Public Speaking

A Process Approach

MEDIA EDITION

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Deanna D. Sellnow

PUBLIC SPEAKING

A PROCESS APPROACH

Media Edition

DEANNA D. SELLNOW
North Dakota State University

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PREFACE

I chose to write *Public Speaking: A Process Approach Media Edition* because I believe that anyone can become an effective public speaker. Similarly, I believe that we can all improve our public speaking skills. In other words, I believe that effective public speaking is a process that improves as we continue to cultivate it. Effective public speakers are those who choose to work at developing their skills and ineffective speakers are those who choose not to do so. At its most fundamental level, public speaking is a process because it involves a series of steps that focus on aspects of content, structure, and delivery. That's why each chapter of this book teaches students the important concepts and then takes them step-by-step through the process of applying these concepts to their speaking activities.

Communication can be defined as the sending and receiving of verbal and nonverbal messages to create shared meaning. Public speaking is one context in which communication takes place. It is not simply a linear process, however, in which a message is sent by the speaker and received by the listener. Public speaking is a transactional process, where messages are sent and received simultaneously by both the speaker and listeners. Together, both the speaker and listeners play important roles in creating shared meaning. For this reason, *Public Speaking: A Process Approach Media Edition* will consider not only the role of the speaker but also the role of the audience in effective public speaking.

Becoming effective public speakers is an evolutionary process; we must continually develop and adapt our skills to diverse audiences that change with context, society, and the times. When we operate as though the fundamentals of public speaking are a fixed set of skills, and somehow beyond our reach, we do not allow ourselves the opportunity to grow by participating in this process. This book considers public speaking skills to be fluid and adaptive, and trusts that we are all capable of developing these skills to better address the changing dynamics of diverse audiences in our society.

Features

A number of key features are designed to help students gain the skills and an appreciation for the process of public speaking.

Learning Styles

For several decades, researchers have studied the relationship between learning styles and information retention. They have found that students' retention of information is a function both of individual students' preferred learning styles and of the manner in which a teacher presents material. Furthermore, studies indicate that all students retain material best—regardless of their preferred learning style—when teachers present concepts in ways that address multiple learning styles, in other words, by "rounding the cycle of learning." (See Chapter 1 for a more complete discussion of *learning styles* and the *cycle of learning.*)

Communication researchers have only begun to consider the relationship between learning styles and effective communication. This textbook focuses on the important role that learning styles play in public speaking. Readers learn that their effectiveness as public speakers will be enhanced as they identify and understand not only their own preferred learning style, but also as they appreciate and address the diverse learning styles in their audiences. *Public Speaking: A Process Approach Media Edition* presents specific strategies to help students achieve these goals.

Diversity

Since the early 1990s, public speaking textbooks have been addressing cultural diversity. Unfortunately, many have done so in ways that unintentionally marginalize or stereotype certain cultural groups. To be more inclusive and to avoid stereotyping, *Public Speaking* integrates diversity comprehensively, yet subtly, throughout the text in ways that acknowledge diversity without marginalizing and stereotyping individuals and groups. For instance, the book shows how diversity may be found in the concept of differing learning styles. Second, a somewhat different approach to demographic audience analysis is shown in Chapter 6. Third, throughout the book various examples from popular culture and from students illustrate the concepts of diversity. Finally, rather than segregating diversity in boxes or sidebars, this book integrates diversity issues and examples within the text itself.

Public Speaking Anxiety

If the research is correct, three out of four people in any classroom experience public speaking anxiety to some degree. Students need to understand why and how to manage their anxiety as it occurs throughout the speech preparation and presentation process. To that end, Chapter 2 is devoted to public speaking anxiety, offering several methods for managing it effectively. In addition, the management of speaking anxiety is discussed wherever it might occur, throughout the text.

Critical Thinking

Many textbooks offer an outline or set of learning objectives at the beginning of each chapter. Unfortunately, students rarely use these outlines or objectives as intended, that is, to focus their thinking as they read. Rather than listing objectives, each chapter opens with four to six **reflective questions.** These questions encourage students to become actively engaged with the material by seeking answers as they read. In a similar fashion, the chapters are interspersed with **What Do You Think?** boxes. These boxes ask students questions that link the text discussion to their own experiences. Doing so also encourages students to think critically about material as they read.

Examples

Students grasp ideas best when they can see examples of those ideas at work. *Public Speaking: A Process Approach Media Edition* contains a wealth of examples drawn from student speakers, famous orators, and popular culture.

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Ethics

Speakers make decisions at numerous points during the speechmaking process; in each decision, there are ethical considerations that affect the choice of topic, audience analysis, research, organization, language, and delivery. Listeners, too, make ethical choices in listening and evaluating. Ethics is integrated throughout the text.

Technology as Speech Preparation and Delivery Tool

The book offers practical advice for using technology effectively and ethically in the speech making and delivery process. Specifically, each chapter includes Web sites for students to visit and InfoTrac College Edition Exercises. Chapter 7 contains abundant information on using the Internet to complete speech research and how to critically evaluate Web site sources, while Chapter 13 offers practical advice on creating effective PowerPoint presentations.

