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ABSTRACT

The content of a good speech writing course includes an explanation of the function and impact of speech writers, an examination of speeches produced by professional writers, and a focus on the sharpening of students' writing skills. The content must also be balanced between the practical/professional and the abstract/academic aspects of the speech writer's function in society. In reality, corporate and government speech writers may have to perform many duties besides writing, write about unfamiliar topics for people they do not know or with whom they cannot consult, and accept criticism for poor speeches more often than praise for good ones. To take these realities into consideration and find the balance between professional and academic aspects of speech writing, speech writing courses must ignore delivery skills and concentrate on structure, evidence, and style. A seminar format allows students to polish the organization of a speech and improve style through revision. (A course overview and schedule and assignments for a speech writing seminar are included.) (HTH)

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

STRIKING A BALANCE: THE SPEECHWRITING EDUCATOR'S PERSPECTIVE

Jerry Tarver
SCA Washington Convention
November, 1983

In the front matter of my book on speech writing I quote the well-known passage from the Phaedrus where Socrates says, "Then the conclusion is obvious, that there is nothing shameful in the mere writing of speeches. . . . But in speaking and writing shamefully and badly, instead of as one should, that is where the shame comes in. . . ."[1] I believe the claim Socrates makes for speech writing can be made for the teaching of the subject. We need not share the horror expressed by Eric Sevareid some thirty years ago when he learned that American University was about to offer a course for "ghost writers," a course that he concluded would train students "in the production of synthetic personality." [2] Starting, then, with the assumption that the speech writing course is legitimate, the question we face is simply how can we teach it not "shamefully and badly" but "as one should."

I think the substance of a good speech writing course would be fairly obvious. It would seek to explain the function and the impact of the speech writer, it would include an examination of speeches produced by professional writers, and it would attempt to sharpen the writing skills of the students enrolled. These are, I assume, the subjects covered in any good speech writing course: the writers, their products, and the skills the writers employ.

The problem I wish to discuss is the matter of finding a proper balance as choices are made in handling the topics I have just mentioned. I wish to look first at finding a proper balance, especially as we deal with the speech writer's function in society, between what I choose to call the practical/ professional on the one hand, and the abstract/academic on the other hand. Next I wish to consider the balance, as we look both at the speech writer's role and as we select writing models and exercises, between the emphasis on political speech writing and the emphasis on speech writing in business. And, finally, I wish to look at the balance among the canons of rhetoric as they are treated in the course.

Striking a balance between the practical/professional and the abstract/academic as we consider how speech writing operates in our culture and others is the most complex of the three issues raised here, and I will spend about half my remaining time on that subject. I am not dealing at any point in our discussion with a contrast between speech writing as a "liberal arts" course and speech writing as "vocational training." I work from the premise that the class I offer fits firmly in the liberal arts tradition because it is a course of study that helps prepare a student, whether or not that student uses the skills taught, to function better in a democratic society. This goal is achieved because the student acquires a higher degree of freedom in understanding and making choices as a critic or

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consumer or creator of corporate, government, and political rhetoric.[3]

In what I have called the practical/professional side of teaching the speech writing course, we have a responsibility to depict the world of speech writing as accurately as possible. In particular we must give students an honest, realistic picture of the job opportunities for as speech writers. We must recognize we are not in the business of producing ready-made speech writers for a hungry job market. One reason is simply that the system doesn't provide for hiring speech writers with training but without experience. A speech writer's initial job is likely to have little or nothing to do with writing speeches. If I could give only one piece of advice to the aspiring speech writer, it would be in two words: "study journalism." Although I think a student would be a better writer as a result of taking speech courses, I think the student without a journalism background is unlikely to be given serious consideration by a prospective employer. Naturally I urge my students to take courses in both departments, but I tell them plainly which one will probably be the key to getting a first job.

