



Speaking Culturally (Suny Series in Human Communication Processes)

By Gerry Philipsen

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Speaking Culturally presents case studies of two cultures, focusing on how speaking is thematized and enacted in each. The Teamsterville culture is drawn from the author's studies of the spoken life of an urban, working-class neighborhood in Chicago, while the Nacirema culture draws upon studies of communication among middle-class Americans, primarily on the West Coast. Using fieldwork conducted over a period of twenty years, Philipsen shows how listening to a people's spoken life can reveal expressions of underlying codes--or social rhetorics--of what it means to be a person, how persons can and should be linked together in social relations, and how communication can and should be used in interpersonal conduct. From these studies of speaking in two cultures emerges an understanding of communication as an activity in which people not only draw from and express but also shape and fashion their understandings of self, society, and strategic action.

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Review

This is the only book I know of written by a communication scholar which gives such detailed attention to two cultural communities and the patterns that distinguish them, but moreover abstracts from them in a theoretically provocative, enriching, insightful way. I think this book will be widely read. Philipsen's earlier work on Teamsterville is classic in the field of communication, and this book significantly advances that earlier work in a way which will be noticed. Donal Carbaugh, University of Massachusetts"

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About the Author

Gerry Philipsen is Associate Professor of Speech Communication at the University of Washington.

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