National Forensic Journal

The National Forensic Association is devoted to both education and competitive excellence in intercollegiate speech and debate.

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Submission Guidelines

The *National Forensic Journal* is a journal dedicated to ideas that affect the forensic community. Scholarship is accepted that is related to pedagogy, research, methodological issues, and administration in competitive individual events and debate activities. The goal of the journal is to facilitate systematic discussion among forensic educators and students in order to improve the quality of the educational experience. The Editorial Board will consider manuscripts that use any appropriate methodology. The journal welcomes submission by any interested person. While the scholarship need not specifically involve the forensic community, the conclusions drawn should have relevance to the activity. The journal uses a blind peer review policy. Manuscripts must be double-spaced throughout, including block quotations, notes, and references. Manuscripts should be prepared in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the 6th edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) *Publication Manual*. To facilitate blind review, please avoid self-references in manuscript. Include on a separate page with author(s), academic titles, institutional affiliations, contact information, and any manuscript history. The second page of the manuscript should contain an abstract of no more than 200 words. The text should begin on the third page of the manuscript and should include a title at the top of the page. Because manuscript distribution may be done through email correspondence, please give the document a name that does not include author identity. While under review by the *National Forensic Journal*, authors may not submit the manuscript to another publication source. Articles should not be submitted that have previously been published in whole in other sources. Upon acceptance, copyright for the article shall be retained by the National Forensic Association. Authors are expected to follow the review guidelines established by their institution's research review board for studies involving human participants. Manuscripts should be submitted as a Word document to repaine@noctrl.edu.

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Editors' Note

This issue marks our last as co-editors of *The National Forensic Journal.* We leave knowing that applied scholarship in our field has never been more valuable. As programs face funding challenges across the country and as full-time faculty appointments become less common, it is imperative that we continue to demonstrate that the field of forensics is one integrally tied to teaching, learning and the creation of knowledge. In a field bound to adjudication, the willingness to engage in the peer review process demonstrates that we as forensic educators practice what we preach to our students and colleagues.

No scholarly journal could exist without colleagues willing to share their expertise through submission and the review process. Our thanks to those who have submitted manuscripts and to our numerous colleagues who have reviewed the submissions. The list of names is too long to include here, but please know that we are indeed grateful. The scholars have benefited from your helpful critiques and suggestions.

We also are grateful for the support of our student assistant, Carson Kay, who offered quick and capable assistance this year. We wish her well as she begins graduate studies in communication this fall.

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Limited Time: Meeting Judge Expectations and Pedagogical Standards in Rhetorical Criticism

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Since the creation of Communication Analysis/Rhetorical Criticism as an event in competitive college forensics, forensic research has critiqued the depth of analysis in Communication Analysis/Rhetorical Criticism speeches, with many arguing that effective analysis was impossible due to the ten-minute time limit. Considering this criticism, spanning three decades, I argue time has come for an increase to the time limit, allowing students to more effectively analyze artifacts, to better understand the methodology they employ, and to make changes to the structure of their speeches in response to the critiques of other scholars. Such a change would increase the educational impact of the event and address concerns that have long been discussed.

Before its inception in 1974 at the National Forensics Association National Assembly and early in its life as a speech event, Rhetorical Criticism/Communication Analysis had been the subject of much critique, primarily because of a desire to provide further clarity to the event description and rules (Harris, 1987; Larson, 1985). Larson (1985) specifically noted, "the fact still remains that students who compete in the event cannot find a set of guidelines directing their composition of a communication analysis speech" (p. 142). Since the 1970s and 80s, changes to the rules and the emergence of normative judge expectations have provided further clarification to the event. According to the current rules, the purpose of the speech is to:

> Offer an explanation and/or evaluation of a communication event such as a speech, speaker, movement, poem, poster, film, campaign, etc., through the use of rhetorical principles. ("AFA-NIET description of events," p. 1) Describe, analyze, and evaluate the rhetorical dynamics related to a significant rhetorical artifact or event. Rhetorical Criticisms are characterized by enlightening critical insight, in-depth analysis, description and application of rhetorical principles or a theoretical framework, topic significance, credible sources, and vocal and nonverbal delivery choices that reflect the speech's purpose ("NFA Bylaws," 2015, 2A3).

Subtle differences exist between the two organizations' descriptions for the event. While the American Forensics Association rules describe specific artifacts that could be subject to analysis, the reference to rhetorical principles is nondescript. On the other hand, the

NFA rules do not mention specific types of artifacts, but emphasize that the speech must not only explain, but also evaluate the artifact, referring to specific rhetorical principles such as "enlightening critical insight" and "topic significance" ("NFA Bylaws," 2015, 2A3). The addition of the phrasing "rhetorical principles or a theoretical framework" in the NFA description quoted above were intended to counter these movements toward formulaic analysis and invite students to provide deeper, more varied analysis.

Regulating behaviors also exist which further define the responsibilities of the competitor. Hatfield-Edstrom (2011) further contended, "the 'rules' that guide our students' speech writing and performances are convention and normative practices" (p. 138). White (2009) concurred, writing that Rhetorical Criticism has seemingly "become one of the most standardized" events (p. 105). Certainly, judge preferences have always been paramount in Rhetorical Criticism, due in part to the openness provided by the description of the event. For example, Dean and Benoit (1984) and Harris (1987) found judges displayed consistent expectations that emphasized the effective inclusion of background information, description and application of a method, and provision of a rhetorical judgment about the artifact. In other articles, scholars theorized pedagogies of the event based on personal experience and influences of the communication discipline with regard to theory and rhetoric (Dean, 1985; German, 1985; Givens, 1994; Kay & Aden, 1989; Murphy, 1988; Rosenthal, 1985; Shields & Preston, 1985).

Some, however, consider these expectations of judges too burdensome for the 10-minute time frame. As Green and Schnoor (1990) lamented, "We as coaches/judges may be demanding too much to be accomplished in the ten-minute time-frame" (p. 197). The connections between the time limit associated with the event and complaints about depth of analysis have a complicated relationship with judge expectations: given high expectations, students try to do more in 10 minutes, and judging norms arise based on choices students make on what to include; at the same time, judging norms and competitive rewards influence the choices students make. Unraveling where these trends and norms emerged is an impossible task. Nevertheless, the combination of time constraints and such high expectations of coaches and judges means that inevitably, somehow part of the analysis ends up being shortchanged. Historically and more recently, new rules and norms have attempted to counter these concerns about the pedagogy of the event, often specifically attempting to increase depth of analysis. Therefore, I first examine concerns regarding depth of analysis in the event, and past rule changes and normative moves intended to increase depth of analysis. I then argue for the implementation of an increased time limit, providing a suggestion further attempt to resolve problems associated with depth of analysis.

Depth of Analysis

Given the competitive nature of the event, judge expectations necessarily structure decisions made by students and coaches regarding the content of Rhetorical Criticism speeches. Though many scholars have noted the connections between the pedagogical aims of the forensics event and research papers in rhetorical criticism, choices made for competitive reasons may not always be pedagogically sound, especially when a time limit must be considered (Hatfield-Edstrom, 2011; Houge, 2008; Paine, 2008; Richardson, 2008; White, 2008; Wood, 2008). Nevertheless, because forensics competition is closely aligned with the communication discipline, tying our competitive standards to pedagogical standards within the discipline makes sense (Kelly, Paine, Richardson, & White, 2014). This tension between pedagogical and competitive aims is likely at the root of the disconnection between the long-expressed concerns in articles regarding the quality of analysis in these speeches and the actual advice given by coaches and by judges in the forensics sphere. Slow changes to norms as well as rule changes have attempted to resolve this dialectic. Areas of change or

concern have shifted over the history of the event, including debates over a questioning period, inclusion of background information, research questions, method, and implications.

Questioning Period

Meant to allow the judge to verify student authorship and encourage students to understand their research in more depth, the questioning period rule provided time for the judge to ask a question of competitors in Rhetorical Criticism. Since the questioning period also had an impact on the time limit of the event, consideration of its history in the event is especially relevant. The questioning period was eventually eliminated in 1989, due in part to coach concerns about time constraints, abuse of questions, and perceived elitism. Nevertheless, its end was heavily debated and the involvement of coaches in the writing process of Rhetorical Criticism remained a concern through the early 1990s (Cutbirth, 1985; Gorsline, 1985; Green & Schnoor, 1990; Levasseur & Dean, 1989; Manchester, 1985; O'Rourke, 1985; Reynolds, 1985; Sellnow & Hanson, 1990).

