

## 2 Rhetoric, Discussion, and Character

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If one were to listen only to the political discourse and the civic education of today, then one might never imagine that it was not until 1913 that citizens nationwide could vote for their federal senators or that the Nineteenth Amendment did not nationalize women's suffrage until 1920. It is hard to imagine, by today's standards, that there was a time when an almost incalculably small minority had even a dream of receiving a college education. Even educated Americans often are unaware that these first few decades were a time of active and strong Communist and Socialist parties in the United States, both locked into conflict with government agencies while also fielding candidates for the presidency.<sup>1</sup> Many would be surprised to learn that this was a period when people who spoke out against the draft might find themselves in prison labor programs or deported.<sup>2</sup> It was during these first few decades of the twentieth century, in a time of change and turmoil, that speech teachers and scholars took up a movement toward a broader and more inclusive democracy and the subsequent education that would be required for citizens to participate. It was exactly during this conflicted period that many in the early field of speech found justification and guiding principles for their pedagogy and scholarship. By defining their field broadly and connecting it to national and political purposes, teachers and scholars of speech articulated what was likely a distinctively American attitude toward communication in the early twentieth century. It was full of difficulties and even contradictions, at once embracing a wide and deep form of democracy and also supporting domestic propaganda efforts. In these first few decades, there was already a rich discussion of some of the most vexing and important questions that had and would continue to plague rhetoric and speech.

This chapter begins with a study of how the breadth of speech gave scholars a wide focus in their teaching and scholarship. That breadth, combined with the shifts in the purposes of speech education, pushed teachers of speech

toward a concern for educating the general citizenry. In large part, this was due to the perceived connection between education in speech and the capacity for every citizen to participate in democracy. However, the commitment to democracy and broad scope of the discipline also gave rise to more nationalistic service by speech teachers and scholars. This chapter continues with a documentation of how speech studies and training were deployed as military assets. The capacity for speech to be pressed into service in wartime leads into a discussion of the difficulties in the distinction between speech and force, a difference that has long been vital to ethical positions in the discipline. In an effort to resolve some of the increasingly complex ethical and political difficulties that speech education was encountering, the operation and education of moral character became a vital concern for the discipline.

In the section that follows, Gehrke describes a trend in the 1910-40s among scholars and teachers of rhetoric to move away from offering students training in formal oratory to training in informal everyday speech, like discussion, deliberation, and compromise. This was driven by the conviction that only a small fraction of students would have use for public speaking (i.e. trial lawyers and politicians) whereas all students would need to be able to discuss political issues and reach compromises in business negotiations. They insisted that it was very much in the nation's interest for voting citizens to be capable of reasoned, unemotional political discussion.

Just before this new section, Gehrke discusses those who opposed the new trend away from formal training in oratory, naming Mosher as a leading advocate for that side. So as you begin this new section, he's referencing a debate among scholars of rhetoric between those who favor formal oratory and those who favor training in informal speech contexts like discussion and negotiation.

### **Speech as Training for Democracy**

However, what Mosher and the discussion advocates agreed upon without question was the belief that good speech was duty-bound to serve democracy. Democracy (and by this was meant the United States of America's form of government) was inseparable from the social values and normative psychological standards to which students should be adjusted in their speech training. It was an essential function of all education, and most certainly of speech education, to train students in proper democratic participation.

Murray wrote that the end product of education ought to be a “citizen who is a well-adjusted, critically minded cooperator.”<sup>53</sup> The Virginia Plan for Secondary Education noted that “American secondary education has its orientation in the ideals of democracy.”<sup>54</sup> W. H. MacKellar wrote that schools and colleges could only justify their existence and financing insofar as they served as “centers, from which are going forth armies of men and women to oppose all the cults of wrong.”<sup>55</sup> The explicit connection between the expanding educational system and the enculturation of citizens into the American democratic model was common in the discourse of this era, but speech teachers and scholars were finding a specific and powerful connection between their discipline and these objectives.

