



Public Speaking and Civic Engagement

Hogan, J. Michael, Andrews, Patricia Hayes, Andrews, James R. & Williams, Glen
[Pearson Education](#). 2008
519 pages
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From the moment the book *Public Speaking and Civic Engagement* arrived in our departmental mailboxes, we have been intrigued to discover the contents. For several years we have been searching for a book which weaves the basics of public speaking with notions of civic engagement. “Weaving” is the key word. We were not looking for a book with “add-on” boxes or a new chapter discussing civic engagement. Rather, the ideal book with civic engagement would build the skills of public speaking around the very concept of civic engagement.

When browsing through the table of contents, it may appear that *PSCE* is your typical public speaking textbook – beginning with role of public speaking in society and ending with special occasion speaking. Most certainly, these traditional chapters are important when helping students learn to deliver effective presentations. *Public Speaking and Civic Engagement* offers the traditional public speaking textbook content with a unique integration of the role of public speaking in a democratic society.

Two unique aspect of this book are the Focus on Civic Engagement boxes found in each chapter. The boxes highlight individuals who have made civic engagement central to their lives. For example, in Chapter Three: “Preparing to Speak with Commitment and Confidence,” the work of Shirley, a woman from a small community in Southern Indiana who is working to solve problems of poverty and homelessness, was highlighted. Hogan et al. embed the notion of civic engagement into the very core of this book. Next, while the Focus on Civic Engagement boxes highlight the works of civic minded individuals—from the famous to the ordinary—each chapter enhances civic engagement and critical thinking by providing examples which address important issues at local, state, and national levels. Chapter 14: “Speaking to Inform” provides a clear

example of the authors' commitment to highlighting public speaking as a form of civic engagement. For instance, the authors illustrate the spatial organization pattern by using a speech on the Shalom Community Center in Bloomington, Indiana. The chapter highlights the importance of choosing topics of public concern by offering unique example topics and how to present these topics in organized and meaningful ways.

We believe the weaving and reinforcement of civic engagement is the strength of this textbook. Instructors whom desire this perspective to inform a public speaking course, should find this book insightful for both the teacher and the student.