Many argued that the use of the question discouraged coaches from writing speeches and encouraged competitors to be more knowledgeable both about the process of rhetorical criticism and their own speeches (Cutbirth, 1985; Lavasseur & Dean, 1989; Reynolds, 1985). In fact, some, such as Cutbirth (1985), saw the question as the only defense against students misleading judges who were not as familiar with rhetorical criticism, as such judges might not have the necessary background to question assertions made by the students. In contrast, Gorsline (1985) argued that students had ample opportunity to prepare for questions, thus not resulting in less coach involvement. Other forensics educators noted that judge abuse of the question as a mechanism for showing off their own knowledge was problematic (Gorsline, 1985; Green & Schnoor, 1990; Reynolds, 1985; Sellnow & Hanson, 1990). Equally troubling was a lack of judge consistency in questions asked, leading to potential unfairness in the amount of time competitors received to explain their ideas (Green & Schnoor, 1990; Manchester, 1985). Others, however, such as Levasseur and Dean (1989), argued that judge abuse rarely happened, noting that students were in favor of keeping the questioning period. Reynolds (1985) also emphasized that, despite problems, students tended to support the use of the question. Nevertheless, considering the debate in the literature, the use of the questioning period had a dubious impact on depth of analysis in the event.

Because the NFA tournament was the only national competition to employ the questioning period and only in the Rhetorical Criticism event, concerns over consistency and perceived elitism, due to Rhetorical Criticism being the only event allowed a questioning period, also contributed to the demise of the questioning period (Manchester, 1985). Though Levasseur and Dean (1989) argued that Rhetorical Criticism was more suited to the inclusion of a question than other events, others, including Green and Schnoor (1990), Manchester (1985), O'Rourke (1985), and Sellnow and Hanson (1990), claimed that Rhetorical Criticism was no more suited for question-asking than other public address events.

Ultimately, however, the concerns of tournament administrators over the amount of time taken by the questions overruled potential positives. Green and Schnoor (1990) emphasized that, despite potential educational benefits, tournament operations had to take priority. Thus, as O'Rourke (1985) emphasized, judges had to "extend contestants in rhetorical criticism the same courtesy we extend to all other forensic competitors: accept their work as original without the aid of a question" (p. 166). Thus, the subject of question-asking, though a contentious issue three decades ago, no longer occupies the minds of forensic educators nor the content of forensic research. Nevertheless, the same concerns regarding tournament administration problematize any increase in time limit, though I attempt to answer these objections below.

Consideration of Background Information

Background information, often the section where cuts are first made in a speech, provided in successful speeches rarely meets educational standards as students tend to not address the larger institutional contexts of their artifacts within their speech, often not even doing sufficient research about background information (Givens, 1994). Givens argued that this was problematic for several reasons, namely that it restricted the students' ability to select appropriate methods and that kept implications from addressing larger social structures and concerns. Hatfield-Edstrom (2011) argued that such a lack of context is only to be expected in a situation where students write rhetorical criticisms purely for competitive purposes, suggesting that coaches require students to write rhetorical criticisms initially for academic purposes and then adapt the papers for competition. She argued that such a process would increase the ability of the student to properly synthesize their ideas, provide stronger implications, and a more complex understanding and explanation of theory (Hatfield-Edstrom, 2011). Though concerns about adequate context are mentioned in research about the event, time limits and norms that preference implications over other speech content restrict the student's ability to provide necessary information (Hatfield-Edstrom, 2011).

Research Questions

Paine (2009), affirmed Lemaster's 2005 call, as he proposed a re-evaluation of the appropriateness of the use of a research question in competitive Rhetorical Criticism, noting that the increase in use of research questions is an attempt to mimic current academic practices. Kellam (2014), in an analysis of the 2011 NFA final round, similarly found, "omission of a research question in rhetorical criticism is an extremely rare occurrence" (p. 29). Certainly, many of the most popular rhetorical analysis, especially those geared toward undergraduate students, emphasize the importance of including research questions (Zdenek, 2009). Specifically, Foss' textbook, one of the most popular, presents the research question as, in essence, a requirement (Zdenek, 2009).

Paine (2009) notes that the trend toward using research questions is strongly influenced by judge comments on ballots, further arguing that these comments are based in a desire to create change, create deeper analysis, and base the rhetorical criticism done by forensics students on an academic foundation. However, Paine claims forensics students do not follow academic standards for research questions in practice: namely, that the research question is often written after, rather than before, selecting a method of analysis. Paine argues that this creates a problem in which students attempt to answer a question about an artifact using the same steps another author applied to a different artifact in order to answer a different question. Kellam argues, "Not all questions are bad questions…but when students are automatically expected to have a research question, or worse penalized if they do not, the forensic community encourages students to contrive questions into criticism that may not actually need them" (p. 29). Kellam proposed a solution to this problem posed by contrived research questions, namely that students should avoid using language that positions their research as social scientific and should make an argument, rather than ask a questions.

Method

Normative practices reinforced by judges rewarding certain behaviors has resulted in a change in the ways students use methods and theory in their speeches. White (2009) noted that students often cut corners when describing the aspects of their methodology, limiting their understanding of its application, a shift from the 1980s when a focus on method was considered primary (Murphy, 1988). Both Paine (2009) and White (2009) noted that students are now spending less time explaining and applying their method than examining their implications. This lack of time allocated to explanation and application of methods is especially problematic, considering the move from using more general methodologies in the

1980s (German, 1985; Shields & Preston, 1985) to much more specific, artifact-focused methodologies (see: Houge, 2008; Paine, 2009; White, 2009; Wood, 2008). Thus,there is a decrease in likelihood that the judge would be familiar with the method used by the student. In fact, Kellam (2014) argues that the use of the word *method* is, in fact, a misnomer, since it implies that, "that the process of criticism…should be performed step-by-step and without deviation…it calls us to imagine the speech as a distinctly scientific project" (pp. 30-31).

Additionally, White (2009) observed that students are expected to use at the most two, but usually one, scholarly resource for their method, which decreases both the depth and breadth of the student's understanding. Willoughby (2010) noted that students generally choose so-called *tenets* of the method, which are narrowly applied to the artifact. Similarly, Kay and Aden (1989) had written about their concerns with limited analysis generated by the use of a singular method, arguing that students should use a perspective developed from the work of several scholars. Students who spend even less time on applying than explaining the methodology (Murphy, 1988; Paine, 2009; White, 2008). Murphy (1988) argued that a lack of focus on applying the method to the text being examined is problematic because it limits the specificity of the analysis and called for more time to be spent on application, rather than on explanation of the method. Kay and Aden (1989), however, criticized Murphy's argument based on the concern that the suggestion would lead to a weaker understanding of methods and therefore, shallow critiques. Considering that student explanation of methods are already considered lacking, Kay and Aden are likely correct that no time can be spared from such explanation. Richardson (2008) noted that learning to balance explanation and application of methodology was especially important for students who desired to seek graduate education in the field. As the norms of the event have shifted away from a focus on method, concern over the educational value with regard to method has grown. To solve this problem, Kellam (2014) suggests a critical shift in language use, arguing for the use of words like *dynamics* instead of *tenets*, that students should analyze their artifact rather than apply tenets. They should employ theoretical perspectives rather than methods, and use language that speaks to possibilities like *can* rather than statements using the word *must*.

Insufficient Implications

Since the 1990s, a trend has developed in forensic writing toward encouraging scholars to advance theory. In Rhetorical Criticism, this trend is indicated by a shift toward the inclusion of implications regarding the methodology used by the speaker (Houge, 2008; Wood, 2008). Since the 1990s, students have tended to offer two implications, one about the artifact and the other building off the method (Givens, 1994; Houge, 2008; Wood, 2008). Though scholars have noted a trend toward allocating more time to developing critical conclusions, more time has not translated to a lack of problems (Houge, 2008; Paine, 2009; White, 2009; Wood, 2008). Primarily, concern is in two areas: confusion surrounding the distinction between method and theory, and lack of breadth in implications regarding method.

The distinction between theory and method in rhetorical criticism tends to be murky, with the terms often used interchangeably (White, 2009). This confusion is not limited to forensics; Bineham (1990) noted that a debate exists within Communication Studies at large over the roles that theory and methodology play in rhetorical analysis. He claimed:

> The theory-method relationship is explained in various fashions. A popular contemporary explanation of this relationship holds that theory and method converge in rhetorical criticism, so that no distinction exists between the two. Others maintain that theory and method are distinct; because method, even in rhetorical criticism, tests theory. (Bineham, 1990, p. 30)

Arguably, the lack of distinction between theory and method in forensics Rhetorical Criticism is due more to confusion within the discipline at large than to a lack of time; however, the trend toward including implications regarding methodology does impact the amount of time available for other tasks within the speech.