The equivocation of democracy and the American system of government and the connection between democracy and speech enabled speech education to claim a certain indoctrination into the political and social values of American government. Trillingham argued that speech education must serve every student because “all citizens are expected to participate intelligently in the affairs of a democracy.” This education, for Trillingham, was essential so that the American citizen might “merit freedom of speech”—that is to say, might be sufficiently prepared to contribute to democratic deliberative processes.<sup>56</sup> John D. Hansen likewise maintained that training and experience in speech would serve students well “when they are called upon later to perform important duties of citizenship in a democracy.”<sup>57</sup> Thus, a political belief in democracy grounded not only discussion but speech training in general. Interestingly, these beliefs also presume that one must be taught how to be a proper citizen. Students, to be worthy of participation in American democracy, had to learn the right ways to speak, listen, and think so that they could then serve that democracy effectively.

This celebration of democracy in the 1930s and 1940s gave further credence to the discussion advocates’ claims for cooperative modes of deliberation, reinforced the mental hygiene standards, and further undermined the position of traditional platform oratory. The priority of listening in the democratic system served as a fulcrum point for these positions. Holm argued not only that it was the important skill of self-expression that gave freedom of speech and democracy their significance, but it was equally dependent upon the inclination and ability of every individual to listen to others.<sup>58</sup> After all, for discussion to occur, there had to be an interplay and sharing between the disinterested discussants, which required that they listen to one another. Trillingham likewise wrote that the obligation of speech teachers was not simply to produce good speakers—those who could skillfully and articulately express themselves—but also, if speech teachers wished to perpetuate and

improve democratic life, to ensure “that those who are on the receiving end of speech activities are intelligent listeners.”<sup>59</sup> Students would need to be mindful and critical in their reception of messages so as to contribute to the conversations and discussions that they may encounter.

With listening given its due, the value of the full sharing of information, and the promotion of the primacy of reason, one could ground a faith that democracies produce optimal decisions. The faith that the full sharing of information produces the best decisions was expressed best by James Innes in 1945: “If the common people know the facts, we can trust the judgment of the common people to stand by the right principle.”<sup>60</sup> Connecting proper decision-making and understanding of information to the ethical and psychological standards of honesty and reason was a long-standing tradition in speech studies. Charles Woolbert had made it a central feature of his ethic of public address in 1914, writing, “Honesty plus the vision to trust the force of truth inevitably overcomes trickery and slippery methods.”<sup>61</sup> Thus, the sharing of information and the honesty of that sharing again returned to the priority of truth as a key component of ethical and politically responsible speech. The extraordinary power of this point of view is its capacity to adapt and interpret every event to support its faith. All failures were sufficient proof of their own poor practices, while every success could be ascribed either to good practices or to the fortunate grace of a proper outcome even in light of erroneous communication. Every historical instance could be taken as an example of the importance of teaching and following the principles of honesty and truth.

This desire to train students to become responsible participants in the American democratic process likewise reflected both a faith in American governmental systems and a perception that a certain crisis of faith or legitimacy was threatening those systems. Carrie E. Church expressed this fear well in her 1934 presentation at the Western Association of Teachers of Speech Convention: “America is facing a crisis. The future may be intelligently democratic or arbitrarily fascist. Either we train good leaders or we accept bad ones.”<sup>62</sup> Alfred Westfall wrote in 1943 that “too many young people have grown up with no faith, or too little faith, in the American form of government. Our task is to give them an understanding of democracy and an abiding faith in the democratic way of life.”<sup>63</sup> This was not quite the same thing as the nearly incessant cry of the decline of morals among the youth, repeated ad nauseam from ancient times onward, but rather was an expression of a real challenge to the American political and economic systems during the 1920s and 1930s. As Keith has noted, many people in the twenty-first century have forgotten that in the 1920s and 1930s, there were

many options besides American-style democracy that were actively in play, even here in the United States.<sup>64</sup> Communism, fascism, anarchism, and other structures of economic and political life were all still contesting the future of the nation. Teachers of speech took a definitive side as allies of American democratic government, understood to require broad participation of the citizenry, and expressed a strong faith in that government to be able to better the lives of all its citizens.

