Speak Out, Call In

by Meggie Mapes · Language: EN

Summary by booksummaryai.com — https://booksummaryai.com/country/en/speak-out-call-in

Overview

Speak Out, Call In: Public Speaking as Advocacy is a textbook by Meggie Mapes that reframes public speaking not as a performance to be perfected but as a form of advocacy and civic engagement. The book challenges traditional public speaking pedagogy, which often focuses on delivery, confidence, and persuasion, and instead centers on the ethical responsibilities of speakers to use their voices for social change. Mapes argues that every speech is an opportunity to call in—to invite others into dialogue, to build community, and to address systemic issues. The text is structured around practical skills, from audience analysis and research to organization and delivery, but each skill is tied to a larger purpose: speaking out against injustice and calling in those who might disagree.

The book is designed for college courses in public speaking, but it is also a call to action for anyone who feels silenced or marginalized. Mapes integrates critical perspectives, including feminist and rhetorical theory, to show how public speaking can be a tool for empowerment. She emphasizes that advocacy is not limited to political speeches; it can happen in classrooms, workplaces, and community meetings. The book includes examples, exercises, and case studies that help readers apply the concepts to their own lives. By the end, readers are encouraged to see themselves as advocates who can use their voices to create change, not just to inform or persuade.

Speak Out, Call In matters because it reimagines a foundational communication skill as a means of social justice. In an era of polarized discourse, Mapes offers a model for speaking that is both critical and compassionate. The book is a bridge between theory and practice, making complex ideas accessible to students and activists alike. It is a timely resource for anyone who wants to speak up and call others in, rather than shutting them out.

Key Takeaways

- Public speaking is not just about delivery; it is an act of advocacy that can challenge power and create social change.
- Before you speak, analyze your audience's values, beliefs, and contexts to build a message that resonates and invites dialogue.
- Use 'calling in' as a strategy to engage with those who disagree, focusing on shared values rather than winning an argument.

• Research and evidence are not just academic requirements; they are ethical responsibilities that ground your advocacy in truth.

• Organize your speech with the audience's needs in mind, using clear structure to guide them through your argument.

• Delivery is more than confidence; it is about authenticity and connecting with your audience through your body, voice, and presence.

• Reflect on your own positionality and privilege as a speaker to avoid reinforcing the very systems you seek to change.

• Every speech is a chance to build community and call people in, not just to inform or persuade them.

Chapter Summaries

Introduction: Speaking Out, Calling In

Mapes introduces the central premise of the book: public speaking is a form of advocacy that can be used for social justice. She contrasts traditional public speaking courses that focus on performance with an approach that centers on civic engagement. The introduction outlines the book's structure, which integrates theory and practice, and encourages readers to see themselves as advocates. Mapes also discusses the importance of 'calling in' as a way to engage with others constructively, rather than 'calling out' which can alienate. This chapter sets the tone for a course that is both practical and critical.

Chapter 1: Advocacy and Public Speaking

This chapter defines advocacy and explains how it relates to public speaking. Mapes argues that all speaking is political, whether we realize it or not, and that speakers have a responsibility to use their voices for good. She introduces key concepts such as the public sphere, civic engagement, and the rhetorical situation. The chapter includes examples of advocacy speeches and encourages readers to identify their own passions and issues. Mapes also addresses common fears about public speaking, reframing them as opportunities for growth rather than obstacles.

Chapter 2: Audience Analysis

Mapes emphasizes the importance of understanding your audience before you speak. She provides frameworks for analyzing audience demographics, values, and beliefs, and explains how to adapt your message accordingly. The chapter includes exercises for conducting audience analysis and discusses the ethical implications of tailoring your message. Mapes argues that effective advocacy requires listening to your audience, not just speaking at them. She introduces the concept of 'calling in' as a way to build bridges with audiences who may disagree with you.

Chapter 3: Research and Evidence

This chapter covers the research process for a speech, from finding credible sources to integrating evidence into your argument. Mapes stresses the ethical responsibility of using accurate and relevant evidence, especially when advocating for social change. She discusses different types of evidence, including statistics, testimony, and examples, and how to evaluate sources critically. The chapter also addresses how to cite sources orally and in written materials. Mapes encourages students to see research as a form of advocacy, as it helps to ground your claims in truth.

Chapter 4: Organizing Your Speech

Mapes provides practical guidance on structuring a speech for clarity and impact. She covers common organizational patterns, such as chronological, spatial, and problem-solution, and explains how to choose the best pattern for your purpose and audience. The chapter includes tips for writing strong introductions and conclusions, as well as transitions that guide the listener. Mapes emphasizes that organization is not just about structure but about helping your audience follow and remember your message. She also discusses how to adapt your organization for different speaking contexts.

Chapter 5: Delivery and Presence

This chapter focuses on the physical and vocal aspects of delivery, including eye contact, gestures, vocal variety, and pacing. Mapes challenges the idea that delivery is about performing confidence; instead, she argues that it is about authenticity and connection. She provides exercises for improving delivery and managing anxiety. The chapter also discusses the role of technology and visual aids in delivery. Mapes emphasizes that delivery should serve your advocacy, not overshadow it, and that speakers should be mindful of how their body language can reinforce or undermine their message.