Because, as White (2009) noted, students tend to solely focus on the work of one author in their method section, the implications students are able to draw about their method/theory are limited in the breadth of their applicability. Houge (2008) and Wood (2008) further argued that a lack of understanding of both a theory's context and specific applications meant that implications which attempted to build theory tended to be weak or based on incorrect assumptions about the method. This concern is not new; Rosenthal (1985) argued that students should not be expected to build on theory within their speeches, because time constraints limited their ability to effectively do so. Because rewards from judges maintain an emphasis on theory-building in the implications section of these speeches, implications regarding method are unlikely to disappear soon or at the behest of concerned academics and coaches. We can, however, tackle contributing causes by educating our students more broadly by employing Kellam's (2014) recommendations and by considering the issue of time limits.

Proposed Rule Change for Communication Analysis/Rhetorical Criticism

As Billings (2011), Hinck (2003), Littlefield (2006), Lux (2014), and McBath (1975) have all emphasized, education continues to be valued in forensics; thus, critiques of the event based on pedagogical standards are warranted and should be welcomed by the forensic community. While Kellam (2014) is correct to critique the norms of language choices that so narrowly structure rhetorical criticism, I argue that changes in norms are only one area in which changes can be made to strengthen our students' depth of analysis. After all, as Benoit and Dean (1985) so aptly note, experiments with changes to Rhetorical Criticism, even when they have failed, have served to both "[invigorate] the practice of rhetorical criticism" and "[provide] insights which would have been difficult to obtain with traditional approaches" (p. 154). Thus, I propose, as has been debated frequently in the forensics community, that the time limit of the event be extended to twelve minutes, arguing that an extended time limit would provide the space needed to more thoroughly articulate the argument, theoretical perspectives, and analysis that Kellam (2014) and others so rightfully claim these speeches require. I will briefly provide the context of past arguments for an increase in the time limit and the ensuing objections before providing answers to these concerns.

Since the 1980s, forensics scholars have expressed concern over the ability for students to meet both judge and pedagogical expectations for effective rhetorical criticism. As Cutbirch (1985) stated, "It is impossible to conduct a meaningful, in-depth analysis of a worthwhile rhetorical artifact within the time allowed for the event" (p. 177). Many scholars have noted that the expectations of judges exceed what can be effectively and ethically accomplished within a ten-minute time limit (Green & Schnoor, 1990; Levasseur & Dean, 1989; O'Rourke, 1985; White, 2009). A primary objection to increased time limits came from tournament directors who were concerned about tournaments running according to the schedule, noting a problem where question-asking caused tournaments to run long (Green & Schnoor, 1990; O'Rourke, 1985). Another concern, similarly present in the debate over question-asking, was that giving increased time limits in rhetorical criticism would be unfair to participants in other events (Green & Schnoor, 1990; Levasseur & Dean, 1989; O'Rourke, 1985).

While I disagree with Green and Schnoor's (1990) assertion that tournament considerations with regard to time should overrule potential educational benefits, tournament

logistics still deserve attention. Rounds of Rhetorical Criticism could be run with five competitors, rather than six, thus solving the time problem. While the argument could be made that such a structural change would increase the number of sweepstakes points available within Rhetorical Criticism, the increase, if any, would be incremental, as tournament directors already frequently make adjustments to round sizes based on number of competitors in the event and last-minute drops (M. Dreher, personal communication, December 1, 2014). However, if the tournament director desired, points adjustments could be made in tab to offset the possible increased opportunity to earn points as follows, per a personal correspondence with M. Dreher (December 1, 2014):

> Say you do use a multiplier in CA. Example: 18 people in CA. Normally, 3 sections of 6. In the [author] proposal, we now have 4 sections (2 of 5, 2 of 4). To be fair, the multiplier becomes 3/4. 36 people in CA. Normally 6 sections of 6. In the [author] proposal, we have either 7 sections (6 of 5 and 1 of 6), or we have 9 sections of 4. Then the multiplier is $6/9 = 2/3$ or 6/7 (para. 21).

In the past three years of the NFA national tournament and the AFA-NIET, running rounds of Communication Analysis/Rhetorical Criticism in sections of five, rather than six, would only have increased sections by, at most, five, based on the tab sheets and schematics of the tournaments. Compared to the amount of sections in Prose and Program Oral Interpretation (AFA-only), the amount of sections for Communication Analysis/Rhetorical Criticism would have still remained significantly less (except for the 2013 AFA, where CA would have tied Prose for the most sections if this rule was applied).

Regarding the relative fairness of increasing time limits in Rhetorical Criticism, I argue that time limits of forensics events should reflect the relative burdens of evidence in each event. The Code of Ethics of both the National Forensics Association (2014) and the American Forensics Association (2009) require students to accurately represent the evidence they cite. Kelly et al. (2014) further argued that education and ethics are intrinsically-linked, writing, "The basic premise that must function as the foundation for this form of learning is a stringent code that compels students to make ethical choices as a foundational consideration of audience" (p. 43). Impromptu and Extemporaneous Speaking have had substantially lower speaking time allocations, without substantial complaint, than the rest of the speaking events because we understand the required evidence in these events to be lower than that of other speeches. We do not expect speakers in Impromptu to provide more than a brief explanation of whatever principle or story they use to illustrate their point; similarly, in Extemporaneous, we expect recent evidence to support student assertions, but limit our expectations due to the 30-minute preparation time period. In Rhetorical Criticism, however, the structure of the event has provided a widespread ethical dilemma with regard to the evidence provided by students, in that students must either provide a light, likely inaccurate, summary of a method or perform poorly if they focus too much on methods and not enough on implications.

Though critiques of evidence in Persuasion, After Dinner Speaking, and Informative have been made, the focus has been more on inaccuracy and less on complexity, making room for the argument that these speeches are able to meet judge and pedagogical expectations in the provided time. This does not mean that Rhetorical Criticism is a more elite event, in the same way that we would not consider Impromptu and Extemporaneous to have less standing than other events. However, in Rhetorical Criticism, if Kellam's (2014) suggestion for a focus on theoretical perspective is to be implemented, additional time for explanation of the complexity of theory is necessary. If, as White (2009) noted, the constraints of time and length limit the ability of the student to provide an accurate, ethical presentation of existing research, then the Rhetorical Criticism time limit is both a problem of

ethics and of education. The current requirements of the event allow students to perform competitively well while presenting a limited and possibly skewed understanding of the theories and methods they use. If the structure of a particular event has created a widespread ethical dilemma, in that students must either provide a light, likely inaccurate, summary of a method or perform poorly if they focus too much on methods and not enough on implications, then the structure of the event itself ought to change. Thus, to further the balance between competitive success and educational/ethical standards, the time limit for Rhetorical Criticism should be extended to twelve minutes. If, after experimentation, two minutes is not adequate to resolve ethical concerns over theory use, the time limit can be revisited.

Conclusion

With the goal of strengthening the educational impact of competing in the Rhetorical Criticism event, I argue that the association should experiment with a change by extending the time limit for the event to twelve minutes. This change would greatly increase the ability of students to respond to the critiques of forensics scholars regarding the depth of their analysis and the ethical use of theory. While problematic event norms will not change quickly, adding two-minutes will require coaches and competitors to make intentional choices on how to use the additional time. As they make those decisions, I would urge students and their mentors to consider the scholarship written regarding the event, both in the past and more recently. An additional two minutes represents an opportunity to enact more time-consuming experiments with content and form and to bring speeches closer to the pedagogical standards of our home discipline. Throughout the life of this event, forensics scholars have challenged norms and attempted to raise the bar: Let's give our students the time to effectively and ethically respond.

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The Teaching of Creativity:
Process, Product, Environment, and Assessment

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Teaching creativity is an issue gaining more attention. Businesses and universities alike are looking for ways to promote creative and innovative thinking. As universities look for ways to teach and assess creativity, interscholastic speech and debate competition should be held up as a model for such efforts. Through a combination of iterative performances, the mastering of domain knowledge, an environment that encourages/rewards creativity, and feedback based on the Consensual Assessment Technique, forensics offers an ideal environment for students to learn the process of developing creative products.

Interscholastic speech and debate activities (forensics) can teach a variety of skills: critical thinking (Allen, Berkowitz, Hunt, & Louden, 1999; Hill, 1983; Holm & Carmack, 2012; Milsap, 1998; Rhodes, 1961; Williams, McGee, & Worth, 2001); public speaking (Allen, Berkowitz, Hunt, & Louden, 1999; Bartanen &Littlefield, 2015; Colbert & Biggers, 1985; Millsap, 1998; Stenger, 1999); argumentation; literary analysis (Endres, 1988; Lewis, 1988; Lindemann, 2002); character development (Dimock, 2008; McBath (1984); persuasion; analytic skills (Aden, 2002; Allen, Berkowitz, Hunt, & Louden, 1999; Hill, 1993; Semlak & Shandrow, 1976); and research and writing skills (Rogers, 2002; Semlak & Shandrow, 1976. McBath (1975, p. 2) tells us, "Forensics should develop students' communicative abilities, especially the abilities to analyze controversies, select and evaluate evidence, construct and refute arguments, and understand and use the values of the audience as warrants for belief."