Part of this faith was a belief that democracy, as Trillingham put it, “contains within its own ideology and within its own machinery the opportunities and means for its own improvement. It encourages change. It promotes the quest for truth.”<sup>65</sup> From such a faith in democracy, one could also establish certain principles that would both distinguish the form of government from others and identify the proper modes of communication in a democratic society. A. F. Wilenden outlined three basic assumptions required by faith in democracy: “First, that all folks either are or can be interested in really studying the problems that confront them; second, that if average folks are provided the facts on all sides of a case and are given free and ample opportunity to study and discuss them, we can trust their decisions; and third, that in arriving at public policies we prefer the slow and often painful educational method rather than the quicker executive action.”<sup>66</sup> From this faith in American democratic governance, speech scholars articulated a variety of differences between democracy and its nemesis, dictatorship. Kenneth G. Hance praised democracy for permitting speechmaking by citizens even when the nation was at war. It was, for Hance, particularly noteworthy that in a democracy, “all of us are talking—not a few actual or self-styled leaders or a body of propagandists.”<sup>67</sup> Propaganda was separated from speech and allied with dictatorship. Dickens wrote that propaganda was “the most important single measure of the efficiency of a dictatorship.” In no small part, this was because Dickens held that dictators relied upon their ability to secure “obedience to policies which would ordinarily be unpopular.”<sup>68</sup> Thus, the key defining factor of democracies was that everyone could speak; contrary and opposing voices were given their space. The definition of propaganda and dictatorship was that it could not permit the expression of contrasting positions. So, in Dickens’s view, the defining quality of despotic and nefarious societies is their intolerance for unpopular views. This is not merely the idea of government control and restriction but, more important, the fact that a democratic society listens to a wide range of voices, whereas non-democratic societies hear only the voice of the propagandists.

In Dickens’s description, it is obvious that speech could thrive only in democratic settings. Earnest Brandenburg, in his article on Roman orator

and teacher Quintilian, wrote that “eloquence flourishes only in democratic surroundings.” Brandenburg continued his argument by claiming that “every orator of sufficient prominence to be considered in the area of statecraft has been a champion of democracy.”<sup>69</sup> Perhaps, in part, such claims could be made without substantial controversy because the standards for prominent oratory were already infused with democratic ideals. Trillingham explicitly argued that “in a democracy, all avenues of communication should likewise serve to perpetuate and improve democracy.”<sup>70</sup> So, only communication that improves and perpetuates democracy was worthy or good communication; thus, it is quite easy to discard any communication outside of democracy as incapable of being healthy or ethical.

In this way, the function of speech in a democracy paralleled the scientific and psychotherapeutic models advanced by the mental hygienists. Murray made the connection explicit in 1938 when he wrote that “speech has a threefold function: (1) it must facilitate warm, friendly relations, (2) it must result in clear understanding, meeting of minds, and cooperation, and (3) this meeting of minds must, as near as possible, be on the basis of a content of scientific fact. This functioning of speech is the foundation for progress in democracy.”<sup>71</sup> Democracy, mental hygiene, and scientific method all required a form of speech and argument that did not involve the loading of minds or the domination of the audience but, as Auer put it, the presentation of an idea “so that audience may make rational judgments as to its validity and desirability.”<sup>72</sup> The importance and pervasiveness of this connection was well expressed by the stated theme and purpose of the second annual convention of the Western Association of Teachers of Speech in 1930. The convention program listed the theme as “A Program of Speech Education in a Democracy,” while the stated purpose for the conference, printed immediately below the theme, was “The Fullest Development of the Speaking Personality.”<sup>73</sup> This was the meaning given to speech that might distinguish it from the act of propaganda. It was thus that the model of the big-game hunter would become antithetical to the study of speech and the marked dominance that some found effective in speakers would be labeled a deficiency in character and in mind. Speech was regarded, as MacKellar put it, as “the crowning achievement of the human mind and the cementing principle of civilization.”<sup>74</sup> The ability to engage in the healthy, proper, democratic, ethical practice of communication—that which would set itself apart from propaganda—would require an entire disposition and style of communicating, a self-discipline and a governing logic that would engage reciprocally with interlocutors. Such a method of communication not only would express democratic values and mental health but would likewise promote both. As

