. Communication goals have to be in dialog with civility, since your goals with a specific audience are always also attempts to maintain a community (understood in the broadest sense). "Effectiveness" in the narrow sense of getting your own way is not a good test for ethical acceptability. Throughout history, speakers have sometimes used deception and manipulation to persuade audiences to do things that speakers knew were wrong. The fact that a speech is effective in moving an audience does not mean that the speech is ethically good.

Ethics and Effectiveness

In this chapter, we would like to make the case that you should engage in ethical speaking practices because it is the right thing to do, and because the choices you make collectively define your character as a person. But if you aren't convinced by those claims, you might consider being ethical because the perceptions of your ethics make a big difference in how people respond to things that you ask them to do (for example, in asking them to change a belief, attitude, or action in a speech).

There is a good bit of research to bear this claim out, but some of the most interesting work on ethical communication and personal effectiveness comes from studies of interactions between bosses and workers in the workplace. This will come as no surprise to readers that have worked for very good or very bad bosses: A study (Walumba et. al, 2011) of employee satisfaction and productivity found that employees were more willing to do what their bosses asked of them if they perceived their bosses to be ethical, that they had more confidence in their ability to achieve tasks, and that they were willing to work harder for the good or the organization. Other studies have underscored this same relationship between being perceived as ethical and being effective in achieving goals in contexts as diverse as television news and science communication. The bottom line is this: Aristotle said that an audience will be more favorably disposed toward you if they think that they can trust you, and that you have their best interests at heart. As we study this dynamic in more and more areas, it appears that Aristotle's insight has been borne out.

For more information, see:

Walumbwa, F., Mayer, D. Wang, P., Wang, H., Workman, K. Christensen. A. (2011). Linking ethical leadership to employee performance: The roles of leader–member exchange, self-efficacy, and organizational identification. Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes. 115: 204–213.

Because your words can affect your audience, you need to steer your listeners in a direction that is effective in changing their minds, in a way that's good for them—and for *us*, a larger community. To do this, your speech needs to be based on sound evidence and arguments. If your goal in public speaking is to connect with your audience on a topic of importance to you, you should do everything you can to build a good relationship with them. This relationship is the most important component of public speaking, and it is the core from which all the choices you make should flow.

Your choices entail more than just avoiding ethical risks like lying, misrepresenting sources, and knowingly making weak arguments. Ethical public speaking also requires responsibly using and citing evidence in your speech, employing sound reasoning, and delivering your speech in a clear and accessible manner. Good speakers take these steps to nurture their relationship with their audiences.

FAQ *Why do I need to worry about ethical choices? Aren't I just conveying or translating information from my research?*

In a sense, yes, often you are relaying things you've learned to the audience. But you don't relay *everything*—you can't—which means you're making choices. And if your audience questions your choices ("Why didn't you mention . . . ?"), you need to be able to take responsibility and explain the reasons for your choices. So, every communicator, no matter the context, by definition is forming some kind of ethical relationship with the audience.

CIVILITY BREAKS DOWN IN PUBLIC SPEAKING

Most people don't like to think of themselves as uncivil. They think they generally maintain appropriate and positive relationships through communication. And maybe they're mostly right. But there can be many demands on our communication when we are talking to people, demands that pull against civility. There may be things we want from them, and that gets in the way of our judgment. We get nervous in front of people and don't achieve our best intentions, getting caught up in the moment. During preparation, we can lose focus among competing goals, and this can lead us away from civility. Sometimes it's helpful to point out the ways that attempts to be civil can go off track. Deceptive speech, inappropriately biased speech, and poorly reasoned speech represent potential risks in building an ethically sound relationship with your audience. In this section, we highlight what you should try to avoid in speaking. Let's start with lying, or the risk of deceptive speech.

Deceptive Speech

Consider the following thesis for a speech:

> **Lowering the drinking age to 18 will help young people, and college students in particular, to drink less.**

Wait—is that true? Will lowering the drinking age help young people drink less? Would there be anything wrong with defending that thesis if it weren't true?

Is it wrong—uncivil—to say something untrue? Your reflex response may be "Of course it's wrong," but this is a more complex question than it may first appear. In everyday speech, we often say things that are untrue, but our intention is not always to deceive. Sometimes we just have the facts wrong. For example, if you argue in a speech that 80% of college students binge drink, you may simply be mistaken, but not necessarily deceptive.