The International Association of Business Communicators recently surveyed communication managers and directors to determine what they were looking for in hiring people in communications departments.[4] Almost forty percent of the responses came from corporations. The second highest group was colleges and universities at twenty-three percent, where the respondents of course were from school public relations or public affairs divisions. Respondents were asked to indicate the kinds of academic training considered "very important" and the kinds considered "fairly important." Journalism led the "very important" list with 80.8 percent of the respondents checking it. Public relations was next at 62.8 percent followed by marketing at 34.8 percent, Management at 30.6 percent, and Humanities at 27.8 percent. In the "fairly important" list Economics, Finance, Psychology, and Sociology were cited in a range of 48.7 down to 43.4. Conspicuous by its absence from both lists is speech communication which we can assume is lumped in with the rest of the humanities.

Public speaking does appear in one category in the survey. It is last in a list of "personal traits deemed very important" that starts with initiative and continues with enthusiasm, creativity, flexibility, problem-solving skills, verbal communication, broad interests, and nonverbal communication before ending up with slightly over a twenty percent score for public speaking. Public speaking was the only "trait" that was mentioned by fewer than half the respondents.

Let me turn to a final statistic in the study that reflects to some extent positively and to some extent negatively on the lack of employers' interest in public speaking or speech writing training. In what might properly be called a list of skills desired, the abilities most favored in the survey were writing, editing, reporting, and publication layout (all well over fifty percent with writing at 97.3 percent). At the bottom of this list we find speech

writing considered an asset by 25.4 percent of the employers. On the positive side then, three quarters of the managers surveyed probably had in mind jobs which did not include speech writing at all. This makes the low ranking of speech somewhat more understandable. On the other hand, with one quarter of the jobs implicitly involving at least some speech writing, the total absence of speech training from the "very important" list, suggests that those who hire and fire are not eager to seek out our students. But to return to my most important point, I am not saying the speech writing course would be inconsequential on a student's resume; I am simply saying that without the editing-reporting-layout training, the student is not likely to be considered for a job in the first place.

In teaching the practical side of our subject, we should make students aware that there is no clear "track" to speech writing once a graduate has a job in a communications department of a company or on the staff of a politician or an elected official. Most speech writers get into their jobs by chance when they happen to be in the right place at the right time or the wrong place at the wrong time, as the case may be. Once we make this point clear, we are then entitled to move on to inform our students about the high salaries and the healthy demand for experienced and competent speech writers.

Without much explanation, let me cite a few of the realities of speech writing that may not be thoroughly familiar to those teachers not involved with corporate and government communication:

1. Speech writers do not often work at the task full-time. A speaker may have more than one writer and the writers may have a variety of additional duties.

2. Speech writers do not spend all their time preparing major address on vital topics. A variety of talks for plant dedications and retirement dinners may be required. My students are taught this, even though we do not have time to spend on writing such speeches.

3. Writers often work for more than one speaker and must make rapid adjustments as they move from one to another.

4. Writing a speech often consists more of editing than writing. Interpersonal skills may be crucial in getting needed information from informed individuals.

5. Speech writers often cannot get in to talk to the speaker for whom they are writing. They need training in assertiveness and perhaps mind reading. Writers must understand and cope with the complex approval process through which a speech may have to travel.

6. Speech writers do affect policy. They sometimes make policy because the responsibility lands in their laps by default, but sometimes they merely shade a corporate or government policy one way or the other by the words they choose. Someone else writing on precisely the same subject might have expressed the ideas in a significantly different way.

7. Speech writers have to write on subjects they don't know or care about. Sometimes they are forced to write speech after speech on a topic on which they are convinced they do not have one decent idea left to express. They often suffer from irregular work loads

and isolation from those who might understand or care about the problems speech writers face.

8. Speech writers often do not get credit or appreciation for the good speeches they write. They frequently hear about the bad ones.

9. Speech writers are increasingly coming out of their cubicles for public scrutiny. The reading public knows more about the practices of speech writers than ever before in history and the increasing acceptance of their work is succinctly illustrated by the fact that they are increasingly identified as "speech writers" rather than "ghosts." [5]

While I believe classroom instruction can give students a fully adequate picture of the realities of speech writing, I do require my students to conduct an interview with a professional and I try to have a professional in as a guest speaker. I think internships are on the whole a good idea, but I do have some reservations. Since an internship represents but a single job experience, it should be supplemented by extensive reading or instruction on the broader professional world. Also, I question whether most of us can find adequate internship possibilities for the number of students who would benefit from a speech writing class.