Pedagogy

In writing *Public Speaking: A Process Approach Media Edition* I have tried to remain true to the tenets of learning style theory: I explain concepts in ways that address the "feeling, watching, thinking, and doing" dimensions of the learning cycle. As they move through each chapter, students may "round the learning cycle" as they read. A list of key words for each chapter cue students on important terms that will be defined within. I have used the terminology of the communication field appropriately and have attempted always to define terms simply and completely. The Glossary at the end of the book contains all terms and definitions. At the end of every chapter are practical activities for students to do in class or on their own. Speech outlines as well as transcripts from students and professional speakers are included throughout the book.

Format

This book is organized into three units in such a way that readers can strategically follow an effective pattern for preparing and presenting public speeches for diverse situations and audiences.

Unit I: Understanding Communication Dynamics (Chapters 1–4) introduces readers to foundational components of the communication process. These concepts are relevant, not only to public speaking specifically, but to communication transactions generally. The chapters in this unit cover communication models, communication ethics, communication anxiety, listening, and evaluating.

Unit II: Preparing and Presenting Public Speeches (Chapters 5–13) sets forth the fundamental skills required to organize and deliver effective public speeches. The skills covered in these chapters include topic selection, audience analysis, research and supporting material, organization, language, delivery, and presentational aids.

Unit III: Considering Communication Contexts (Chapters 14–18) provides a basis for understanding why and in what ways content, structure, and delivery

might be unique, based on the situation and the audience. The various types of speeches are included: informative, persuasive, special occasion, and speaking in small groups.

Ancillaries

The **Instructor's Manual** offers a wealth of suggestions for setting up the course, including various syllabi and daily schedules. The manual is filled with speech assignments, activities, extended chapter outlines, and sample lesson plans that include activities for all learning styles, allowing students to "round the cycle of learning."

Available both in printed form and in computerized formats, the **Test Bank** offers numerous test questions of various types: recall, conceptual, and application, in all formats for multiple cognitive levels.

The **Interrater Reliability Training Video** provides exemplary speeches to be used in training evaluators, both teachers and students, to rate consistently using reliable standards.

The ***SpeechMaker*** CD-ROM, which may be packaged with each textbook, brings together text, full-motion video, sound, and the Internet to create a dynamic exploration of the steps involved in the speechmaking process.

The ***Public Speaking Web Site*** contains additional resources such as **PowerPoint Slides,** practice quizzes for students, as well as other activities and instructor teaching tools.

The **Student Speaker Video,** a sixty-minute videotape, shows different types of speeches: self-introduction, informative, persuasive, special occasion, group symposium, and impromptu.

A collection of **Overhead Transparencies** is available to demonstrate the resources, such as models, key charts, diagrams, and forms used in the preparation and presentation phases of public speaking.

Acknowledgments

This textbook represents a process of growth and discovery for me over the past three decades as a public speaker, teacher, and director of the basic course. To thank everyone who has played a part in shaping my development as a public speaker, college teacher, and now author, I realize is impossible, but I would like to acknowledge a few: Howard Vallaincourt, my junior high school speech and debate coach; C. T. Hanson, Robert Littlefield, and Tim Sellnow who inspired me to higher levels of skill and college competition; Bernard Brock, Professor Emeritus at Wayne State University, and Ivan J. K. Dahl, Professor Emeritus at the University of North Dakota for their unrelenting belief in my abilities as a communication scholar and teacher; my father-in-law, Les Sellnow, who provided needed encouragement throughout this project; and for their unceasing, unconditional love and support, Grandpa Johnson and Grandma Miller, who were inspirational mentors who, during the writing of this book, have gone to be with the Lord.

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Finally, thanks to Tim and Debbie and Ricky, not just for enduring me, but also for helping and encouraging me. You have supported me, guided me, and strengthened me, and will, I believe, continue to do so as we pursue our life journey together. I hope that I can do the same for each of you along the way.

To God be the glory.

DEANNA SELLNOW
NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Deanna D. Sellnow is Associate Professor of Communication and Director of the Public Speaking Fundamentals Program at North Dakota State University, where she has taught since 1990. After finishing her master's degree at Wayne State University in Detroit, she completed the Ph.D. program at the University of North Dakota. She has received numerous honors for public speaking, teaching, and research, including the American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament Champion in Communication Analysis, North Dakota Speech and Theatre Association's "Scholar of the Year," and "Outstanding Teacher" at North Dakota State University.

In addition to her teaching, Deanna is active in the National Communication Association, Central States Communication Association, and the North Dakota Speech and Theatre Association. She has served as Chair of the Basic Course Interest Group of the Central States Communication Association and is currently Vice-Chair Elect for the Experiential Learning Commission of the National Communication Association. She also serves as editor of the *Basic Communication Course Annual,* a publication that focuses specifically on research related to the basic course.

Deanna lives with her family in Fargo, North Dakota—husband Tim, daughter Debbie, and son Ricky, along with their golden retriever, Trini, and cat, Carl. She enjoys camping and traveling with her family, running marathons with Tim, and playing a variety of musical instruments including the saxophone, piano, and guitar.

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