However, if you decide it's OK to say, "Everybody on campus drinks," because some exaggeration is good for making your point, your choice may be hard to justify. That little bit of hyperbole for the sake of making an argument can have serious negative effects because students' drinking habits are heavily influenced by their perceptions of what "everyone" is doing.[2]

Part of what makes an intentional lie wrong is that the misrepresentation or omission is *done for the speaker's advantage*. Liars know the truth but either hide it or make the audience believe something different, and usually they do so for their own benefit. For example, if you're trying to convince an audience that a particular political candidate is terrible when she is not, you are probably doing so in the hope that people will vote for your favorite candidate. An intentional lie deceives for the purpose of accruing some benefit for the liar.

Sometimes, however, an intentionally deceptive statement does not have a destructive or self-serving purpose. For example, if a friend asks whether you like the new shirt he bought, you might say yes even if the answer is no. The motive behind socially acceptable white lies like this one is to avoid hurting someone's feelings, whereas the goal of intentional deception, such as lying about an opposition candidate, is to benefit the liar. The difference is motive.

TRY IT!

WHEN LYING MIGHT BE ETHICALLY DEFENSIBLE

Of course, if you were protecting an innocent person from a murderous mob by hiding him in your house, you might be justified in telling the mob he is not there. Even though honesty is a good ethical goal, protecting the life of an innocent victim might justify a bit of deception to avoid a more significant ethical evil.[3] Brainstorm more instances of ethically defensible lies.

Despite the distinctions between different kinds of lies, most of us agree that lying is an ethically undesirable choice, and the ethical goals for our speeches ought to be avoiding harm, promoting good, and maintaining the quality of our relationships. Thus, though lies may be acceptable in some narrow instances, they are not justifiable in public speaking, because the goal of a good relationship in public speaking is to give the audience as accurate a version of the facts as possible so they can make a good decision on the basis of the evidence presented.

TRY IT!

REASONS TO BE HONEST—AND NOT TO BE

Make a list from your personal experience of all the advantages and disadvantages of honesty in communication. Then compare them to the lists of other people in the class. How similar or different are they? What do you think accounts for the differences?

Deceptive speech has three important drawbacks for your audience and your relationship to them. First, deceptive speech practices can harm your audience by inducing them to act on or believe in things that are untrue. Second, deception can damage your credibility. If your audience begins to wonder whether you are being deceptive, either because something doesn't sound quite right or because they know the truth about your claims, you will lose credibility. Third, the technical choices you make in speaking—deciding what to say, how to say it, what details to include, what to leave out—are ethical choices. If you are willing to lie for a public speaking grade, you are cultivating a habit that may be harmful to your character.

Coercive Speech

One of the goals for public speech is to convince others that they should agree with you. And, without a doubt, that goal may imply using persuasion to nudge people in a direction that they did not anticipate or expect. But, some attempts at persuasion can subtly (or not so subtly) turn into bullying or threats. Speech that "coerces" or leverages the other person into acting on an idea that they don't agree with or believe in hurts the fabric of public discussion—it makes it less likely that people will cooperate to figure out collective solutions to problems, and it makes people defensive.

There are a few important distinctions to keep in mind here. First of all, it is not coercive to make a better argument or to present evidence—ideally, in a civic setting where people are listening to each other, open to being persuaded, and thinking about the merits of arguments based on evidence and sound reasoning, the force of the better argument should prevail. But, if references to evidence or to arguments are part of an attempt to demean or humiliate the other person, they likely cross the line into coercion. Second, it is not coercive to be passionate or strongly convinced of your opinion. Sometimes people feel threatened or manipulated by impassioned speech—and in that instance, if the display of passion is about advancing the good of the whole, the responsibility is on the listener to listen charitably. But when passion is connected with either a threat of harm or some other negative consequence for the listener—one not related to ideas—passion can work against persuasion. Third, it is not coercive to say that arguments or ideas are wrong, or to point out that they are based on bad evidence, assumptions, or reasoning. But when the impulse to engage another person's arguments, ideas, or identity is about demeaning the worth or value of the person, engagement turns over into an attack on the character of the person and not the quality of the ideas. Again the responsibility is on both parties here in a public conversation. The speaker should present the truth as they see it, and they should not flinch in making their point. The audience should not feel attacked if the speaker is questioning their opinions or commitments, since showing someone that they are wrong about something is often a gift—it is how we grow and develop better ideas. But the overarching question here, and the difference between effective change and hardening positions, is the impression that the goal of a speech is to create good for the whole. That is why we insist on thinking about public speech as a conversation—in any conversation about change, your goal is to present ideas in a way that is most likely to achieve their intended effect, so civil speech always has to balance between *how* you say the thing you'd like to say, and *what* it is that you need to say.