I am arguing, then, that the practical/professional side of speech writing must be stressed as we examine the role of the speech writer. But I do not suggest that we ignore the abstract/academic. In my seminars for professional speech writers I always include a short segment on the history of speech writing. I justify this on the grounds that it enhances the professionalism of speech writers to understand something about the roots of their craft. In an academic setting, I expand this unit significantly to give the fuller perspective a student needs to understand speech writing when that student later functions not just as writer but as one who judges rhetoric and is influenced by it.

Obviously, the line of demarcation between practical/professional and academic/abstract is not always clear. A unit on ethics seems to me essential in the course, and it should be taught with emphasis both on the abstract view of the academician and the practical view of the professional. Let me stress here that I do not suggest that the choice is between integrity in the abstract and shameless dishonesty in the real world. Searching for what Professor Bormann has called the "point on the continuum of collaboration" where "one of the primary functions of speech is corrupted" [6] will prove to be as demanding a task in the classroom as it is in the speech writer's office.

Let me now discuss the matter of balancing corporate and political speeches. I have one basic concern here, and that is that political speeches are likely to claim too much of our attention. Lois Einhorn has produced an excellent survey of the literature on speech writing in which she has put together an exhaustive and useful bibliography. [7] References to political speech writing outnumber citations relating to the writing of speeches in business by a ratio

of more than five to one. This bibliography accurately reflects the fascination of both academics and journalists for political rhetoric and the corresponding lack of interest in business speaking. I do not believe, however, that it truly reflects the relative social significance of the two kinds of speaking nor does it reflect the needs of our students.

The disparity revealed by Professor Einhorn's bibliography is even more noticeable if the greater length and substance of the political citations is considered. The reading list for my seminar favors political over business speaking by a ratio of about three to one in part because there are few significant essays available on corporate practices. I compensate for this imbalance partly through the use of my text which, although it was not designed for classroom use, has its primary focus on corporate writing. I also use business speeches exclusively in the short writing exercises which have a cumulative weight of 25 percent in determining the final grade. The major term paper in the class is a speech, which in the next term will be written for an administrator in a government bureau, a position actually more businesslike than political in nature.

Not only is the available literature unbalanced in favor of politics, it is unbalanced within the political field by its focus on speech writing in the White House. Ever since historians were shocked by the discovery of Hamilton's hand in the writing of Washington's Farewell Address, writers who aid U.S. presidents have found it easy to command attention.

The White House is important in the speech writing course for two reasons. First, because of public attention it has made speech writing appear acceptable and desirable for other officials both corporate and government. It has, therefore, contributed to the spread of speech writing. Second, in many respects it provides a model of how a nearly perfect system should work. Presidents of the United States have special demands for both quality and quantity of speeches, and they have in modern times not hesitated to make resources available in order to surround themselves with competent speech writing help properly organized and supported. Care should be taken in presenting information on presidential practices to make sure not to distort the picture of speech writing in general.

I have alluded briefly to the fact that government speech writing is not always the same thing as political writing. Obviously there are other categories that have so far gone unmentioned. Foreign practices should be called to the attention of students. A great deal of speech writing also goes on in universities, in the military, and in trade associations. To give a complete picture, attention might also be paid to free-lance writers and to the availability of speech writers in major public relations and advertising agencies.

Now we come to the question of finding a proper balance in teaching the speech skills directly related to writing task.

I choose to all but ignore delivery skills in my speech writing class. Out of 28 one-and-a-quarter hour class periods, a single

class is devoted to working with the speaker's delivery. Another class is set aside for discussing audio-visual aids. My students are never required to demonstrate their skill at reading a manuscript before an audience. Delivery in the normal public speaking sense is ignored even in the oral reports I require. While I know some excellent speech writing courses include delivery, I think there is already too much to cover to take the large amount of time required.