Lester L. Hale argued in 1948, democratic freedom is only possible for “those who seek for it in the expressions of his total person, in his services and in his habits of life.”<sup>75</sup>

This convergence of methods and perspectives reflected an impulse toward generating a system of ethical standards or rules for communication. This was a movement toward a view of how communication ought ideally to be undertaken and in what modes one ought properly to engage in the daily practice of living one’s life as a communicating being. Such a convergence was dependent upon linking together views ranging from the psychology of mental hygiene to the political faith of early-twentieth-century proponents of American democracy. However, the proponents of democracy held that speech could serve another purpose for the American government, a purpose that would conflict with these ideals and ethics: speech would play a part in war.

### Speech as Military Strategy

During both World War I and World War II, speech teachers claimed that speech education and the practice of speech-making could play critical roles in American victory. B. C. Van Wye claimed that “the work of the teacher of speech is eminently essential in the great task of winning the war. . . . It offers extraordinary opportunities for genuine patriotic service.”<sup>76</sup> Such services ranged from the analyses of Axis power war rhetoric by the U.S. government during World War II, to the importance of speech to soldiers (especially officers) in both world wars, to the speeches made at home in support of the war effort and the soldiers’ service.<sup>77</sup> In 1940, the interest in such projects was reflected by the large number of conference panels on speech in wartime and on speech as a component of national defense, as can be seen just by perusing the conference program of the Western Association of Teachers of Speech that year.<sup>78</sup> While the broad clamor over the possibilities actually diminished after 1942, the war did serve throughout the early 1940s as a central focus for a significant portion of American teachers of speech.

For example, in 1943, William Norwood Brigance and Ray Keeslar Immel published a textbook specifically designed for training military officers in public speaking and speech. By that date, Brigance had already been teaching a course in speech for officer candidates for some years and had consulted on speech training for both the army and the navy. Brigance and Immel laid out their case for the importance of speech training for military officers in the first few pages of that text: “The ability to speak effectively is essential to personal military leadership. Men do not respect officers who speak in a weak, apathetic manner.”<sup>79</sup> This valuation of speech training for military



service was not one-sided. The military likewise reflected this concern with communication training, as Brigance's consultation and his and Immel's text demonstrate. Even more telling is that the military drafted a few speech teachers into active duty specifically to make them serve as teachers of speech for the officers. Glenn R. Capp resigned his position in the southern region's speech association in 1942 because he was drafted "without any application" in order to serve "as an instructor in public speaking to Army officers."<sup>80</sup>

For some speech scholars and teachers, no draft was required. They eagerly sought out ways to aid war efforts and encouraged their colleagues to do likewise. Balduf listed three of the ways that speech teachers and students might most directly involve their skills in the war effort: reach people with war information, train volunteer speakers, and keep the community in high spirits.<sup>81</sup> These tasks found the greatest application during World War I and reflect the difficulty in distinguishing between democratic speech and propaganda. Merry quoted the U.S. Director of the Speaking Division of the Committee on Public Information in 1918 as calling upon the "National Association of Public Speaking Teachers" to attain "that universal education absolutely necessary for the winning of the war, for in a democracy fullness of information and intelligent participation by each citizen is essential and this can be effectively secured only through the spoken word."<sup>82</sup> What is most interesting is that "fullness of information" meant the effective expression of the government's position on the war. Van Wye called directly for "speakers who can interest and enlighten, speakers who can put before audiences the wishes of the Government in a brief and appealing way."<sup>83</sup> Franklin H. Knowler, in asserting the role of speech departments in World War II, claimed that it was "training in the presentation of the propaganda or morale-building message—spoken, read, or acted" that uniquely qualified speech teachers and students to assist the war effort.<sup>84</sup> In contrast to the discourses of listening and discussion and the valorization of open dissent in democracy, here we see the prioritization of government positions being put forward and people being moved to the task of supporting the war, not engaged in critically minded discussions of it.