In addition, competitive speech and debate helps students develop aspects of their personalities including self-confidence (Holm & Carmack, 2012; Sauro, 2008). A key component of the oral interpretation of literature is emoting empathy which teaches students to see the world from the perspective of others and help us understand the human condition (McBath, 1984). Because of the nature of the activity and the time students devote to travel and event preparation, competitors' time management skills, organizational skills, leadership skills, and creativity are likely to be far more developed than college students who don't face these issues. It is the issue of creativity upon which this article will focus. Forensics provides students with the best possible environment for the development of their creative abilities. Forensics is more than just a creative outlet; through their participation in forensics students are taught to be creative.

To fully understand the issue of creativity in forensics we will look at the need for creativity in our society, then define exactly what we mean by creativity, examine how the activity of forensics fosters creativity, and finally look at how the assessment process in forensics is ideal for promoting, fostering, teaching, and rewarding creativity.

Defining Creativity

Justice Potter Stewart gave us a solid analogy to use for defining creativity when he said he knew pornography when he saw it. Most people can identify creativity when they see it, but to set down parameters that define creativity is more difficult. Part of the problem is that creativity is like, and in some cases overlapping with, several other issues such as innovation, divergent thinking, novelty, and originality. Within creativity research, scholars have identified two levels of creativity; *big C* creativity and *little c* creativity (Schlee & Harich, 2014). "Big C" creativity is that which is demonstrated by individuals who are well-known and eminent in their domain, the proverbial creative genius (e.g. Steve Jobs, Thomas Edison, Leonardo Da Vinci, etc.). "Little c" creativity is that which is demonstrated through everyday problem-solving by relatively ordinary people (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; McWilliam & Dawson, 2008, Simonton, 2012). Creativity researchers have also identified type A and Type B creativity. "Type B creativity is what educators teach in their classrooms by the means of methods, tools, strategies, and other processes such as brainstorming, visualization, imagination, mind mapping, lateral thinking, questioning, problem reversals and examination of opposites." (Sani, et al, 2011, p. 148-149). They go on to explain that Type A creativity doesn't follow any rule and is not controlled by habit or choice. When children exhibit Type A creativity people label it genius or gifted. "This type of creativity cannot be taught because it is a spontaneous activity." (Sani, et al, 2011, p. 149) These are all valuable observations and distinctions, but they do not provide us with a definition of creativity.

Creativity researchers come from a variety of fields: cognitive psychology, sociology, communication, business, the fine arts, engineering, software development, education, and the list goes on. Each field has a slightly different approach, use, and definition of/for creativity. All creativity is not created equal. "There has been an extensive debate in the psychological literature, for example, about whether creativity is a general phenomenon that applies across contexts, or a domain-specific skill that does not generalize to alternate areas or disciplines" (Marquis & Vajoczki, 2012, p. 2). The idea of creativity transcending domain boundaries is important. If participation in forensics teaches a student the fundamentals of oral interpretation and they master that skill set and then become creative, innovative, and adventurous, they might exhibit creativity in the way they perform literature. In common parlance they push the envelope. They find a new (and ideally better) way of performing literature. They exhibit creativity by producing a product that is novel, effective, and whole (Mishra, Henriksen, & the Deep-Play Research Group, 2013). If we then move the students into a different domain we hope the skills of creativity transfer. If they can cross apply their creativity to public speaking or debate events we would see the skill as transferable. But the argument could be made that all of these events are just variations on a theme. If forensics students transfer the creativity they developed in preparing events for competition to work within their major (engineering, law, physics, economics, etc.) we would be more inclined to see the skill as transferable. Prior scholarship on forensics pedagogy has presented strong evidence that participation in forensics competition results in a variety of increased skill sets. McMillan and Todd-Mancilas' (1991) surveyed forensics participants and found that 89 percent reported improvement in critical thinking skills, 89 percent reported improved organizational, 74 percent reported improved research, and 82 percent reported improved writing skills. Rogers (2005) found that students with a forensics background had higher levels of social responsibility, cultural understanding, and more job offers upon graduation and others found forensics participation correlates to academic success (Colbert & Biggers, 1985; Derryberry, 1998; Hill, 1982; Holm & Carmack, 2012; Jones, 1994; Rogers, 2005; Williams, McGee, & Worth, 2001). It stands to reason that if cultural understanding and

academic success are transferable skills, creativity should be a transferable skill as well. To understand how participation in forensics can be a portable skill we need to understand what creativity is.

Ford (1996) defines creativity as "a domain-specific, subjective judgment of the novelty and value of an outcome of a particular action" (p. 1115). Ford is not saying that creativity is domain specific, but rather the evaluation of creativity must be conducted by someone with domain-specific knowledge. If a person who rarely attends the theatre sees a performance where the actors directly interact with the audience members rather than confining themselves to an interaction between characters on stage they might view this as being very creative. But someone who regularly attends the theatre or majored in theatre would recognize breaking the fourth wall as a fairly common theatrical technique. While the technique was creative the first time it was used, its use today is imitative, derivative, and even commonplace. But one would only know that if they had some domain expertise. (This idea is explored in greater detail in the assessment section of the paper when the Consensual Assessment Technique is explained.)

Creativity is often associated with divergent thinking (Ashton-James & Chartland, 2009; Cropley, 2006; Erbil & Dogan, 2012; Guilford, 1967; Moore, et al, 2009). As Erbil and Dogan (2012) explain, convergent thinking seeks to find *the* answer or the *best* answer. Cropley (2006) adds, "It emphasizes speed, accuracy, logic, and the like and focuses on recognizing the familiar, reapplying set techniques, and accumulating information." (p. 391). Erbil and Dogan (2012) go on to explain that divergent thinking involves looking for or creating multiple alternative answers, seeking possibilities, making unexpected combinations and associations, and finding unexpected and unconventional answers. Ashton-James and Chartand (2009) claim both convergent and divergent thinking are needed for creativity: they tell us "being creative requires both convergent and divergent thinking capabilities to differing degrees depending upon the nature of the problem." (p.1036) an idea echoed by Cropley (2006). Moore et al (2009) contend "divergent thinking is an important measurable component of creativity." (p. 267). But the reality is this information does not provide a definition of what constitutes creativity.

Clearly there is a connection between divergent thinking and creativity. But even Guilford, the researcher who coined the terms convergent and divergent thinking, maintained that divergent thinking and creativity could not be equated. Most researchers have found creativity to be difficult to define. "Definitions that focus on the attributes of creative products have become widely acknowledged as the most useful approach for empirical study and theory development" (Ford, 1996, p. 1114).

Isaksen, Stead-Dorval and Treffinger (2011) define creativity by its characteristics and applications. They also differentiate it from innovation saying that creativity uses imagination, is a process, it generates, is novel, and soft. This contrasts with innovation which involves implementation, a product, developing, usefulness, and hard. Amabile (1987) is a leading expert in creativity research and has posited that a "product or response is creative if it is a novel and appropriate solution to an open-ended task" (p. 227). Ford (1996) tells us, "Researchers and laypersons seem to agree that creativity refers to something that is both novel and in some sense valuable" (p. 1114). Mueller, Melwani, and Goncalo (2012) stress, "novelty is the key distinguishing feature of creativity beyond ideas that are merely well conceived" (p. 13). However, "speaking gibberish, for example, may be novel but since it is not meaningful, it is not, by such a definition, an example of creativity because it is not useful" (Aldous, 2007, p. 177). This combination of novelty and value/usefulness seem to be at the center of most contemporary research on creativity (Aldous, 2007; Mishra & Henriksen, 2013; Mueller, Melwani, Goncalo, 2012; Simonton, 2012). Compton (2004) discusses the importance of novelty in forensics in terms of topics, literature, and argument

choices. Assuming that it is also useful, the more novel or unique an idea, example, argument, or piece of literature, the more value it has in competition (Compton, 2004). Creativity is an integral part of competitive forensics.

For the purposes of this article creativity is defined the way Simonton (2012) explains it, "creativity concerns the psychological phenomenon where someone comes up with an idea or product that is simultaneously novel and useful" (p. 217). But Lewis and Elaver (2014) state "creativity and analytical thinking do not have to be mutually exclusive" (p. 236). Rigor is not the enemy of imagination; critique does not thwart creativity. Those are two of the important qualities forensics brings to the creative process. As the article explores later, critique and revision are critical to the process of developing creativity. It is through practice, alteration, adaptation, and revisions that students begin to see creativity as a process rather than simply a product that appears as if by the magical inspiration of an external muse. Creativity can be learned and therefore it can be taught.