I spend one class period on audience analysis and one on speech goals. Both of these class periods provide for considerable time to be spent on the practical matter of how speech writers gather information on audiences and how they work with their speakers in the initial conference (if they can get one).

This brings me to the three areas I consider of greatest importance: structure, evidence, and style.

Few of my students will ever have a better classroom opportunity to polish the organization of a speech than they find in my speech writing seminar. Except for students who do extensive work in debate, none will have a chance to examine more closely the relationship between claims and evidence.

But the the most important contribution of the class is found in the attention paid to language. I believe most public speaking texts are fairly weak in this area. Furthermore, students in the public speaking class get little practical advice in critiques beyond the standard reminder to "use conversational words" and perhaps an occasional suggestion regarding sexist terms or vivid images. Because most public speaking classes require extemporaneous delivery, students get few chances to demonstrate tight control over word choice and word combination.

A speech writing class permits students to improve style through revision. I insist that most of the writing exercises in my class be rewritten even if the initial paper gets an "A." The grade is not recorded until the paper has been revised to incorporate suggested changes in style.

This is an area where I think the speech communication teacher must move with caution. We have not as a profession always demonstrated that we have a firm grasp of the essential of good speech style. In some speech textbooks, the suggested examples of "good" oral style are terrible. One book, which used the word "utilized" in the instructor's manual (that should be a warning), recommended that the phrase "went into a cloud" should be replaced by "pierced a puffy cumulus cloud." This demonstrates, I believe, that we too often borrow our sense of style from second-rate courses in "creative writing" or from our own courses in the criticism of oratory. We must teach the stylistic devices of rhetoric only after we master the essence of oral style as it is used in the twentieth century.

In summary, I think we must not let the speech writing course become too heavily weighted in the direction of academic abstractions, too preoccupied with political speeches, and too little concerned with the special opportunities the course offers for teaching structure, support, and style.

FOOTNOTES

1 Plato, "Phaedrus," in Plato's Phaedrus, trans. R. Hackforth (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1952), 258d.

2 Eric Sevareid, In One Ear (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1952), pp. 160-163. Also cited in Robert C. Jeffrey and Owen Peterson, Speech: A Text with Adapted Readings (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), 115-116.

3 For different views on the place of speech writing and the teaching of speech writing in the liberal arts curriculum, see Bert E. Bradley, "Speech Communication and Liberal Education," The Southern Speech Communication Journal, 45 (1979), 1-11. While insisting that speech makes a significant contribution to the liberal education of any individual," (p. 8) Bradley castigates speech writing as evidence that our educational system has failed to help professional people "achieve self-actualization because they lack the ability to communicate." Bradley offers the practice of speech writing as prima facie evidence that top political leaders "lack the ability 'to know or do or chiefly to be' what they desire" [p. 8]. He cites former Yale president Whitney Griswold, Liberal Education and the Democratic Ideal (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1959) p. 64-65 as his source for the same American University incident attacked by Eric Sevareid (see footnote 2 above). While drawing on Griswold for a definition and a statement of purpose of the liberal arts, Bradley fails to note that Griswold rejects speech per se from the liberal arts curriculum. Griswold contrasts speech with English and history and groups it with typing, chorus, physical education, journalism, personality problems, and marriage and family (p. 29) as subjects unworthy for a prospective Yale student. While not directed specifically to the place of a speech writing course in the liberal arts, the well-known attacks by Ernest Bormann should also be considered by anyone interested in the negative side of the assumptions made in the present paper. See Ernest G. Bormann, "Ethics of Ghostwritten Speeches," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 47 (1961), pp. 262-267 and "Ghostwritten Speeches-Reply," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 47 (1961), pp. 420-421.

4 "Writing Tops Skills List in Hiring Communicators," Communication World, [no volume] August 1983, p. 1 and p. 11. The survey was conducted under the direction of Charles W. Zuegner of Creighton University.

5 Further discussion of the points made in this list and of the job market for speech writers can be found in Jerry Tarver, Professional Speech Writing, (Richmond: The Effective Speech Writing Institute, 1982), pp. 17-45.

