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Political Communication: Rhetoric, Government, and Citizens

By Dan F. Hahn



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Political Communication: Rhetoric, Government, and Citizens By Dan F. Hahn

This award-winning book presents politics as an essentially rhetorical process, a societal conversation that is the essence of democracy. In this ongoing conversation among citizens, and between citizens and their government, issues are shaped, ideology debated, decisions formed, and public policy created.

There have been enormous political and technological changes in the world in recent years, the author notes, yet some things remain the same: for democracy to flourish, citizens must be active, critical participants in the societal conversation.

Political Communication: Rhetoric, Government, and Citizens shows how students can rise to the challenge. The book presents a basic framework for understanding major ideologies and shows how those ideologies reflect and are reflected in political argument. It draws on contemporary theory and research to explore the language choices, metaphors, and other rhetorical strategies that shape public discourse--and illustrates them with a rich array of historical and contemporary events, issues, and political commentary.

FEATURES

- presents political communication as an ongoing societal dialogue about public issues such as education, welfare, war, health care, and taxes, as well as election campaigns

- describes politics as a fundamentally rhetorical process, emphasizing language choices and their effects on how issues are defined and public policy shaped

- explores the effects of euphemisms, social myths, government secrecy and surveillance, and common metaphors on the democratic process

- emphasizes the skills and understandings necessary for citizens to take an active role in the democratic process

- provides a conceptual framework for understanding major political ideologies and how they influence perspectives and arguments

- draws examples from a broad range of historical and contemporary issues, events, and political commentary

--highlights key concepts, societal contexts, and applications by opening each chapter with a pertinent quotation and ending with questions for further consideration

FEATURES OF THE NEW EDITION

--New, up-to-date examples and analyses reflect current political issues and discourse, showing the continuing importance of concepts and principles.

--The rising significance of the Internet in politics, with its potential and limitations, is discussed in a new appendix by Candace Todd and elsewhere in the book.

--Some material has been revised to be more accessible to students and more flexible to classroom needs. (See, for example, Chapters 8 and 9, "Sexual Language and Politics" and "The Marriage Metaphor in Politics.")

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Editorial Review

From the Inside Flap

COMMENTS FROM POLITICAL COMMUNICATION SCHOLARS AND TEACHERS

"Students gave it excellent reviews -- almost unheard of for a textbook....It provides a good integration of communication and politics; it is very accessible, yet not simple. It does a good job of showing how the media are intertwined with politics and of providing students with a methodology for assessing candidates."
Denise Bostdorff, College of Wooster

"Students love the book. [They] appreciate the writing style and the clarity of ideas....[Especially valuable is] the emphasis on citizenship and developing awareness (and, in turn, skills) in interpreting and evaluating political rhetoric."
Donna M. Kowal, SUNY Brockport

"Excellent general coverage of the range of political communication; well organized; attractively written."
Robert J. Doolittle, University of Tulsa

"Good discussion of rhetorical perspective (especially metaphors)."
Janis Edwards, Western Illinois University

"I like the sequence and pattern of organization.... [The] emphasis on rhetoric is significant. Use of Burke skillful and very teachable!"
Linda Hobgood, University of Richmond

"It offers a rhetorical and philosophical approach to the study of politics and communication."
Pierre Rodgers, Morgan State University

"Chapters 1 - 4 present a useful approach to analyzing political communication."
Laurinda Porter, St. Cloud State University

"[It covers] a wide range of interesting topics."
Philip Voight, Gustavus Adolphus College

"Easy to read . . . good content."
James L. Heflin, Cameron University

"Very helpful, especially on language."
Jill Schmid, Willamette University

Additional comments on the first edition:

"Overall, this is an excellent book for Political Communication. [It] is clearly focused, beginning with fundamental terms for understanding political communication and progressing from these fundamentals to more sophisticated topics, thereby easing the student along the way."