The Need for Creativity

Preparing college students for a working world is a complex and varied task. Students need to have a solid grasp of the technical aspects of the field they intend to enter. No one would argue that point. But post-secondary education has also identified other skills sets that seem to be universally needed such as solid interpersonal and public speaking skills, strong writing/grammar skills, and a basic knowledge of math, science, and computers (Eisner, 2010). With input from business most institutes of higher education have also taken steps to help students develop leadership skills the ability to work in a group or on a team. Higher education wants to produce critical thinkers; we want our graduates to be savvy consumers of information. Liberal arts institutions want students to have a familiarity with history, the arts, the sciences, other languages, and, more recently, we want them to have intercultural, multicultural, and/or cross-cultural experiences. These are all skills and experiences that make our students better suited to the workplace and help them become well-rounded citizens. Once again, a forensics education can help provide educational opportunities in most of these areas. Bartanen (1998) suggests that forensics programs teach to the heart of the liberal arts institution's agenda and claims "the forensics program can serve as a model of proven effectiveness for learner-centered pedagogies" (p. 1).

Higher education has met or attempted to meet, the changing needs of our businesses and communities. To greater or lesser extents we have been successful in helping students develop the skills employers are looking for in graduates. "After years of seeking students with leadership skills, companies today are putting similar levels of emphasis on those with creative capabilities" (Lewis & Elaver, 2014, p. 235). The United States has long been recognized as a mecca for intellectual and creative processes. After all we put a man on the moon, we produce what are arguably the best cinematic creations in the world, we have broken countless world records, and our artists have created countless highly acclaimed master pieces. But it would seem the creativity landscape is changing on a global scale. The United States fell just south of the top ten creative countries on The Global Creative-Class Index. We placed 11th out of the 25 countries on the index (Florida, 2004). That can be a significant long-term problem for the US because creativity and talent seem to be inextricably linked and talent goes where talent can best thrive. Ultimately, "wherever creativity goes−and, by extension, wherever talent goes−innovation and economic growth are sure to follow" (Florida, 2004, p. 123). The brain drain might very well give way to the creativity drain.

A seeming dip in creativity in college graduates has not gone unnoticed by big business. As Berrett noted, "IBM surveyed 1,500 chief executives in 33 industries around the world in 2010 to gauge how much they valued characteristics like creativity, integrity, management discipline, rigor, and vision in an increasingly volatile, complex, and interconnected world. Creativity topped the list." (Berrett, 2013). The reason is apparent to some: "Unfortunately, even though creativity is crucial to business and management success, higher education generally does not devote sufficient attention to it" (Lewis & Elaver, 2014, p. 236). Creativity is often viewed as a soft skill; like a sense of humor many believe you either have it or you don't, you either are a very creative person or you are not. That is not to say that you have no creativity, but your creative genius is not as good as other's and that is a fact of life because creativity cannot be taught (Gow, 2014). But that is not true (Amabile, 1998; Davis & Rimms, 1985; Epstein, Schmidt, & Warfel, 2008; Marquis & Vajoczkl, 2012; Schlee & Harich, 2014; Simonton, 2012; Sternberg, 2006; Tepper & Kuh, 2011; Torrance, 1987). Not only *can* creativity be taught, it *needs* to be taught.

But the United States will need to make some changes to how we approach teaching creativity if we are to be successful in creating an educational environment and pedagogical approach that will foster creativity in our students. Because "As calls for enhancing the ability of business students to think creatively and develop innovative goods and services have become universal, researchers in the area of creativity have expressed concerns that the U.S. educational system may not foster creative thinking" (Schlee & Harich, 2014, p. 133). Because even though creativity is critical to success in business and management higher education has not made a concerted effort to devote sufficient attention to it (Lewis & Elaver, 2014).

But the problem may be greater than simply not teaching creativity. Tepper and Kuh (2011) elaborate, explaining that the US educational system is "undermining creativity in K-12 education through relentless standardized testing and the marginalization of subjects like art and music" (p. B13). No one is claiming that there is a nefarious plot to undermine creativity in the United States educational system. But we cannot deny that we have prioritized other issues over creativity. We have an expressed promotion of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) especially for young female students. These are all fields that drum analytical, linear, and classic scientific-process driven thinking into students. That is not inherently bad: I think we all agree that a greater understanding of the domain knowledge of these fields will lead to more discovery in those fields. But one could argue that "creative acts are the definitive episodes that distinguish successful innovations from less noteworthy efforts" (Ford, 1996, p. 1113). The better argument is not that we should teach creativity instead of domain specific information, but rather that we should teach creativity as part of and alongside domain specific knowledge.

"The United States must invest generously in its creative infrastructure. Education reform must, at its core, make schools into places that cultivate creativity" (Florida, 2004, p. 134). The benefits of teaching our students to be more creative is not limited to success in business for the individual after they graduate. The impact is far broader than that. It "has been indicated that creativity not only is conducive to learning, student achievement, and cognitive development but also is a predictor of academic success" (Rinkevich, 2011, p. 219). Strengthening the creativity of our current students "appears to lead to a measurable increase in creative expression in an organizational setting" (Epstein, Schmidt, & Warfel, 2008, p. 12). Finally, on a level that transcends the working world and speaks directly to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, "a more recent tradition, starting with humanistic psychology and continuing with the positive psychology movement, argues that creativity is a sure sign of self-actualization and subjective well-being" (Simonton, 2012, p. 220). Teaching and promoting creativity improves education, increases creativity in organization, and can lead to

self-actualization. Creativity seems to be a pervasive and valuable addition to individuals, organizations, and societies.

It is no doubt because of the increased need for and call for creativity that many organizations in higher education have started aggressive programs to promote the teaching of creativity. Stanford University requires incoming students to take a course in creative expression (Berrett, 2013). It could be a coincidence that there is a high school forensics event by the same name. Berrett goes on to talk about programs at Carnegie Mellon, Bryant University, Adrian College, the University of Kansas, and the City University of New York that are all designed to teach students to access their creative side and be more creative. Even the US military is taking steps to train our men and women in uniform to find more creative solutions to problems. Last spring I was asked to be a part of the Marine Corps University's Quality Enhancement Plan for Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accreditation. After surveying key officers and enlisted personnel and examining after action reports, the university decided the greatest need across the Marine Corps was for an increased use of creativity to solve complex problems. As a result the QEP Team proposed a center for creative problem solving be integrated into the university and be used to train faculty to train students to find creative solutions to problems that occur on and off the battlefield. That center (the Center for Applied Creativity) opened its doors in the fall of 2015.

Creativity is a valuable attribute in any organization and it is an area in which the United States has started to fall behind. While standardized testing in K-12 and a regimented curriculum in higher education may have pushed the development of creativity to the side in our classrooms, extra-curricular and co-curricular activities often keep creativity at the core of what they do and often teach our students to be creative when the classroom experiences they have fail to do so. Going to college should be about learning and developing all of our students' abilities, including their creative abilities. As Simonton (2012) says, "no student should receive a college degree without knowing something about creativity or without learning how to be creative" (p. 220).

The Teaching of Creativity

The teaching of creativity has been an area of study for many researchers for decades. There are those who will contend that creativity is an innate trait and not learnable. As Simonton (2012) reminds us, "Although the nature–nurture issue now constitutes a general controversy in developmental psychology, it is important to remember that the debate first centered on understanding creativity" (p. 219). After extensive reviews of the available research on creativity and the teaching of creativity, both Torrance (1987) and Davis and Rimm (1985) conclude that creativity is definitely teachable. While the current higher education system seems to be primarily focused on teaching hard skills that are easily and objectively assessable on paper and pencil tests, Lewis & Elaver (2014) remind us that "creativity and analytical thinking do not have to be mutually exclusive" (p. 236). Quite the opposite, all of the content and convergent thinking is needed for students to be creative within a given domain. "The major components of creative thinking processes and creativity are a knowledge base; general as well as domain-specific skills; metacognitive skills in planning, monitoring, and evaluation" (Feldhusen & Ban, 1995, p. 242). The need for domain specific rigor is essential for creativity to prosper. As Cropley (2006) sums it up "knowledge provides a well from which ideas are drawn" (p. 395).

Teaching students to be creative does not require advanced study in creativity. It may require forethought and planning to create assignments that foster and encourage creative thought. It would certainly require teaching the domain-specific knowledge needed for creativity to take a student down a novel and useful path (think teaching them the box so they

can learn to think outside the box). It would certain require promoting an environment that is welcoming to creative thoughts and products. But it is certainly not outside the realm of possibility for any educated instructor who wants to promote creativity.

The Uniquely Human Factor

None of this should deny the fact that some people seem to be more creatively inclined than others. In the same way that a novice who first picks up a paintbrush and blank canvas might produce something that looks more like art than the novice on the next easel, some people more generate creative products more readily than others. The role of a person's personality (which might be the product of genetic coding or environment) influences creativity. Creative people "show broad interests, an attraction to complexity, self-confidence, aesthetic sensitivity, and an emphasis on the value of originality and independence, and they tend to reject the narrow and the mediocre and to cherish the general and the fundamental" (Hemlin, Allwood, & Martin, 2008, p. 205). That is not to say these characteristics can't be fostered in those who do not initially seem to have them. "Generativity Theory suggests, among other things, that creative potential in individuals is universal and perhaps limitless" (Epstein, Schmidt, & Warfel, 2008, p. 7).

