Chapter 1
History of Public Speaking

This chapter focuses on the history of public speaking and its role in expanding freedom and democracy

“Speech is power: speech is to persuade, to convert, to compel.” Ralph Waldo Emerson
Ancient Speech and the Roots of Democracy

• **Public Speaking** – was once a right reserved only for priest, kings, and other leaders in the ancient world
  
  • *To provide guidelines to participate in ancient dialogues the Greek philosopher, Aristotle (384-322 B.C.E.) established basic and essential rules for public speaking*

• **Rhetoric** – the art of persuasive speech
  
  • Aristotle argued that three are three fundamental persuasive elements in an effective speech

    1. **Ethos**: the credibility or believability of the speaker, which helps convince listeners that the argument is valid.
    
    2. **Logos**: the use of logic in the speech, which must be structurally solid and backed up by evidence.
    
    3. **Pathos**: the emotional appeal of the speech, which can be used to reach the heart of the listener.
The Great Roman orator, Cicero outlined The Five Canons of Rhetoric or rules!

1. **Invention** – The process of deciding on a topic and the appropriate arguments to support it

2. **Arrangement** – the different components of an argument organized to achieve success

3. **Style** – the manner in which the argument is delivered

4. **Memory** – the methods orators use to remember their speech and make it memorable for the audience

5. **Delivery** – the manipulation of speech, including pitch and volume as well as physical gestures that engage the audience during the speech
The Use of Rhetoric in the Medieval Church

• Rhetoric became one of the principle tools the church used to spread its message
  • St. Augustine (354-380 C.E.) – Aurelius Augustinus Hipponensis, a Roman teacher of Oratory
  • Oratory – a form of eloquent public speaking
  • The core education in the Middle Ages included public speaking to help shape both political and religious leaders and build political power and unity!
Freedom of Speech as a Weapon against Tyranny

• During the Renaissance of the fourteen and fifteenth centuries, the works of the ancient Greeks and Romans were rediscovered, including those that emphasized the importance of rhetoric as part of civic responsibility
  • Civic Responsibility – the duty of citizens in a democracy to participate in governance of their society by voting debating issues, and volunteering for public office or public service

• Political Absolutism began in Europe
  • Kings and emperors consolidated their powers and established Rigid censorship to prevent dissent
  • The use of public speech challenged older patterns of political rule
  • Political cultures relied on public speaking

• English Civil War
• English Bill of Rights in 1689
• Public speaking was at the center of governance
• Town meetings or town meetinghouses
The Enlightenment Expansion of Freedom of Speech

- The Enlightenment or Age of Reason – was an era of intellectual growth and change and its ideas sparked both the American and French Revolutions

- Philosophes - French intellectuals including philosophers, writers, scientist who wrote about new ideas such as reason, religious tolerance, and natural rights during the Enlightenment Era
  - Philosophes championed the idea that humans were born with natural rights, including freedom of expression

- John Locke and Francois-Marie Arouet – were two of the most prominent Enlightenment thinkers

- Locke believed that political participation was crucial in maintaining legitimate government

- Arouet – was a prominent defender of freedom of speech during this era and wrote under the pen name, Voltaire
Public Speaking in the Era of Revolution

• American and French Revolutions
• The British Government
  • “Benign neglect”
  • Self-Rule
• French and Indian War
• Parliament began to enact a series of taxes called the Stamp Act
• Stamp Act occurred in Virginia in 1765 when Patrick Henry announced his opposition
• Sugar and Tea taxes

• Committees of Correspondence
• Founding Documents of the USA, and the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution
  enshrine freedom of speech as a natural right and the cornerstone of liberty and democracy
• French Revolution of 1789
• The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen
Reform Movements and Public Speaking in the Nineteenth Century – *Key Individuals*

**Who are they?**

**What did they do?**

- Henry David Thoreau
- Frederick Douglass
- William Lloyd Garrison
- Journalist Maria Miller Stewart
- Sarah and Angelina Grimke
- Lucy Stone

- American Lyceum Movement
- Lyceum Circuit
- Declamation
- Lincoln-Douglas Debates of 1858
Public Speaking in the Modern Era

• Speaker’s Corner
  • Karl Marx, William Morris, George Orwell

• Recorded sound, radio, film and television expanded forums for public speaking

• Politicians
  • Dictators used public speaking to persuade others and proselytize their ideologies
The Future of Public Speaking

• Internet is expanding the opportunity for public speaking
  • Podcasts
  • TED Talks
  • YOUTUBE
  • Spoken Word

• Crucial tools in political persuasion, performance, and education
  • Malala Yousufzai
  • Fannie Lou Hamer

Rather than take the right to speak in public for granted, people in the past and even today must use it to continue the pursuit of social, political, and economic justice.