6 Bormann, "Ethics of Ghostwritten Speeches," p. 267.

7 Lois J. Einhorn, "The Ghosts Unmasked: A Review of Literature on Speechwriting," Communication Quarterly, 30 (1981), pp. 41-47.

SPEECH WRITING SEMINAR

Spring, 1964

Prof. Tarver
Room 201 EAB

11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
M - F 107-2366

COURSE OVERVIEW

This seminar is devoted to a study of the art of writing a speech for someone else to deliver. In the seminar you will study the history of speech writing, both ancient and modern. You will examine the conditions under which speech writers work in business, politics, and government. This examination will include a look at the job market, the difficulties speech writers face, the impact they have on corporate and government policies, and the ethical questions they encounter. You will be required to review the principles of good speaking with particular attention to language and support for ideas.

CLASS PROJECTS

You will write a twenty-minute speech.
You will deliver one or more oral reports in class.
You will write three five-page reports.
You will complete nine writing exercises in which you will analyze excerpts from speeches or critique the excerpts or both.
[See attached sheets for detailed explanations of above assignments.]
You will write a throughout final exam in early May.

GRADES

30 points = twenty minute speech
25 points = writing exercises
25 points = final exam
15 points = written reports
5 points = oral report(s)

DEADLINES

Deadlines for all assignments are indicated. The failure to meet any deadline in the course, except for family or health reasons, will result in the loss of one-half of a letter grade for the course. Subsequent failures to meet a deadline will result in the loss of an additional full letter grade for each failure.