A person's interests and passions drive their use of time and resources. They won't set out to be creative but they will fulfill their goals and further their passions in creative ways (Ford, 1996). In other words, creativity seems to be intrinsically motivated. It would appear that "intrinsic interest is not only sought after more than ever, but also a necessary catalyst to propel individual into and through creative work." (Lewis & Elaver, 2014, p. 237). McMillan and Todd-Mancilas (1991) reported only 7.6 percent of forensics students surveyed reported the desire to win awards was what motivated them to participate in forensics. Clearly, forensics students are internally and intrinsically motivated.

The College Environment and Creativity

After their extensive review of the available research on creativity and the teaching of creativity both Torrance (1987) and Davis and Rimm (1985) conclude that creativity is definitely teachable. Epstein, Schmidt and Warfel (2008) come right out and say "Creativity competencies can be trained." (p. 12) Many researchers have conducted empirical studies related to teaching creativity. Schlee and Harich (2014) note that other researchers have shown the impact of teaching creative can result in trained groups outperforming control groups by roughly one standard deviation.But institutions of higher education have been criticized for emphasizing a narrow, skill-based curriculum (Tepper & Kuh, 2011) that is not conducive to creativity. Westby and Dawson (1995) go so far as to say "schools may provide an inhospitable environment for creative students" (p. 8). Livingston (2010) explains that the traditional educational environment in colleges and universities is not conducive to the teaching of creativity. He writes, "If the academy wishes to center its mission on honing creativity, it can best do so by pedagogies that maximize opportunities for students to practice being inventive" (p. 60). Competitive speech activities are a direct fit for the kind of environment in which Livingston and others claim the teaching of creativity will be most successful.

Researchers have found several factors that contribute to developing creativity and creative products in the educational environment. As the University of Kentucky laid out the requirements for creativity courses offered across the curriculum, "The common thread, no matter the discipline, is that students must produce an original work, be evaluated by their peers, and revise their work based on that feedback" (Berrett, 2013). Amabile (1996) pointed out that practice and learning is necessary for creativity to occur, an idea Simonton (2012) furthers reminding us that we "acquire domain-specific expertise by means of deliberate

practice" (p. 219). Deliberate practice is differentiated from simply repeating a task until you can complete the same task each time in the exact same manner. Deliberate practice focuses on intently practicing with the intent of improving each time: Vince Lombardi's idea of practice not making perfect and only perfect practice making perfect. Hemlin, Allwood, and Martin (2008) say group interaction and time for reflection is critical. Livingston (2010) emphasizes the importance of practice, and Marquis and Vajoczki (2012) says the environment in which students engage in creative activities must support "risk taking, and [attempt] to increase students' internal motivation" (p. 2). Finally, Erbil and Dogan (2012) say, "It is reasonable to say that creativity occurs in the iterative processes of convergence and divergence" (p. 75).

This laundry list of criteria laid out by scholars could just as easily be a list of the defining characteristics of competitive forensics programs. Assuming that a coach isn't unethically writing speeches for students and students aren't just duplicating a performance their coach *models* for the students, the process most forensics students and coaches follow is one of creativity. Forensics students become domain experts (in poetry, or a specific invention or policy), regularly create original works, receive feedback from peers (and experts), revise their work based on feedback, engaging in critical reflection, conduct deliberate practice, take risks, and through the iterations of both convergent and divergent thought, present a unique, original, an often engaging performance that is a result of this creativity-generating process. Perhaps the best part is that these students are largely internally motivated to engage in this process. While we give them awards, those are usually not why students compete in forensics. They do it because it is fun and they want to do it.

While a typical college classroom does offer students the opportunity to produce original creative work, there isn't always time or incentive to also allow students the opportunity to acquire domain-specific knowledge, practice, interact with a group of students interested in their creative product, take the time to reflect on their process and product, take risks, find internal motivation, and repeat the process of creative development through convergent and divergent thinking. But forensics competition does all of those things and as Duncan (2013) points out directors of forensics ask students to commit years of their life with only the promise of helping them improve" (p. 18). At that point, the creative process has become as familiar to them as their own reflection in the mirror.

Obviously this is not a definitive list of the environmental factors necessary for creativity to flourish, but the list is sound and valid. We must also allow for the individual's personality, a confluence of ideas, perspective-taking, exposure to ideas, mental agility, and plain luck. "Some famous thinkers such as Ernst Mach, Etienne Souriau, or Alexander Bain have even concluded that luck is the main factor in creativity" (Cropley 2006, p. 393). Chance meetings with people with differing viewpoints, random happenstances, and serendipity all play a role in creative development. But, again, forensics activity brings together a confluence of intelligent and creative people who articulate philosophies, perspectives, arguments, ideas, and literature from a variety of domains. While a university might be a deep pool of knowledge, forensics activities is a fast moving river of ideas and information.

The Forensics Environment and the Teaching of Creativity

In addition to the process forensics teaches, it also creates an environment that is uniquely suited to fostering creativity. The environment created by competitive speech and debate programs is far more conducive to creativity than a traditional classroom setting. Several creativity researchers and scholars have identified characteristics and influences that will promote, foster, and encourage the development of creativity and creative products (Amabile,

1987 & 1998; Berrett, 2013; Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; Davis & Rimm, 1985; Erbil & Dogan, 2012; Ford 1996; Guilford, 1967; Lewis & Elaver, 2014; Marquis & Vajoczki, 2012; McWilliam & Dawson, 2008; Pink, 2006; Simonton, 2012; Sonnentag, 2000; and Torrance, 1987). Tepper & Kuh (2011) stands out and provides a list of seven activities that develop creativity. To understand how forensics competition provides an ideal environment for students to develop creatively and creativity we will look at Tepper and Kuh's seven typical methods or activities for developing creativity:

1. **Approaching things in non-routine ways by using analogy and metaphor.** Other than the obvious exploration of metaphor and analogy in literature forensics student also explore these devices as a way to help audiences understand complex issues in informative speeches and as examples in persuasive speeches and debate rounds. When a student uses an apple's shape and skin as and analog for the magnetic fields and crust of the earth in a speech on the Earth's magnetic poles as Robert Cannon did in his national championship speech, he is using something tangible that we understand to explain something theoretical and unfamiliar. Analogies and metaphors are common techniques in informative speeches. They are also common literary components and something forensics students use and hear others use at every tournament they attend. Approaching things in a non-routine way become routine.

2. **Proposing *what if* propositions and reframing problems**. This is a common technique in literature as well, but it is often used by speakers in After Dinner Speaking and parliamentary debate rounds as well. What ADS speakers asks us to consider the idea that maybe we need confrontational rhetoric or to reframe the way we think of death, they are asking us to see our world through a different lens or look at an issue from a new perspective. When debaters engage in *hypo testing* (taking the opponent's ideas to their logical extension) they are not only seeing from their opponent's perspective, they are extending that position to build an argument.

3. **Keen observation and the ability to see new or unexpected patterns**. Paying close attention to the language of literature, finding and applying a rhetorical model to a communication artifact, generating an extemporaneous speech on economic trends, and finding social trends that become part of an after dinner speech are just a few examples of this method at play in forensics. Inductive reasoning is about building arguments from examples. When an impromptu speaker provides three or four examples to support or negate the claim being made by the prompt for the round, they are showing the audience that they have found a pattern that proves or disproves the claim. Where a student pulls together a program of literature about a common issue but from multiple perspectives, they are identifying patterns.

4. **Taking risks**. Nearly any forensic performance involves risk taking. To stand in front of an audience and portray a character, to embody that character, to emote the feelings of a character is to take a risk. To stand in front of a group and make an argument with passion and conviction to try to make an audience laugh with original humor is to take a risk. Duncan and Bonander (2015) discuss techniques for encouraging risk-taking behaviors in forensics students because, in general, risk taking can be competitively successful. The recommend that when coaches want to encourage risky behaviors they should frame the discussion in terms of the likelihood of judge's positive responses. If the coach knows some judges will really dislike the idea or approach but others will really like it, coaches can increase the likelihood of students engaging in the risky behavior if the discussion focuses on how some judges will really like it rather than mentioning that most will dislike it.