Inappropriately Biased Speech

All speeches come from a viewpoint that is unique to the speaker. The question, however, is whether you let your personal perspective, or ***bias***, shape *all* the evidence or information you present in your speech. Because an ethical public speaker respects the intelligence of the audience, your goal is to make your case while letting the audience make up their own minds based on their own reasoning skills. As a result, when speaking you ought to make choices that do not rely on bias and that allow listeners to see multiple legitimate positions on your topic.

bias Generalizations or commitments based only on your own personal perspective.

It's important, however, to distinguish between bias and advocacy. ***Advocacy*** is presenting a strong case for your perspective or leading your audience toward a change in belief or an action. Being an advocate means you are willing to give other perspectives a fair hearing. You may be advocating lowering the drinking age, but as an advocate you're aware of, and address, the reasons why people might disagree. Showing bias, on the other hand, means that you intentionally misrepresent, leave out, or unfairly downplay alternative perspectives.

advocacy Making a case for a perspective, a change in belief, or a particular action.

REMIX

Bias, or, on Being Fair and Balanced

Research around bias is very interesting. However, research shows that when an audience perceives a significant bias in a speaker, they will tend to respond to it in one of two ways: If audience members share the speaker's bias, they may respond with approval, and if they do not share the speaker's bias, the audience is likely to resist the speaker's conclusions. So far so good. But some evidence also indicates that when a speaker goes *too* far in avoiding the perception of bias, acting as if they have no preexisting opinion when the audience expects one, an attempt to eliminate bias can create resistance in the audience to the speaker and the speaker's claims—perhaps because the audience thinks that the speaker is not being fully honest about their motives.

The theory here suggests that the best thing to do is to be honest about your dispositions on a topic, and then to try your best to be charitable toward the other opinions in presenting them.

For more information, see:

Knowles, E. and Linn, J. (2004). Resistance and Persuasion. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Earlbaum and Associates.

Think about it this way: As a speaker who is providing information, you will be at your best when you treat your topic the way you expect your teachers to treat topics: You give the fullest picture possible, without leaving out facts or ignoring areas of dispute. For example, if you were giving an informative speech about the effects of lowering the drinking age, you would present the evidence on both sides. By the same token, if you were giving a persuasive speech, you would certainly advocate your position, but not by leaving out or discrediting alternative viewpoints. For example, in a persuasive speech advocating lowering the drinking age you might legitimately say the following:

> **Some scientific evidence justifies the claim that legal drinkers are, on average, more responsible drinkers.**

In contrast, this would be an inappropriately biased statement on the topic:

> **Just think about the negative effects of Prohibition. Obviously, setting the drinking age at 21 makes things worse in the same way.**

The difference between advocacy and bias is a matter of the choices you make. Notice that in citing "some scientific evidence" in the first example above, the advocate does not back off her claim that lowering the drinking age is good. Instead, she qualifies it with the word *some* to acknowledge disagreement.

In the second example, the speaker chooses to ignore criticism altogether, which can be a surprisingly ineffective persuasive strategy. Listeners who disagree with the speaker will be put off by the suggestion that they are being unreasonable. In contrast, the first statement is on solid ethical ground because it respects the intelligence of the audience, acknowledges an alternative viewpoint, and suggests there are sources they could consult to come to a reasoned decision on their own.

MindTap®

Watch the video and answer the comprehension questions.

Poorly Reasoned Speech

Deception and bias are two common ethical risks in public speaking, and the third is poorly reasoned speech. We will show you how to create a well-reasoned speech more extensively in

the chapters on research and persuasion. For now, we will discuss the ethical implications of knowingly making poor arguments.

What is an argument? It is not a shouting match or a heated back-and-forth between two or more parties. An **argument** is a **claim**, or something you would like to prove or get another person to agree with, that is supported by some **grounds**, that is, evidence, expert opinion, data, or logical chain. **Reasoning** is the process of making good arguments that are well supported by good grounds.

argument An assertion (a claim) supported by evidence, expert opinion, data, or a logical chain (grounds).

claim A statement to be proven or agreed to.

grounds Evidence, expert opinion, data, or a logical chain in support of an argument.

reasoning Making good arguments that are supported by good grounds.

There are a number of ways the process of reasoning can go wrong. (We'll have more to say on this in Chapter 12, discussing reasoning and persuasion.) Here are some examples:

- *Claims without any support.* If you say, "Eating a strict diet of rutabagas is the path to a healthy life," but you don't provide any data, expert opinion, or studies to back up the claim, your argument is incomplete and therefore poorly reasoned.
- *Claims with weak support.* If you say, "You should invest heavily in pork bellies, because I read a great advertisement from the Pork Council that said investments in pigs will really pay off," you have provided some grounds for your claim. But because your support is a small and arguably biased sample, it does not justify your claim.
- *Claims with inappropriate support.* If you say, "You should go to Disneyland for spring break, because the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently found that vaccines are safe," you have provided support that does not justify your claim. Though most examples are not this obviously defective, speakers commonly cite evidence that has little to do with the conclusions they want the audience to make.