Theodore O. Windt, University of Pittsburgh

"I am very much impressed with Hahn's knowledge of language and rhetoric. His ability to cogently frame a concept and then provide real-life, real-time examples is also impressive."

Sidney A. Kraus, Cleveland State University

"I found this to be an interesting and informative work."

Thomas A. Hollihan, University of Southern California

"It talks about concepts in political communication in ways that are accessible to those who are less sophisticated about politics."

Darin Klein, Georgia State University

"It would enrich my course by providing a rather neat connecting theme of ideological conflict as well as broadening its scope with a more detailed treatment of the roles language and media play in the political arena."

Moya Ann Ball, Trinity University

"The book would provide a strong background for my students. It casts the political process as something larger than just the campaign (persuasive) aspect."

Dennis Alexander, University of Utah

"Exceptionally readable--a pleasure to read. Author is widely read, erudite in source material, weaving ideas together from history, literature, and many areas of communication."

Kathleen E. Kendall, University at Albany, State University of New York

"The extended attention to language is an especially welcome feature."

Kathleen J. Turner, Tulane University

"The primary strength of Hahn's book rests in its rhetorical emphasis--particularly in its concern with teaching 'citizens' the critical skills necessary for survival in a democratic society....there is a deep, abiding need for the perspective Hahn offers."

Dale A. Bertelsen, Bloomsburg University

"I believe it will be a refreshing addition to our field."

John W. Smith, Ohio University

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About the Author

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dan F. Hahn is a Visiting Professor in the Department of Culture and Communication at New York University. Educated at Kansas State University (B.S.), the University of Kansas (M.A.), and the University of Arizona (Ph.D.), he is the author of more than two hundred articles, book chapters, and convention papers exploring aspects of political communication. He also is coauthor of two books, *Presidential Communication: Description and Analysis* (with Robert E. Denton, Jr.) and *Listening for a President: A Citizen's Campaign Methodology* (with Ruth Gonchar Brennan).

Dr. Hahn has chaired the departments of communication at Queens College and Florida Atlantic University. He has served as president of the Eastern Communication Association. His recent honors include the National Speakers Association's Outstanding Professor Award (1994), the Florida Communication Association's Scholar of the Year Award (1995), selection for Who's Who Among America's Teachers (1996), the Eastern Communication Association's Distinguished Service Award for lifetime contributions to the field (1996), and election as an Eastern Communication Association Research Fellow (1996) and Teaching Fellow (1997).

HONORS

The Eastern Communication Association awarded Dr. Hahn the Everett Lee Hunt Award for the first edition of *Political Communication: Rhetoric, Government, and Citizens*.

The first edition of this book was reviewed in *H-Pol* (H-Net Reviews), *Discourse & Society*, *Journalism and Mass Communication Educator*, and *Public Relations Review*.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Darren Marshall:

In this 21st one hundred year, people become competitive in most way. By being competitive right now, people have do something to make these individuals survives, being in the middle of typically the crowded place and notice simply by surrounding. One thing that at times many people have underestimated the idea for a while is reading. Yes, by reading a publication your ability to survive raise then having chance to remain than other is high. For you who want to start reading a new book, we give you that *Political Communication: Rhetoric, Government, and Citizens* book as nice and daily reading book. Why, because this book is usually more than just a book.

John Lee:

Reading can called brain hangout, why? Because when you find yourself reading a book specially book entitled *Political Communication: Rhetoric, Government, and Citizens* your head will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in each and every aspect that maybe unknown for but surely might be your mind friends. Imaging every word written in a guide then become one application form conclusion and explanation that will maybe you never get previous to. The *Political Communication: Rhetoric, Government, and Citizens* giving you another experience more than blown away your mind but also giving you useful

information for your better life on this era. So now let us teach you the relaxing pattern the following is your body and mind will be pleased when you are finished reading it, like winning a game. Do you want to try this extraordinary investing spare time activity?

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Mary McDonald:

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