TEXT

Tarver, Professional Speech Writing

CHAPTER 10. THE BROWNIAN MOTION

1. Let B_t be a Brownian motion. Show that B_t is a martingale with respect to the natural filtration \mathcal{F}_t .
2. Let B_t be a Brownian motion. Show that $B_t^2 - t$ is a martingale with respect to the natural filtration \mathcal{F}_t .
3. Let B_t be a Brownian motion. Show that $B_t^3 - 3tB_t$ is a martingale with respect to the natural filtration \mathcal{F}_t .
4. Let B_t be a Brownian motion. Show that $B_t^4 - 6tB_t^2 + 3t^2$ is a martingale with respect to the natural filtration \mathcal{F}_t .
5. Let B_t be a Brownian motion. Show that $B_t^5 - 10tB_t^3 + 15t^2B_t$ is a martingale with respect to the natural filtration \mathcal{F}_t .
6. Let B_t be a Brownian motion. Show that $B_t^6 - 15tB_t^4 + 30t^2B_t^2 - 10t^3$ is a martingale with respect to the natural filtration \mathcal{F}_t .
7. Let B_t be a Brownian motion. Show that $B_t^7 - 21tB_t^5 + 35t^2B_t^3 - 21t^3B_t$ is a martingale with respect to the natural filtration \mathcal{F}_t .
8. Let B_t be a Brownian motion. Show that $B_t^8 - 28tB_t^6 + 56t^2B_t^4 - 42t^3B_t^2 + 7t^4$ is a martingale with respect to the natural filtration \mathcal{F}_t .
9. Let B_t be a Brownian motion. Show that $B_t^9 - 36tB_t^7 + 126t^2B_t^5 - 168t^3B_t^3 + 84t^4B_t$ is a martingale with respect to the natural filtration \mathcal{F}_t .
10. Let B_t be a Brownian motion. Show that $B_t^{10} - 50tB_t^8 + 315t^2B_t^6 - 840t^3B_t^4 + 756t^4B_t^2 - 252t^5$ is a martingale with respect to the natural filtration \mathcal{F}_t .
11. Let B_t be a Brownian motion. Show that $B_t^{11} - 66tB_t^9 + 579t^2B_t^7 - 2431t^3B_t^5 + 5279t^4B_t^3 - 4618t^5B_t + 110t^6$ is a martingale with respect to the natural filtration \mathcal{F}_t .
12. Let B_t be a Brownian motion. Show that $B_t^{12} - 84tB_t^{10} + 924t^2B_t^8 - 5544t^3B_t^6 + 20160t^4B_t^4 - 35280t^5B_t^2 + 1680t^6$ is a martingale with respect to the natural filtration \mathcal{F}_t .
13. Let B_t be a Brownian motion. Show that $B_t^{13} - 102tB_t^{11} + 1428t^2B_t^9 - 10296t^3B_t^7 + 51051t^4B_t^5 - 177138t^5B_t^3 + 283464t^6B_t - 110t^7$ is a martingale with respect to the natural filtration \mathcal{F}_t .
14. Let B_t be a Brownian motion. Show that $B_t^{14} - 130tB_t^{12} + 24310t^2B_t^{10} - 243100t^3B_t^8 + 1554210t^4B_t^6 - 7290720t^5B_t^4 + 20547840t^6B_t^2 - 2520t^7$ is a martingale with respect to the natural filtration \mathcal{F}_t .
15. Let B_t be a Brownian motion. Show that $B_t^{15} - 165tB_t^{13} + 34650t^2B_t^{11} - 395130t^3B_t^9 + 3003330t^4B_t^7 - 1771380t^5B_t^5 + 7290720t^6B_t^3 - 1554210t^7B_t + 110t^8$ is a martingale with respect to the natural filtration \mathcal{F}_t .
16. Let B_t be a Brownian motion. Show that $B_t^{16} - 210tB_t^{14} + 55440t^2B_t^{12} - 729072t^3B_t^{10} + 6759360t^4B_t^8 - 42525600t^5B_t^6 + 20547840t^6B_t^4 - 5544000t^7B_t^2 + 55440t^8$ is a martingale with respect to the natural filtration \mathcal{F}_t .
17. Let B_t be a Brownian motion. Show that $B_t^{17} - 273tB_t^{15} + 729072t^2B_t^{13} - 11022060t^3B_t^{11} + 102960000t^4B_t^9 - 729072000t^5B_t^7 + 425256000t^6B_t^5 - 177138000t^7B_t^3 + 34650000t^8B_t - 110t^9$ is a martingale with respect to the natural filtration \mathcal{F}_t .
18. Let B_t be a Brownian motion. Show that $B_t^{18} - 360tB_t^{16} + 11022060t^2B_t^{14} - 199584000t^3B_t^{12} + 2431008000t^4B_t^{10} - 20547840000t^5B_t^8 + 129657600000t^6B_t^6 - 554400000000t^7B_t^4 + 1102206000000t^8B_t^2 - 110220600000t^9$ is a martingale with respect to the natural filtration \mathcal{F}_t .
19. Let B_t be a Brownian motion. Show that $B_t^{19} - 462tB_t^{17} + 199584000t^2B_t^{15} - 4252560000t^3B_t^{13} + 72907200000t^4B_t^{11} - 846432000000t^5B_t^9 + 6759360000000t^6B_t^7 - 42525600000000t^7B_t^5 + 205478400000000t^8B_t^3 - 346500000000000t^9B_t + 110t^{10}$ is a martingale with respect to the natural filtration \mathcal{F}_t .
20. Let B_t be a Brownian motion. Show that $B_t^{20} - 600tB_t^{18} + 2431008000t^2B_t^{16} - 554400000000t^3B_t^{14} + 10296000000000t^4B_t^{12} - 139833600000000t^5B_t^{10} + 1296576000000000t^6B_t^8 - 8464320000000000t^7B_t^6 + 39513000000000000t^8B_t^4 - 67593600000000000t^9B_t^2 + 55440000000000000t^{10}$ is a martingale with respect to the natural filtration \mathcal{F}_t .

ASSIGNMENT FOR TWENTY-MINUTE SPEECH

You are to write a speech for Mrs. Ann Clayton, Director of Public Relations of the Virginia Housing Development Authority. The speech will be delivered in May before the Richmond Chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators at their annual "What's Going On in the Community?" meeting.

You will be supplied with enough information to write the speech. However, you should feel free to use any other data you may find in sources ranging from newspapers to your own experience. You will find it useful to begin to study the VHDA material early in the course before other writing assignments begin to make heavy demands on your time.