Perhaps the most concrete and organized example of these practices came during World War I when the American government, with the cooperation of teachers and departments of speech, organized a program called the Four-Minute Men. As Merry explained it, this organization was composed of men who would speak for four minutes or less in movie theaters before each showing, "carrying the gospel of patriotism." These speakers would receive topics and facts bimonthly from the nation's capital, from which they would then assemble a short speech.<sup>85</sup> In cities such as Cincinnati, a

teacher of speech would be one of the members of a committee that would hear the would-be speakers who volunteered for the program and ensure that they were of high enough quality to perform the duty.<sup>86</sup> In 1918, over twenty thousand men were enrolled in the program, delivering the message of the national government in movie houses across the country.<sup>87</sup> Democracy required its propagandists to put forward the government's position.

While the belief that speech could aid the war effort was again advanced by many speech scholars during World War II, there also was a group of articles that began to challenge both the propriety and the effectiveness of speech-making on behalf of the government. First, there was the extension of the mental hygiene argument that wars, strikes, and social unrest were caused by mental maladjustments and poor communication. Grey argued that World War II was due, at least in significant part, "to the failure of communication among some peoples."<sup>88</sup> Likewise, the "fullness of information" would take on a different significance as scholars such as Hansen argued that the duty of speech teachers and students was not only to repeat the government position but to "obtain and impart information not readily gained by the general public through the daily news, to keep critical issues continually before them, and to ensure a sturdy morale by protecting people from the warping effects of misinformation and propaganda."<sup>89</sup> The distinction between speech and propaganda would legitimize the infusion of information not commonly available, and such an infusion would occur under the name of democracy, allying it with the war effort at its base.

The more complex model of democratic discussion and deliberation represented by Hansen's position was also reflected in Everett Hunt's claim that there could be no grand oratory on American involvement in World War II. In part, this was because the war was seen as "the result of a series of selfish, stupid, preventable mistakes, with justice and injustice so inextricably intertwined" that any "lofty pretensions" would only be met with suspicion. Hunt argued that in 1943, most of the sources of grand war oratory were simply not persuasive. Among those he listed as being dubious were "boasting, heroism, the hills of home, a holy cause, joy in the destruction of the enemy, and, in a softened civilization, even the sweetness of dying for the fatherland."<sup>90</sup> What Hunt was describing was a relatively common dissatisfaction with the extension of the American involvement in the war onto continental European soil. It was not for many years to come that a broad consensus would form in America on World War II. Thus, for Hunt, the war lacked the kind of central values or issues that could be used by propagandists to rally the American public behind the cause, which he believed had occurred during World War I. Whether or not his assessment speaks well of him or his age, it does help

to demonstrate a shift in the thinking about the propriety and function of governmental communication campaigns surrounding war efforts between the earliest decades of the twentieth century and the 1940s. That change was also connected to changes within the discipline of speech and its attitudes toward persuasion and discussion.

### Speech and Force

Part of what was playing out in Hansen's and Hunt's claims about World War II was the difficulty that speech scholars had in distinguishing reasoned discourse from force. Mental hygienists and democratists had held speech and especially discussion above propaganda and threat because speech and discussion could more properly engage the reasoning capacities of the interlocutors and allow each individual to make up his or her own mind on a subject. Trillingham expressed this view when he wrote that language "gives men the means to substitute intelligence for force."<sup>91</sup> Communication offered the promise of transcending conflict-oriented politics and social organization while offering the hope of democratically "getting along." Claude E. Kantner even laid the responsibility for developing such communication processes squarely upon the teachers of speech.<sup>92</sup>

However, it was also the case that conflict and force were implicit in the practice and training of speech. In his study of effective public speakers, Clyde W. Dow noted, as others had before him, that while mental health asserted that one ought to be neither markedly submissive nor markedly dominant, the best public speakers were markedly dominant. Dow observed that though this may make people difficult to live with, enhancing the dominance of our students will also enhance their efficacy as public speakers: "It probably would not be very pleasant to live with a definitely ascendant person, but the indications are that this ascendant person is likely to be a good public speaker. It seems reasonable to suggest, then, that in our attempts to train young men and women to become effective public speakers we should try to develop in them this trait of ascendance or dominance."<sup>93</sup>

