

THE ART OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

Stephen E. Lucas



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PREFACE

The Art of Public Speaking is written for college students enrolled in public speaking classes. The text offers a balanced approach: It is informed by classical and contemporary theories of rhetoric but does not present theory for its own sake; it keeps a steady eye on the practical skills of public speaking. It seeks to be thorough without being tedious, clear without being mechanical, lively without being frivolous. In all, the book reflects my belief that a basic text can maintain the intellectual integrity of speechmaking while being adapted to the needs and abilities of undergraduate students.

This is a book for students who want to speak more effectively, but it never loses sight of the fact that the most important part of speaking is thinking. The ability to think critically is vital in a world where personality and image too often substitute for thought and substance. In helping students become capable, responsible speakers, this text aims also at helping them become capable, responsible thinkers.

Throughout *The Art of Public Speaking* I have followed David Hume's advice that "He who would teach eloquence must do it chiefly by examples." Whenever possible I have tried to *show* the principles of public speaking in addition to telling about them. Thus you will find in the book a large number of narratives and extracts from speeches—set off from the text in a contrasting typeface. There are also many speech outlines and sample speeches. All these are provided so students can *see* how to *formulate* specific purpose statements, how to analyze and adapt to audiences, how to organize ideas and construct outlines, how to assess evidence and reasoning, how to use language effectively, and so forth.

Because the immediate task facing students is to present speeches in the classroom, I have relied heavily on examples that relate directly to students' classroom needs and experiences. At the same time, however, the classroom is a training ground where students develop skills that will serve them throughout life. Therefore, I have also included a variety of illustrations drawn from the kinds of speaking situations students will face after they graduate—in their careers and in their communities.

PLAN OF THE BOOK

One of the biggest challenges in writing a textbook is deciding what to include and in what order to present it. I have tried to structure *The Art of Public Speaking* so that its coverage of the material and its sequence of chapters will fit the introductory public speaking class as it is offered at most colleges and universities. Still, only rarely does a textbook line up exactly with an instructor's established syllabus. For this reason I have made each chapter as self-contained as possible. Instructors should have little difficulty adapting the book to their own emphases and teaching methods.

Part I, "Speaking and Listening," introduces the basic principles of speech communication and the respective responsibilities of speakers and listeners. Chapter 1 explains the value of a course in public speaking, examines the basic elements of the speech communication process, and discusses the ethical obligations of public speakers. A major purpose of this chapter is to instill a positive orientation toward speechmaking and toward the speech class. To this end, the chapter confronts what is nearly always uppermost in students' minds at the beginning of the class—stage fright. It also compares public speaking with conversation, stressing the fact that students can build upon many of the skills they already use in everyday communication.

Chapter 2 deals with listening. It shows the importance of good listening, identifies the basic causes of poor listening, and suggests ways to become a better listener. A special feature of this chapter is its explanation of methods for effective note taking.

Part II, "Speech Preparation: Getting Started," takes up the initial steps of speech preparation. Chapter 3 sets forth criteria for workable speech topics. It offers several methods of finding a topic when one does not spring to mind—including a full discussion of brainstorming. Chapter 3 also uses a variety of examples to clarify how a speaker moves from choosing a topic to formulating a specific purpose and phrasing a sharp central idea.

Chapter 4 introduces the basic principles of audience analysis and explains how to adapt a speech to an audience. Two other features of this chapter are its emphasis on the classroom as an authentic speaking situation, and its explanation of how to use questionnaires as a method of audience analysis for classroom speeches.

Chapter 5 is devoted to gathering speech materials. Since many students do not know how to use the library efficiently, this chapter explains the basic resources and methods of library research. It also explains interviewing techniques—and follows a sample research interview through the entire interview process. Of course, instructors can assign only as much of this chapter as is necessary to meet the needs of their students.

Chapter 6 explains the basic types of supporting materials and presents guidelines for using them effectively. A full student speech, accompanied by a running commentary, illustrates how to work supporting materials into a speech.

Part III, "Speech Preparation: Organization and Outlining," consists of three

chapters. Chapter 7 shows students how to organize the body of a speech. The basic patterns of speech organization are illustrated by many examples, with special attention given to clarifying topical organization. The chapter also has a thorough section on transitions, internal previews, internal summaries, and signposts.

Chapter 8 is devoted to introductions and conclusions, again with many examples. Chapter 9 presents the principles of outlining and exemplifies them with a complete, annotated preparation outline. A sample speaking outline is also provided to show how a detailed preparation outline is transformed into a brief set of speaker's notes.

Part IV, "Presenting the Speech and Varieties of Public Speaking," focuses first on language, delivery, and the use of visual aids, and then takes up different types of discourse. Chapter 10 discusses the importance of language and offers a number of practical guides for using language accurately, vividly, and appropriately. Chapter 11 discusses the basic methods of speech delivery, the use of the speaker's voice, and the role of nonverbal communication in speechmaking. Chapter 12 explains the advantages of visual aids, the kinds of visual aids available, and the ways to use visual aids most effectively.

Chapter 13 focuses on speaking to inform. The first part of the chapter explains how to analyze and organize four basic kinds of informative speeches—speeches about objects, speeches about processes, speeches about events, and speeches about concepts. The second part of the chapter offers guidelines for constructing effective informative speeches. The chapter concludes with an annotated student speech.

In Chapter 14 the topic is persuasive speaking. Here I have tried to give students the information they most need to create effective persuasive speeches—without bogging them down in theoretical issues or excessive jargon. The first part of the chapter explains how to analyze and organize speeches on questions of fact, questions of value, and questions of policy. The second part deals with the special requirements of audience adaptation in persuasive speaking. The third part presents persuasive methods—building credibility, using evidence, reasoning, and appealing to emotions. A sample student speech with commentary shows how these methods work together. All in all, I believe you will find that this chapter offers an unusually clear and practical introduction to persuasive speaking.

Chapter 15 deals with speeches for special occasions; each section of the chapter includes at least one full sample speech. Chapter 16 is designed for instructors who include a unit on group discussion in their classes.

OTHER FEATURES

The Art of Public Speaking has a number of pedagogical aids to help students learn and apply the principles of effective speechmaking. As noted earlier, Chapters 6, 13, and 14 contain sample student speeches with commentary. Chapter 9 has a complete preparation outline and speaking outline, both with

commentary. The Appendix consists of seven additional speeches for discussion and analysis. These Appendix speeches have been chosen to illustrate particular aspects of speechmaking, and all of them are dealt with in the chapter exercises.

Each chapter opens with an outline that previews the contents of the chapter. At the end of each chapter there is a summary, followed by a series of review questions. These features provide the kind of systematic review activity that should help students come to terms with the main ideas of the text.

A set of application exercises accompanies each chapter. The exercises are written assignments that students can complete, on their own, in conjunction with reading assignments. They can also be used as the basis for classroom activities and discussion. The wide range of exercises—in the text and in the *Instructor's Manual*—should give instructors maximum flexibility in choosing those best suited for their students.

The *Instructor's Manual* contains supplementary exercises and classroom activities; offers suggested course outlines and speaking assignments; provides synopses of the appendix speeches; and gives a bibliography of additional teaching and learning resources.

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