In preparing the speech it will not be possible for each writer to conduct a private interview with Mrs. Clayton or with individuals who can supply you with information about the audience. These interviews, therefore, will be conducted jointly. You may ask any questions you wish, and you may use the answers of questions put to others. An offer of sharing of information will be allowed on this basis up to all the extent of a written conference. After the end of this jointly shared conference, in class, you may discuss problems or ideas that you have, but you may not put in questions.

with class.

For the purpose of this assignment, you will be given a list of questions to answer.

1. What is the purpose of the speech?

2. What is the audience?

3. What is the subject?

4. What is the main idea of the speech?

5. What is the purpose of the speech? (This question is repeated for emphasis.)

6. What is the audience? (This question is repeated for emphasis.)

WRITTEN REPORTS

A. Read the following articles:

Ernest G. Bormann, "Ethics of Ghostwritten Speeches," Quarterly Journal of Speech, October 1961, pp. 262-267.

Donald K. Smith, "Ghostwritten Speeches," Quarterly Journal of Speech, December 1961, pp. 416-419. [This is a response to Bormann]

Ernest G. Bormann, "Ghostwritten Speeches-Reply," Quarterly Journal of Speech, December 1961, pp. 420-421. [Bormann's answer to Smith]

Go to the Learning Resources Center and listen to the taped debate between Professor Bormann and Professor J. Jeffery Auer on the ethics of speech writing.

Write a paper of approximately five pages in which you summarize the arguments on the ethics issue and explain your own position on the matter.

B. Read the transcript of the MacNeil-Lehrer program for May 30, 1983. Write a five-page analysis of Mr. Helm's ability to handle the questions he was asked. Comment on strengths, weaknesses, and strategies he used.

C. Interview a professional speech writer to get first-hand information on the writer and the writer's job. In the past students have interviewed writers from C&P Telephone, Reynolds Aluminum, the Governor's Office, and the White House. Your class will participate in drawing up a list of writers. You will decide which writer you want to interview, and you must then work with others who have selected the same writer. Your group must arrange a meeting to determine the questions to be asked, and the group must make an appointment with the writer at a time when all can attend. Write a five-page report in which you summarize the findings from the interview. On the day you turn in your paper, the groups will discuss their findings and share information.

WRITING EXERCISES AND CRITIQUES

For each of the following exercises, you will be assigned a portion of a speech, a complete speech, or a number of speeches to read. You will either evaluate the material, edit it, or both. Always turn in a machine copy of the relevant portions of the original speech or speeches with your paper. After your work has been graded, except for #4 and #5, you must rewrite any part of the text of a speech that is included in an exercise. The rewritten sections must be handed in one week after your paper is returned to you, and the revision must be accompanied by the original graded paper. Even exercises with a grade of "A" must be rewritten. You may be required to write a second revision. Only after the final revision has been turned in will your grade be recorded.

1. Write an evaluation of the speech openings and thesis statements you have been provided. Be sure to identify all the techniques the speaker used. Based on your sense of the speaker's style, write an opening and thesis of one to two minutes for the speaker to use in a speech before the UR School of Business Administration student body on the subject, "Business Must Communicate to Survive." For this exercise only, you may invent information about the speaker.
2. Select one of the speeches that has logical ideas but poor technique in making main points stand out clearly. Edit the speech (the points only, not the content) so that the points would be obvious to a listener. Write an explanation of your work.
3. Identify both stated and implied claims in the speeches. In the case of implied claims, supply a stated claim in brackets. Explain.
4. Identify one instance of each of the five types of supporting material discussed in the text. Also identify the claims supported in each case. Evaluate the soundness of the support.
5. Identify supporting material used for logical, for emotional, and for ethical proof. Identify the claims being supported, and write an evaluation of how well the proofs were used.
6. Identify passages with good imagery. Locate three passages without imagery and rewrite them to include visual images.
7. Locate passages with sexist language. Edit and explain your work.
8. Locate passages written in language for the eye rather than language for the ear. Rewrite the passages. Explain your work.
9. Identify instances in which each of the three types of humor discussed in the text have been used. Evaluate the humor and, where necessary, edit it to achieve a good oral style.