5. **Use critical feedback to make revisions and improve an idea**. This is a mainstay of forensics competition. The judges' ballots and feedback from peers and coaches promote learning and inspire transformation. Dozens of books (Faules, Rieke, & Rhodes, 1978; Hindman, Shackelford, & Schlottach, 1991; Klopf & Lahman, 1967; Swanson & Zeuschner, 1983), articles (Bartanen, 1990; Broeckelman, 2005; Elmer & VanHorn, 2008; Epping & Labrie , 2005; Lewis & Larsen, 1981; Mills, 1991; Morris, 2005; Preston, 1990; Scott & Birkholt, 1996; Verlinden, 2002) and convention papers address the importance and value of the ballot and judges' feedback in helping forensics competitors improve their performances. The activity cares so much about giving feedback to improve student performances of creative works that we train our judges to make them better at giving meaningful feedback (Holm & Foote, 2015). For active competitors it is rare to see a performance at the end of the year that is very similar to the performance they gave at the first tournament because of the constant process of revision and improvement.

6. **Bring people and resources together to create and implement novel ideas**. To bring together a collection of poetry for a program of poetry or a collection of mixed genres of literature for a Program Oral Interpretation (POI) would be one example. Finding a communication artifact and a rhetorical model that helps to explain why it has been successful or unsuccessful would be another. Identifying a problem in a persuasive or after dinner speech and proposing a solution that isn't readily apparent also involves the implementation of novel and useful ideas. But the truly important element in this blend is the human factor. When students and coaches interact and co-create performances and arguments both parties come away enriched from the experience. Peer-coaching programs, duos, debate pairings, and Readers Theatre groups are prime examples of the synergy that the activity offers that foster a unique blending of talent and resources to create a final product that is an amalgamation of the tangibles and intangibles brought together.

7. "**The expressive agility required to draw on multiple means (visual, oral, written, media related) to communicate novel ideas to others**" (Tepper and Kuh, 2011, p. B13) might as well be a description of forensic activities. I think one of the things people involved in forensics forget is that if you stopped the average college student or working professional and asked them to give a five minute speech on the contents of fortune cookie with less than two minutes to prepare most of them could not do it. Those who did would likely fumble through it pulling together random thoughts and trying to stretch it out to "make time." Forensics students know how to draw on visual and oral skills to present a message. That is really the easy part. They draw on rhetorical devices to help audiences understand extremely complex ideas. They master the art of emoting and expressing literature in a way that can literally cause an audience to stop breathing. They will learn to make an audience laugh, cry, understand, and question what they thought they knew. They will take these skills with them when they leave and they will use those skills every day at work, with their friends, and with their children.

   I recently had a discussion with a Captain in the Marine Corps about an issue he was struggling with for a paper he was writing. The issue was a military issue that I think I understood on a rudimentary level. After he explained what he wanted to do with the paper, he said something like "I'm just not sure where to take it from here." So I quickly outlined the ideas he had just run passed me, told him which claims he would need support for, and suggested two or three counter arguments that he should address in the paper. It was much easier that coaching a persuasion or helping to develop a debate case. When I looked up from the notes I was making for him he was

literally sitting there looking at me with his mouth hanging open. He said "How do you do that so fast? I might have been able to do that with a couple of weeks to think about it but you did it in two seconds and I didn't even think you were really paying attention that much." That skill is what forensics teaches; it is the mental agility that is needed for creativity and critical thinking.

While Tepper and Kuh (2011) provide cumulative characteristics of the kinds of activities and perspectives students learning to develop their creativity will find most helpful, other researchers have looked at the individual characteristics of creative organizations to see what organizational factors and climates best facilitate creativity. Hemlin, Allwood, and Martin (2008) found that encouraging supervisors, freedom to choose work assignments, and contact with researchers in neighboring research fields promote creativity. These would be common traits of successful forensics programs as well. In the same way that some workplace supervisors do not allow employees to choose assignments or mandate exactly how work is to be done, there are coaches who assign students to events and model for the students how the performance should look. These are not good coaches and they are not stimulating the students' creative abilities. At best, students of coaches who take this approach will never be better than the coach they are told to model. An extremely directive coach inherently limits the students' opportunity for growth and the development of creativity. Shapira (1995) points out that an organization's support for creative actions and willingness to use creative ideas are critical in promoting creativity. When students develop a new approach or technique and that approach or technique is functionally sound and improves the overall performance, other students will also adopt that approach. "In creative settings, exposure to creative exemplar products may invite imitation and as such influence creative performance" (Rook & van Knippenberg, 2011, p. 346). This idea is also proffered by Ashton-James & Chartand (2009). Duncan (2013) and Cronn-Mills and Schnoor (2003) both point out that many public speaking textbooks include sample speeches written by forensics students as exemplars. Students in the classroom and in competition feed off the creativity of forensics students.

The very nature of forensics teams also seem to support and promote creativity. Livingston (2010) says to promote creativity we need to embrace interdisciplinarity, allow students to mentor each other, and practice problem solving as a team game. Again, these are common practices of most forensics teams where extempers often file jointly and engage in weekly briefings by domain, or in debate activities where teams will work together to develop cases or scout other teams to help develop counterarguments, and of course peer coaching is a standard part of nearly every successful forensics program (Keefe, 1991). Hemlin, Allwood, and Martin (2008) discuss creativity in what they term creative knowledge environments "one where each individual has a number of tasks or projects and where experiences from one domain can exert a positive influence on another" (p. 206). The interdisciplinarity of forensics is clearly evident. Our activity is continually pushing participants to find new and fresh ways of presenting material. Ford (1996) contends that even the most creative people will fall back on uncreative solutions when they are in an organization that doesn't foster creativity. Because we, as an activity, are constantly rewarding creative (novel and valuable) ideas and approaches, we perpetuate creative development.

Even the aspects of our teams that we sometimes consider negative, such a disharmonious atmosphere in the vans or the constant turnover in membership as students leave the team through natural attrition and new members enter, are, according to Hemlin, Allwood, and Martin (2008), positive environments for fostering creativity. Friction provides

opportunity for new and creative solutions or approaches. The turnover in membership keeps ideas fresh and creativity flowing from multiple perspectives and people.

Assessing Creativity

Creativity is one of a myriad of criteria upon which forensics competitors are evaluated. Students are first evaluated by what would be considered domain specific criteria. For example, solid rhetorical composition, the building of an argument, and the mechanics of delivery are all criterion applied to public speakers. The choice of literature, character development, and development of a thematic program (when appropriate) are criteria applied to oral interpretation performances. Creativity is a nuance of forensic performance that accents but does not over power the fundamentals of the domains. When it comes to assessing creativity, researchers have been searching for a good method of determining what is and is not creative and who is and is not creative. "The most common test measuring the creative process was developed by Torrance" (Schlee & Harich, 2014, p. 134). For years the Torrance test (Torrance, 1987) in which, among other things, subjects are given ambiguous partial drawings and asked to draw the rest of the picture which were then rated by trained evaluators, was used to assess an individual's creativity. A comparison can be drawn to many aspects of forensics. For example while the Torrance test asks participants to complete a partially drawn picture, forensics asks students to complete a performance that is just words on a page or to complete a program of literature based just on an idea or a single poem. Then we assess the student's ability to fill in what isn't there (emotional context, delivery, context) with their own creativity.

Unfortunately, unlike forensics, the Torrance Test does not always translate well to real world applications. "When it comes to judging real-world creative products, few people look to divergent-thinking test scores, psychologist-defined scoring rubrics, or self-assessment checklists. They ask experts." (Kaufman & Baer, 2012, p. 83-84). Asking of experts is the basis for one of the most widely used creativity assessment methods today: the Consensual Assessment Technique (CAT) (Conti, Coon & Amabile, 1996; Hennessey & Amabile, 2010; and Kaufman & Baer, 2012). The CAT has been widely used for the last 30 years (Henessey & Amabile, 2010) and shows no significant racial or gender bias (Kaufman et al, 2010). Hennessey and Amabile (2010) found that the CAT yields coefficient alpha inter-rater reliabilities as high as 0.957. The system relies on the subject matter expertise of evaluators in their given fields, not on an expertise in the study of creativity. In short, the research shows that when you are an expert in a field (literature, rhetoric, performance studies, argumentation, etc.) you are uniquely qualified to recognize a product within your field that demonstrates a novel, imaginative product that is viable and useful.

A judge's ballot is essentially a form of CAT. Students are evaluated, the quality of their work holistically is judged, students are given feedback including an indication of the quality of their performance compared to others in the round of competition (the rank in the round); and then a second score that is the judge's evaluation of the quality of the performance where compared to a larger body of work they have seen over the years (the rating for the round). This system is not without its flaws. If you only needed three experts to assess a panel of six participants finding qualified experts would not be difficult on a college campus especially when other schools are sending their experts to help with the assessment. But tournaments are usually looking for a dozen or more judges at the same time to judge final rounds. Typically is a judge has been used in an event in preliminary rounds tournament managers will try to avoid using them to judge final rounds. Add to that a body of hired judges who may feel insecure about taking a strong stance without knowing what the norms are and the hired/lay judges who judge primarily on delivery or whether or not the speaker made them laugh and the assessment gets even more difficult. Throw in events with

drastically differing styles and content between speakers, for example, a round of Dramatic Interpretation could have a monologue; a dialogue;performances that break the fourth wall; programs of literature; performances that involve impressions or characterizations; content that is hilariously funny; content that is heart-wrenchingly sad; people who sing; and people who mime, all competing in the same event in the same room. Even for seasoned judges with high levels of domain knowledge, comparing very different types of performances is hard. But to evaluate the level of creativity students bring to bear on a humorous performance and compare that to the level of creativity another student offered in a dramatic performance is all but impossible.