Additionally, some speech teachers, such as Angelo Pellegrini, threatened that if ever a student should engage in inappropriate speech practices such as charlatanism, the teacher would "rise and tongue-whip him into the dust."<sup>94</sup> These practices made dubious the distinction between speech and force, advocating both that forcefulness and dominance were traits essential to effective oratory and that force and threats were appropriate methods of speech. Recall R. L. Irwin's statement that those with speech or mental defects might best be cured by telling them that they should slow down and speak up if they know what is good for them.<sup>95</sup>

The distinction between democratic discussion and force was perhaps most thoroughly critiqued by William E. Utterback in his 1940 study of the appeals to force that underlie democratic discussion. Utterback noted that while citizens might “possess a body of truth which can be employed as the basis of political decision” and that “unfettered public discussion is a part of the democratic philosophy of government,” these truths and the outcomes of these discussions rest largely on force. He agreed that democratic discussion relied upon certain “political truths” that were regarded by the interlocutors as having “universal and permanent validity,” but Utterback’s examination of these political truths found that “most, if not all of them, appear to have originated as formulae for the adjustment of group conflicts. . . . The terms of the compromise were dictated by the balance of power between the two groups.” The truth of these political principles was thus neither universal nor permanent but rather could be maintained only so long as “that balance of group power which generated it remains substantially unaltered.” Thus, when discussants rely upon a shared political truth as a premise to their argument, “its ultimate reference is to force.” Government by debate and by conference would thus both hold force as “the ultimate determinant of legislative action.”<sup>96</sup> The order of speakers, the burden of proof, the status of presumption, the acceptable and unacceptable forms of evidence, the value of certain practices or norms of communication, and even the prioritization of certain social goods were all built up over time through contestations involving power relations and were dependent upon power for their maintenance or possible alteration.

Despite such critiques, the distinctions between speech and propaganda and between speech and force were essential to how speech scholars legitimized not only their own discipline but also American politics, especially during World War II. While probably no single orator has gained as much attention or extended study as has Adolf Hitler, it was largely after World War II that such writings really began. During the war, comparatively little on Hitler was published in speech journals. Of note, however, is Lambertson’s 1942 essay, which grappled with the fundamental problem that would obsess speech teachers for decades to come: how could someone whom speech scholars believed to be so thoroughly evil and lacking in any proper mental health, moral character, or respect for democracy be such a profoundly effective speaker? While in more recent years some have tried to solve this problem by asserting that Hitler was in fact not an effective speaker, Lambertson immediately argued that the opposite was true. He quoted a variety of sources to establish that Hitler was, in fact, one of the most effective orators of the

first half of the twentieth century.<sup>97</sup> The question was, what could explain this phenomenon?

Given the dominance of the social scientific and psychological perspectives in speech scholarship of the 1930s and 1940s, it should be of little surprise that Lambertson turned to social psychology to explain Hitler's ability. In keeping with the mental hygiene perspective and with the proponents of discussion, Lambertson asserted that Hitler used excessive emotional appeal rather than reason to move his audiences. He wrote that Hitler's belief was that "to reason with people was futile and absurd, but to make them feel deeply concerning his ideas was to gain action." Hitler, according to Lambertson, also tried to "stimulate the emotions" in the early part of his speeches because emotional responses tended to make the audience "more credulous, suggestible, and non-critical." Similarly, he criticized Hitler for playing upon the "hopes and fears and hates of his listeners." The idea of a speaker dominating the audience was likewise part of Hitler's appeal. Lambertson claimed that this idea was essential to any speaker, but because Hitler was especially skilled at dominating his audience, he wielded the "greater power." This combination of emotional suggestion and domination of the audience was described by Lambertson as Hitler's ability "to place both himself and them in a hypnotic state."<sup>98</sup> Here, emotion is not only opposed to reasoning but opposed to will, choice, and voluntary actions, with emotional motivation equated with hypnosis.