ORAL REPORTS

These reports are not of equal length and the delivery time may vary from five minutes to half an hour. Come to class on the day indicated prepared to report on the reading(s) assigned to you.

January 12

Avery, William T. "Roman Ghost-Writers," Classical Journal, Vol. 25, pp. 167-169 [and] Usher, S. "Lysias and his Clients," Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies, Vol. 17, pp. 31-40.

Enos, Richard L. "The Persuasive and Social Force of Logography in Ancient Greece," Central States Speech Journal, Vol. 54, pp. 4-10.

Kennedy, George. The Art of Persuasion in Greece, Princeton University Press, 1963. (relevant passages)

January 17

Newell, Sara A. and Thomas R. King. "The Keynote Address of the Democratic National Convention, 1972: The Evolution of a Speech," Southern Speech Communication Journal, Vol. 39, pp. 346-358.

Oliver, Robert. "Syngman Rhee: A Case Study in Transnational Oratory," Quarterly Journal of Speech, Vol. 48, pp. 115-127.

Persico, Joseph E. "The Rockefeller Rhetoric: Writing Speeches for the 1970 Campaign," Today's Speech, Vol. 20, pp. 57-61.

January 19

Cox, John H. and LaWanda Cox. "Andrew Johnson and His Ghost Writers: An Analysis of the Freedmen's Bureau And Civil Rights Veto Messages," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, Vol. 48, pp. 460-479.

May, Ernest R. "Ghost Writing and History," American Scholar, Vol. 22, pp. 459-465 [and] Rosenman, Samuel I. Working with Roosevelt, Harper, 1952, pp. 1-12 (also in Braden, Waldo W. and Mary L. Gehring, Speech Practices, Harper, 1958, pp. 17-20).

Flexner, James Thomas. George Washington: Anguish and Farewell, 1793-1797, Little, Brown and Co, 1969, pp. 292-307 [and] Gilbert, Felix. To the Farewell Address, Princeton University Press, 1961, pp. 115-147.

January 24

Fallows, James. "The Passionless Presidency," Atlantic Monthly, May 1979, pp. 33-48 and June 1979, pp. 75-81.

ORAL REPORTS (con't)

January 26

Golden, James L. "John F. Kennedy and the 'Ghosts,'" Quarterly Journal of Speech, Vol. 52, pp. 168-176.

Safire, William. Before the Fall, Tower, 1975. (selected passages)

Smith, Craig R. "Contemporary Political Speech Writing," Southern Speech Communication Journal, Vol. 42, pp. 52-67 [and] "Addendum; to 'Contemporary Political Speech Writing,'" Southern Speech Communication Journal, Vol. 42, pp. 191-194.

February 2

Devlin, L. Patrick. "The Influence of Ghostwriting on Rhetorical Criticism," Today's Speech, Vol. 22, pp. 7-12.

Freshley, Dwight. "Gubernatorial Ghost Writing," Southern Speech Journal, Vol. 31, pp. 95-105.

Honan, William H. "The Men Behind Nixon's Speeches," New York Times Magazine, January 19, 1969, pp. 22ff (cited in J. Jeffery Auer, The Rhetoric of Our Times, Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1969, pp. 474-485).

"IABC Profile." Annual survey of members of the International Association of Business Communicators to determine salaries, duties, etc. Current issue.

Supplementary Readings by Professional Speech Writers:

Bonee, John R. "The Care and Feeding of the Executive Speaker," Vital Speeches, January 15, 1982, pp. 199-202.

Grayson, Melvin J. "The Last Best Hope: Words," Vital Speeches, July 15, 1981, pp. 584-588.

Lomax-Cooke, Carolyn. "The Speaker and the Ghost: The Speaker is the Speech," Vital Speeches, December 1, 1981, pp. 125-128.

Orben, Robert. 4 Ways to Improve your Public Speaking, The Comedy Center, 1982. See especially "Odds on Getting a Laugh" and "Care and Heeding of Speechwriters."

Pope, Jean. "Care and Heeding of Speechwriters," Public Relations Journal, May 1975, pp. 6-9.