

# Steven Vrooman, PhD

speaker, author, professor, nerd



There is no way reading speaker one-sheets is fun for you.

Aren't these documents totally weird, from the images of people leaning against objects that have been photoshopped out to the drop-shadowed 3-D around the pictures of their books?

Yet, we still use these things.

I'll bet you use them so much in your job finding keynote and workshop speakers that you find my first-person note here as off-putting as my orange suspenders. This is the place, traditionally, where the speaker talks about her/himself in a fictionalized, ghostly third-person like this:

"Steve Vrooman combines lively hilarity and riveting stories with cutting-edge data for an unforgettable experience!!!"

That's better, right?

This, finally, is my point: communication is hard. Why? Because people suck at information. We're better with ritual, tradition, and toe-ing the traditional lines.

So every year we have a conference and every year we have speakers. And they give us lists of things, illustrated by lists of stories, at least one funny, at least one serious. We are excited for a bit because the speaker is excited for a bit. We even TAKE NOTES! ... and we feel sad when we get home and realize we left them on the refreshment table between the water pitchers and the bowl of mints. But we're not sad for too long. We're sure we will remember the good stuff. It was good, wasn't it?

Look, what I do is analyze how our communication goes wrong and what we need to do to get better outcomes, in leadership, social media, teaching, writing & speaking, all the places we need help, because, as I said, we suck at information while pretending we don't. Let's stop pretending. And let's stop pretending a canned message will cut it. I don't do speeches. I do large group consultations with customized data to help you figure out how to connect, persuade and transform.

And yeah, I do the lively hilarity stuff, too. All of that.

"So I spent the whole day at a workshop on teaching, and I was like, 'Oh geez. Really?' Best damn workshop I've ever been in! Redoing a bunch of things for my class."

-- Andrew Herrmann, Professor,  
East Tennessee State University

"At TEDxSanAntonio, Steve Vrooman did an amazing job of capturing our cultural zeitgeist, breaking it down, putting it back together and making the audience laugh along the way."

-- Chris Sandoval, Chair, TEDxSA  
Programming Committee

## keynotes/workshops:

### "Your Social Media Needs HELP"

Engagement trumps reach. Getting eyeballs is less important than keeping them and getting to the person behind them.

### "Teaching is Hard. Teaching is Persuasion"

Your students don't care. Help them to.

### "Speaking Across the Curriculum"

Add speaking without sacrificing content. Apply the lessons of TED to your classroom.

### "Leadership Is Communication. Communication Is Audience"

Most communication is NOT intentional. Do you know how your motivation, inspiration, feedback and support are REALLY coming across?

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"Steve was great to work with, from start to finish.

He carefully studied our industry to gain a true understanding of the unique challenges that self-storage businesses face. His keynote presentation (By The Time They Need Us, They Already Know Us) resonated with our audience. Our attendees walked away with a completely different perspective on social media, an understanding of social proof, and practical strategies on how to build an authentic identity.

Steve is an excellent speaker, whose presentation was relevant and timely. This is not the same ol' social media presentation that we've all seen dozens of times.

This is really good stuff!"

-- Sonnia Montemayor,  
Director of Education,  
Texas Self Storage Association

"He is exceptionally entertaining, brilliantly insightful, and infectiously energizing. More than a year after the presentation, faculty are still referencing it."

-- Chris Bollinger, Professor,  
Texas Lutheran University

Dr. Steven Vrooman, PhD, is Professor at Texas Lutheran University, where he is Chair of the Department of English and Communication Studies and Director of General Education.

His well-received TED Talk, "Our Brains Are A'Twitter," explored what social media reveals about the ways we have always processed and failed to process information. This built on 20 years of research and teaching in the field, ever since the Internet emerged from the computer-lab basements of BITNET and IRC. He has researched and written on Internet social movements, online fandoms, word use on Twitter, flaming, trolling and invective, the maintenance of online communities and the incorporation of social media into elearning.

He received his MA and PhD in Communication from Arizona State University, writing thesis and dissertation on online communication, and he did his undergraduate study at Loyola Marymount University. He teaches public speaking, popular culture and film, research methods, communication technology, social media, rhetoric and persuasion.

He has spoken on social media strategy at The National Association of College Auxiliary Services and the Texas Self Storage Association.

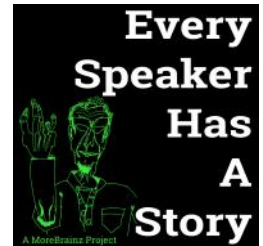
He has published in the journals New Media & Society and Qualitative Research Reports in Communication, as well as in books. He has reviewed articles for a dozen different journals and conferences. He has served on the editorial board for the Western Journal of Communication and has presented scholarly work at the National Communication Association, The Western States Communication Association, The Southern States Communication Association, The Western Social Science Association, the Society for Cinema Studies, and the Southwest Popular Culture Association.

He delivered the keynote for the inaugural Engaging Pedagogy conference at TLU, "Teaching. Is. Persuasion." He has since has spoken on teaching and public speaking at various universities as well as at the Texas Library Association.

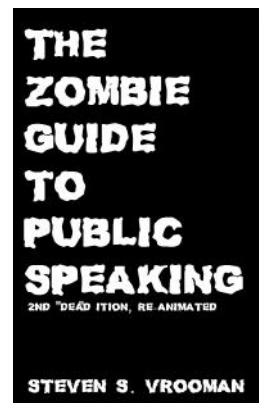
He has appeared in the documentary films The People Versus George Lucas and 3 Glimpses.

He is the creator and host of the "Every Speaker Has a Story" podcast, which curates selections from interviews with professional public speakers on key themes, like "Technical Difficulties" and "Disasters."

He is the author of The MoreBrainz Blog and The Zombie Guide to Public Speaking textbook.



My free podcast:  
[morebrainz.podomatic.com](http://morebrainz.podomatic.com)



My book:  
On Amazon & Kindle now!  
Free excerpts on my blog:  
[morebrainz.blogspot.com](http://morebrainz.blogspot.com)