In sum, Lambertson concluded that three factors primarily determined Hitler's success as an orator: "1) his ability to make men mob-minded, 2) his intuitive grasp of the hopes and fears of the audience, and 3) his fanatical sincerity." Hitler's rhetorical power, then, could be separated from rhetoric and speech under the democratist and mental hygiene models and could be set in opposition to any argument grounded in good character or sound reasoning. The problem, of course, is that Hitler's persuasive strategies, decried as foul by most speech scholars of the period, were highly effective. Hence, in the midst of examining the techniques of one of the most persuasive orators of his age, Lambertson took a moment to pause and ask whether a speaker could be "ethically justified" in using Hitler's techniques. The ethical question arose, at least in part, in response to this dilemma: while certainly highly persuasive to his target audience, Hitler did not fit the normative standards for mental health, he favored the emotions over reason, and he espoused no faith in democratic governance. To explain this, his effect had to be attributed not to his abilities as a platform speaker but to his grasp of "crowd psychology" and his ability to strip people of their proper reasoning faculties

by seducing them into a “hypnotic state.”<sup>99</sup> His ascendancy and capacity to move people were themselves transformed from merely ethically dubious qualities of successful speakers into the eradication of choice and agency in his audience. In Hitler was found the worst possible kind of speech: a drug that could rob the listener of his or her very capacity to think and choose.

Alternatively, when similar methods were used by Winston Churchill or Franklin Roosevelt, these speakers were praised as skilled orators. Joseph W. Miller, in his 1942 study of Winston Churchill, wrote that his skilled speech displayed “vigor, imagery, turbulent driving rhythms, and potential sweep” that suggested “Milton, Burke, and Macaulay.” His ability to use emotion was thus characterized as “skilled speaking” or referred to as “amplification” and praised as reflecting Cicero’s theory of oratory. Churchill was said to “mingle proof with emotion; the effective desires he uses vary with the circumstances, but he appeals chiefly to self-preservation, patriotism, love of God, fair play, justice, common sense, and duty.” He was praised for adapting his speeches well to his audiences and held a reputation for “enchancing his listeners.” Regardless of the similarities between the praise for Churchill’s methods and the condemnation of Hitler’s oratory, Miller not only did not question the ethics of Churchill’s methods but advanced the view that Churchill’s speaking was an “ethical proof.” Miller wrote that “Churchill invests his speeches with an ethical proof unsurpassed by any other Englishman who might aspire to be Prime Minister. Each occasion for a speech imbues the utterance with implications crucial to the Democratic world.”<sup>100</sup> This is not to say that Hitler’s oratorical style and Churchill’s were identical but rather to point out that in those cases in which emotional appeals could be seen as benefiting contemporary democratic governments, particularly in the Allied war effort, these emotional appeals could be praised even while also referring to them as “enchancing” the audience. It was not, then, merely the issue of emotions per se that seemed to tilt the critics of public address one way or another but the underlying ethical and political practices of the speaker.

Harold P. Zelko made a similar analysis that same year of Roosevelt’s speaking style, expressing no hint of a concern for the ethics of his methods and also praising highly his capacity to move audiences to rally behind the democratic cause. Zelko applauded Roosevelt’s “splendid vocal quality” and “rare charm” while attributing both to his “rare rhythm that is attained in the structural development of sentences and ideas throughout the speech.”<sup>101</sup> Roosevelt was commended neither for his capacity to marshal reasoned argument for his cause nor for engaging in a democratic discussion with his audience. Instead, his methods were appreciated for many of the same qualities that brought praise to Churchill and condemnation to Hitler. If Roosevelt was

able to lift the nation up and inspire its citizens to great acts, it was in many ways by virtue of tapping emotional motivations through rhetorical strategies, charming them and rallying them, not by convincing and reasoning. This is the Hitler problem for rhetoric and persuasion: that those strategies for persuasion condemned in Hitler's oratory are simply extreme versions of those more mundane strategies generally found to be at the core of effective persuasion. Lambertson hit squarely upon the Hitler problem when he tried to answer the question of whether a speaker could be ethically justified in using Hitler's techniques; he wrote, "Every good speaker does—to a degree."<sup>102</sup> This conclusion, however, could not be widely affirmed for speech training to lay claim to proper mental adjustment and social well-being. Instead, clear divisions and safeguards would need to be placed between the rhetoric of the demagogue and good speech.

