Chapter 3

Exploring Public Speaking, 4ᵗʰ edition

Open Resource Textbook for Basic Public Speaking Course

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Overview

- Sources of ethics in communication
  - Legal
  - Cultural
  - Philosophical

- Credibility and Ethics

- Using sources and avoiding plagiarism

Ethics

- ◻ "the branch of philosophy that involves determinations of what is right and wrong"

- ◻ A core concern for public speaking because of individual, community, and democratic outcomes

Sources of Ethics in Communication

- Legal
  - Bill of Rights, First Amendment
  - Congress shall make no law abridging freedom of speech . . . or of the press."
  - Supreme Court decisions have addressed various situations, such as obscenity, censorship, flag burning, etc. \
  - Freedom of speech led to broader freedom of expression
  - Supreme Court generally interprets First Amendment broadly

Exceptions to free expression

- Threats to life of president

- Communities can set reasonable requirements for public safety

- Cases where the speech could likely incite violence

- Defamation (slander and libel)

Other sources of ethics

- Cultural and Religious
  - Golden Rule, Religious texts
  - Community Standards
  - Family upbringing

Other sources of ethics: Philosophical

- Plato: noticed the power of speakers to mislead audience
- Quintillian: Rhetoric is the good man speaking well.
- Utilitarianism: greatest good for greatest number
- Pragmatism: consequences are the judge
- Kant: Categorical imperative
- Existentialism: individual choice and responsibility
- Habermas: equal opportunity to fully participate

Credibility and Ethics

- Aristotle: wisdom, sagacity, and character of speaker

- Today: the attitude of the audience toward the speaker, based on reality and perception

- Sources (main)
  - Similarity
  - Character
  - Competence
  - Good will
  - Others: likability, poise, appearance, humor, poise

Credibility

- ◻ Differs from audience to audience

- ◻ Differs even within the speech
  - ◻ Initial
  - ◻ Derived
  - ◻ Terminal

Plagiarism

- Basic definition: "the act of using another person's words or ideas without giving credit to that person"

- Involves
  - Turning in someone else's work as your own
  - Copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit
  - Failing to put quotation marks around an exact quotation
  - Giving incorrect information about the source of material
  - Copying the sentence structure or so much that the majority of your paper/speech is verbatim from the source(s)

Types of Plagiarism

- Stealing: Submitting a whole work from another as your own.

- Sneaking: Cutting and pasting, no sources cited

- Borrowing: Some sources cited, but texts of sources not summarized or paraphrased correctly

Ethically crediting sources

- Full information about the source

- Be sure information is in context and relevant to your points

- Translate the source material into your own words by paraphrasing and summarizing (preferable)