Chapter 6: Speaking to Inform

Mapes explores informative speaking as a form of advocacy. She argues that informing an audience is not neutral; it involves choices about what to include and how to frame it. The chapter provides strategies for making complex information accessible and engaging, such as using analogies, stories, and visual aids. Mapes also discusses the ethical responsibilities of informative speakers, including accuracy and fairness. She encourages readers to think about how they can use informative speeches to raise awareness about important issues and call others in to action.

Chapter 7: Speaking to Persuade

This chapter covers persuasive speaking, focusing on how to advocate for a cause while respecting your audience. Mapes introduces classical rhetorical appeals—ethos, pathos, and logos—and explains how to use them effectively. She also discusses the importance of understanding opposing viewpoints and addressing them constructively. The chapter includes strategies for building a persuasive argument, such as using evidence, storytelling, and

refutation. Mapes emphasizes that persuasion should not be about manipulation but about inviting your audience to see the world differently.

Chapter 8: Speaking in Community

Mapes discusses the role of public speaking in community settings, such as town halls, protests, and organizational meetings. She argues that advocacy is not limited to formal speeches; it can happen in everyday conversations and community gatherings. The chapter provides guidance on how to speak effectively in these contexts, including how to handle hecklers and difficult audiences. Mapes also explores the concept of 'calling in' as a community-building practice. She encourages readers to see themselves as part of a larger movement for social change.

Chapter 9: Advocacy in the Digital Age

This chapter examines how digital platforms have changed public speaking and advocacy. Mapes discusses the opportunities and challenges of speaking online, from social media to virtual presentations. She addresses issues such as echo chambers, misinformation, and online harassment. The chapter provides strategies for using digital tools to amplify your message while maintaining ethical standards. Mapes also explores the concept of 'calling in' in digital spaces, where it can be easy to call out and cancel. She encourages readers to use digital advocacy responsibly.

Conclusion: Your Voice Matters

In the conclusion, Mapes brings together the book's themes and encourages readers to embrace their role as advocates. She reiterates that public speaking is not about perfection but about using your voice to make a difference. Mapes provides final reflections on the importance of 'calling in' and building community. She also offers practical advice for continuing to develop your speaking skills beyond the classroom. The conclusion ends with a call to action: speak out, call in, and use your voice for justice.

Themes

- Advocacy and civic engagement
- Calling in vs. calling out
- Ethical public speaking
- Social justice
- Audience-centered communication
- Community building

Notable Quotes

• "Public speaking is not a performance; it is an act of advocacy." — This quote appears in the introduction, where Mapes sets the foundation for the book's approach to public speaking as a form of civic engagement.

• "Calling in is about inviting people into dialogue, not shutting them out." — Mapes discusses the concept of 'calling in' in the introduction and throughout the book as a strategy for engaging with audiences who may disagree.

• "Your voice matters, and you have a responsibility to use it." — This quote is from the conclusion, where Mapes encourages readers to embrace their role as advocates.

• "Advocacy is not about winning; it is about building community." — Mapes makes this point in the chapter on persuasive speaking, emphasizing the importance of connection over victory.

• "Research is an ethical act." — This quote appears in the chapter on research and evidence, where Mapes stresses the importance of using credible sources.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Speak Out, Call In about?

Speak Out, Call In: Public Speaking as Advocacy is a textbook that redefines public speaking as a form of advocacy. It teaches students to use their voices for social change, focusing on audience analysis, research, organization, and delivery, all within an ethical framework. The book emphasizes 'calling in'—engaging with others constructively—rather than 'calling out.'

Is Speak Out, Call In worth reading?

Yes, especially for students and educators in communication or public speaking courses. It offers a fresh, socially conscious approach that goes beyond traditional textbooks. The practical exercises and real-world examples make it useful for anyone who wants to speak more effectively and ethically. It's particularly valuable for those interested in activism or civic engagement.

How does Speak Out, Call In end?

Spoiler: The book concludes with a call to action, urging readers to embrace their role as advocates. Mapes reiterates that public speaking is not about perfection but about using your voice for justice. She encourages readers to 'speak out' on issues they care about and 'call in' others to join the conversation, emphasizing that every voice matters in building community.

Who should read Speak Out, Call In?

This book is ideal for college students taking a public speaking course, as well as instructors looking for a more critical approach. It's also valuable for activists, community organizers, and anyone who wants to use their voice for social change. If you're tired of traditional public

speaking advice and want a more ethical, advocacy-focused perspective, this is for you.

How long does it take to read Speak Out, Call In?

At an average reading speed of 250 words per minute, the book, which is around 300 pages, would take about 8-10 hours to read. However, since it's a textbook with exercises and activities, you might spend more time engaging with the material. Most students read it over a semester.