One of your most important choices in preparing a public speech is how you will back up what you are saying with data, studies, logic, and expert opinion. If you intentionally make claims without support or with weak or inappropriate support, you can all too easily mislead your audience. If your audience recognizes your poor reasoning, that will damage your relationship with them and your ability to inform or persuade them. If they do not realize that you are making claims based on shoddy support, they may end up acting against their best interests.

FAKE NEWS?

Bias and poor support in speech are part of the larger problem of "fake news" that has become an important part of our national political conversation. One way of addressing the problem of fake news is to follow the steps that we lay out a bit later in our chapter on research—and as you will learn there, you can correct for the biases in sources by consulting a range of sources, thinking about the motives of authors, evaluating the credibility of sources, and so on.

A larger question for the ethics of speech involves not just how you research, but how you will choose to present your findings, and to what extent you are willing to engage your audience in an open dialogue about your commitments. We'd like to engage public speech in a way that opens us to changing our positions on the basis of feedback, and we'd like to think in advance about how an audience is likely to listen to our opinions. These two commitments are important because of the real possibility that we, ourselves, have something to learn by speaking in front of an audience *and* that both the speaker and the audience might change their opinion as a result of the conversation.

The reason why we want ourselves and our audiences to be open to change is because if the tradition of rhetoric teaches us anything, it teaches us that people will speak, hear, and understand arguments and ideas from a perspective that is uniquely theirs. Some of these perspectives are about individual preferences and opinions, and some of them are shared by the larger group of audience members as members of specific groups—think about the idea of the "public" that

we introduced in the last chapter: the audience is composed of people who are both individuals with their own opinions, and of a group of people who are interested in listening for some specific purpose or reason. That purpose or reason may be about where you are speaking (perhaps you are speaking to your fellow students or citizens) or what you are speaking about (perhaps you are addressing a crowd of people who share a common interest in your topic).

This insight, that speakers and audiences have opinions, ideas, and habits that shape how they see the world, has significant implications for how we think about the phenomenon of "fake news." On the one hand, people often say that news that they don't agree with must be "fake" because it doesn't match with how they see the world. On the other hand, there is some "news" that is actually fabricated that people will read, endorse, and even circulate because it reaffirms or strengthens their preexisting opinion. Here is the thing: news is never simply "real" or "fake." If you believe that our opinions, ideas, and viewpoints shape the world and how we understand things, news is never simply true or false. All "news" is told from some perspective, and is about more than just the facts and ideas that it contains: "news" always tells a story from one position, and always advances some motive—either to make money, draw attention, or shape the public debate.

If we got beyond the idea of "fake news" we'd be able to say more intelligent things about the news than whether it is fake or not. Instead, every idea presented in the news is either *more or less likely to be* true, and is always written or produced from one perspective: our job is to put sources in conversation in a way that figures out how likely they are to be true, and that opens our sources to a larger public conversation about whether or not the ideas in our news sources contain truth, falsehood, or some mixture of the two. In other words, if public speaking is a conversation, part of the process of that conversation is figuring out what the best take on an issue is given a broad range of perspectives. Ethical speech does not uniformly accept or dismiss any single source on the basis of it being available to read on the Internet, shared on social media, or produced by a media conglomerate: instead, ethical speech evaluates the relative credibility of "news" items by putting them in a larger context of motives, biases, and evidence for the sake of thinking about them critically. This means that ethical speaking requires that you ask tough questions of your sources, that you present them clearly and with an eye toward their limitations, and that you speak in a manner that is attentive to our tendency to believe things that we like, as opposed to forming our beliefs on the basis of evidence.

With these ideas in mind—avoiding deceptive speech, coercive speech, bad reasoning, and bad evidence—we'd like to turn to some principles that we think can positively influence the tenor of public speech. These seven practical principles can make all the difference in connecting with your audience, avoiding bad reasoning, and applying proper scrutiny to your sources so that you aren't spreading predominantly "fake news."

SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF CIVIL PUBLIC SPEAKING

Now that you know what to avoid, what steps can you positively take to ensure your public speaking choices are civil and ethical? Here are seven principles that will help you think through your choices:

1. Be honest.
2. Be transparent.
3. Be generous.
4. Be balanced.
5. Represent evidence responsibly.
6. Take appropriate risks.
7. Choose engagement.

Let's see how each of these principles works in practice.