

# PUBLIC SPEAKING OPPORTUNITIES

**Author, scholar and motivational speaker  
Wendy Coakley-Thompson, Ph.D.**

Wendy Coakley-Thompson, Ph.D. is a masterful writer, respected scholar and captivating speaker who addresses hard-hitting, controversial issues in her public speaking engagements and her writing. For years, Wendy has enthralled audiences nationwide with her ‘keep it real’ approach to engaging the public on various topics, ranging from touchy issues like “race relations” and “interracial relationships” to motivational themes like “pursuing your true dreams and passions.”

Drawing from her diverse personal experiences, “real world” observations and scholarly research, Wendy makes her own life transparent to deliver messages and approaches that resonate with the public and to which audiences can truly relate. Read below to learn more about Wendy’s key areas of expertise and public speaking topics that are certain to be of interest to the members and audiences of your organization.

## **KEY PUBLIC SPEAKING TOPICS:**

- **Self-Care for Both Body and Mind**

Recent difficult times have forced us to shift the focus away from ourselves and on to maintaining our standard of living in a crippling recession. This often results in the neglect of our physical health and mental well-being. Such neglect manifests itself in different ways. Oprah, in a recent issue of *O Magazine*, stated that for her, the lack of self-care shows up as weight gain. For others, a lack of self-care means missing a yearly physical, a monthly breast exam, or a yearly mammogram, which we do at our peril.

The struggle for balance with managing health and well-being while maintaining one’s lifestyle is a recurring theme in Wendy’s fiction, from Chaney’s battle with depression in [What You Won’t Do For Love](#), to Jonathan’s fight with cancer in [Triptych](#). Treatment for depression and a cancer scare have led Wendy to spread the gift of knowledge through a deeply personalized approach.

Wendy’s following speeches fall under the rubric of **Self-Care for Both Body and Mind**:

- Why You Should NEVER Miss Your Yearly Mammogram
- Overcoming the Stigma of Depression in Blacks

- **Race Relations / Interracial Relationships**

America has endured an extensive, tumultuous journey on the path toward true racial harmony. As a society, we have indeed come a long way. Yet some issues continue to incite strong dialogue, polarizing viewpoints and adamant reactions concerning race relations. The topic of interracial relationships is one such issue.

Having a biracial grandmother and growing up in a racially diverse West Indian family and culture has prompted Wendy to explore race relations, interracial marriage, and colorism in her scholarly research and literature, public speaking engagements and mainstream fiction writings.

Born to West Indian parents in Brooklyn, New York and raised in idyllic Nassau Bahamas, Wendy also relates to the sometimes-painful dichotomy of being a patriotic first generation American who also experiences the simultaneous inextricable pull of the “old country.” Having studied and experienced this phenomenon first-hand, she often speaks to diverse immigrant audiences on this topic, encouraging and empowering them to successfully balance this dichotomy while fully realizing their dreams in this country and experiencing the best America has to offer.

Wendy’s following speeches fall under the rubric of **Race Relations / Interracial Relationships**:

- Doing the “White” Things: Not for the Faint of Heart
- Mixed Nuts? Biracial Mythology and Popular Media
- The Cultural Mulatto: Straddling Both Worlds
- Bahamians are not Jamaicans: One Woman’s Story of Keeping One’s Cultural Identity in the First World
- Amerhamian versus Bahamerican: The Life of One Cultural Platypus
- When Being Intellectually Black Means “Acting White”

- **Adventures in Higher Education**

The academic landscape can provide numerous challenges for those women and persons of color seeking to obtain advanced and terminal degrees. Wendy should know. She has over eleven years of university under her belt, earning a Bachelor’s degree, a Master’s degree, and a Ph.D. She has also taught on the university level – both graduate and undergraduate courses – for over eight years.

Wendy provides concrete examples and prescriptions for navigating the minefield of finding funding, establishing residency, dealing with difficult personalities, and managing internal pressures.

Wendy’s following speeches fall under the rubric of **Adventures in Higher Education**:

- Is Higher Education for You?
- The Changing Face and Gender of Higher Education
- You’ve Secured Your Degree: Now What?

- **Pursuing, and Fulfilling, Your Dreams**

“Follow your dream” – for years, this familiar, yet usually vague message, has saturated music lyrics, books, motivational speeches, dinner party discussions and countless other mainstream forums. It is a theme that does not appear to be losing momentum – on the contrary, many people are creating a successful niche for themselves by making this general message more digestible, practical and achievable for the general public. This is evident through the massive success of Oprah Winfrey’s *Live Your Best Life* tour and talk show topics and the cross-cultural popularity of self-help books like Rick Warren’s *New York Times* bestseller Purpose Driven Life. But for many, this message is diluted by a very real world filled with looming responsibilities, deadlines, bills and various pressures.

Wendy successfully uses the canvas of her personal life to paint a vivid picture of this timeless challenge – how does one pursue his or her dreams while dealing with real-life responsibilities. She incorporates the compelling personal story of how she navigated through various careers and jobs, which were seemingly successful on the surface, to finally fulfilling her ultimate dream – pursuing her passion for writing and publishing her first novel after many long years. Wendy has successfully published three novels and is working on her fourth book.

This topic is especially relevant to all audiences – young and old – because it’s never too late to pursue your true passions and fulfill your dreams. The trick is figuring out how to balance this pursuit with life’s very real, and often very challenging, issues and responsibilities. Wendy’s expertise in studying, writing about, speaking on and ultimately living this topic can inspire and guide audiences through the process of practically pursuing their true passions while simultaneously dealing with real-life responsibilities.

Wendy’s following speeches fall under the rubric of **Pursuing, and Fulfilling, Your Dreams**:

- Who in the World is Wendy Coakley-Thompson, and Why Should We Care?
- Making the Hard Choices: Turning Your Water into Wine
- Back to Life: the Back Story
- The Written Word as Your Path to Personal Fulfillment
- Following Your Dreams: When Opportunity Meets Preparation
- Are You an Intellectual Sharecropper? Start Tilling Your Own Field

**COORDINATE A SPEAKING ENGAGEMENT WITH WENDY:**

To learn more about Wendy Coakley-Thompson and how you can coordinate a captivating speaking engagement for your organization, visit [www.wendycoakley-thompson.com](http://www.wendycoakley-thompson.com).

You may contact the author for any additional inquiries regarding specific speaking or partnership opportunities at:

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