It is helpful if judges have a shared frame of reference for what criteria should be used to evaluate events or even genres. Several scholars have tried to identify the best or most commonly used criteria for various events. Some researchers looked at specific events like Hansen (1988) and Holm (1990) who looked at the evaluative criteria of after dinner speaking or Harris (1987) who looked at rhetorical criticism. Others sought commonalities by genre of event: Jensen (1990) searched for the evaluative criteria of public address events, Elmer and VanHorn (2003) identified commonalities of judging criteria and feedback in oral interpretation events, and Harris (1986) looked at the judging criteria of limited preparation events. While Olson (1989) identified evaluation criteria for all NFA individual events, Lewis and Larsen (1981) looked at the inter-rated reliability of forensics judges, and Kristine Bartanen (1990) analyzed the impact of the criteria referenced ballot. Clearly forensics scholars have devoted great energy to identifying pedagogically sound criteria by which forensics students can be fairly evaluated.

Any coach or competitor who has been to even a handful of tournaments will tell you, forensics judges do not have a 0.957 interrater reliability rating. That is probably the result of the complexity of variables that go into evaluating a performance. While creativity (e.g. pushing the envelope, taking risks) is most often rewarded by judges, it is but one of many criterion. The creative act itself also needs to fit the performance and the event. It also needs to add something unique to the performance without violating the written rules of the events. For example, a program of literature on our perception of time could be creative if it was twelve minutes long and the last two minutes were people explaining why they need more time or wishing they had more time. More than likely it would still be ranked poorly in a final round. But performances that violate unwritten rules or norms are often rewarded. I remember a program of literature on anachronisms where the "*introduction*" came near the end. The introduction being placed out of its normal place in the timing of the performance contributed to the performance while violating the performance norm of having the introduction at the beginning of the performance. In the same regard, when a duo (who would go on to become national champions) began by pulling one another into a sort of side-body hug I was ready to chastise them on the ballot for touching their partner during a performance (my interpretation of the idea of off-stage focus would prohibit that). But when they announced they were conjoined twins I had to shift my paradigm and actually reward them for their creativity.

Creativity is just one criterion used to evaluate performances. The issues with interrater reliability (Lewis & Larsen, 1981) is not that judges are unable to agree on what is and is not creative, but rather they have differing opinions on what criteria should be used to evaluate a performance and what weight each of those criterion should be given. In a fairly thorough exploration of creativity assessment instruments, no instruments were found that were better suited to assessing creativity in a forensic setting than the CAT. So it is not surprising it (the ballot) is the de facto assessment instrument in forensics. As coaches it is important that will have discussions with students about what they see as the salient criteria by which events are judged and ask them to engage in self-reflection and self-evaluation so

they can determine where their performances offer opportunities to showcase the skillsets they see as critical to judges. This helps them establish goals and make meaningful changes to their performances rather than just making changes for the sake of change in hopes that the change will make it better. This practice also teaches them to analyze, compare, critique, and synthesize what they perceive to be the best practices of forensics competitors. Those are the more advanced levels of Bloom's Taxonomy (Bloom, et al, 1956).

Discussion

This article has examined how forensics activities promote, foster, teach, assess, and reward creativity and the creative process. As educational institutions nationwide begin to answer the calls of industry and society for more creative graduates, forensics programs should stand as a model for the teaching of creativity. A student on a forensics team has many advantages that cannot be readily afforded to a student in a traditional classroom. For example, a forensics student can study and compete in forensics activities for up to four years not just a semester. Coaches take hours of time coaching each student, on weekends the students travel hundreds of miles to compete against students from other schools and national tournaments can involve over 100 schools and 1,000 competitors. A close bond develops between students on the team and between students and coaches. That bond, a shared sense of purpose, combined with the friendly competitive atmosphere of most programs and tournaments, motivates students to stretch themselves performatively. The forensics community is a safe place to test creative ideas, and the community rewards creativity while staying grounded in domain-specific knowledge and training.

The forensics community provides an environment that is ideal for creativity. Coaches and peers encourage participants to stretch their creative abilities. Judges reward creative approaches that are novel and useful. Those factors make it almost impossible for forensics to *not* teach students to be creative. As colleges and universities look for ways to foster creativity they should look to forensics education as a model. Creativity is not taught as a stand-alone module or unit, it is best taught as an add-on component to other assignments and tasks. As the Marine Corps looks for ways to teach creativity they are looking for ways to modify their current war games, exercises, and case studies to allow for options that will foster *out of the box* thinking while still maintaining the rigors of the content to be covered. Because creativity tends to require the adaptation of domain specific knowledge the focus of the education process needs to be on domain specific content. Teaching creativity requires a medium for the creative outlet. Forensics teaches students to be good communicators, but it recognizes, fosters, and rewards creative modes and means of communication. In doing so it teaches creativity.

Forensics students make creativity a habit; they learn to look for new and interesting ways to approach ideas and arguments. They recognize the value and usefulness of novelty and learn to generate novel, useful solutions to problems and challenges. That is something their peers in college can rarely claim. To fully develop their creative side, students who compete in forensic activities should try to engage in all of the forensic events. If they can't compete in all of the events they should, at a minimum, engage in each genre of forensic competition: Oral Interpretation, public speaking, limited preparation, and debate. Each genre teaches a different aspect of creativity. The more often students find ways to stretch their creative muscle in different venues and forums, the more universally they should be able to apply their creative acumen when they graduate and enter the work world. It is that flexibility in the application of creative ideas that will change our world. Coaches in the activity should not underestimate the importance of the fact that they teach students to be creative. Students should never underestimate the value of a forensic education.

Future Research

It is clear that forensics provides all of the activities, support, and opportunities for students to develop their creativity producing skills. Anyone who has watched final rounds at a national tournament or even a highly competitive regional tournament would have to admit that there is a lot of creativity displayed in those competitive rounds. But that is not proof that forensics improves an individual's creativity ability. Future researchers need to conduct empirical studies to see if students who join a forensics team show increased creativity scores on standardized creativity assessment instruments faster or to a greater extent than a control group.

Additionally, researcher should determine if the creativity skills fostered in one area (forensic competition) transfer to other areas (the work place for example). We seem to assume that once someone has learned to be creative within a specific domain the ability will transcend the boundaries of that domain. While research has given us no reason to believe that won't happen, we also have no evidence showing that it does happen.

Conclusion

It seems that there is a downside to just about anything. In this case the downside to teaching students to be creative is that they will likely expect the work world. The work world claims to want creative people and creativity. But that is not always the case. As a society we want creative people and we want innovative thinkers. But on a day to day basis we often prefer it when people think, behave, and work *inside the box*.

This is even true in elementary schools where we would expect teachers to support the creativity of young children. Westby and Dawson (1995) report that "children who were the teachers' least favorite students showed…behavioral characteristics…similar to the pattern for the creative prototype. Conversely, the teachers' favorite students showed…behavioral characteristics…opposite of that for the creative prototype" (p. 8). They go on to point out that some of the most creative children go unrecognized, or worse yet, are punished for their creativity. In the workplace, Mueller, Melwani, and Goncalo, (2012) found that organizations and decision makers regularly reject creative ideas *even when they have claimed that creativity is an important goal*. The researchers explain that "the more novel an idea, the more uncertainty can exist about whether the idea is practical, useful, error-free, and reliably reproducible" (Mueller, Melwani, & Goncalo, 2012, p. 13). As a society we must shift from a zero-defect mentality to one of acceptable risk taking. When we focus on not doing anything wrong we are not focusing on creativity. The key, in the working world and in the forensic world, is to find a balance between the two perspectives.

The fact is that creativity is based on novelty, and novel ideas tend to be new. New ideas are sometimes scary because they haven't been proven. As we set out to develop a system for teaching creativity to our students we must also teach them to be open to creative ideas. If we do that, one day we will have a society that is open to new and creative ideas.

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Inroads to Outrounds: A Hofstedian Approach to Newcomer Integration into the Culture of Forensics

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This study examines how newcomers to forensic competition in intercollegiate forensics integrate themselves into the larger community of competitors. Specifically, this study takes an intercultural approach and frames the forensic organization as a culture unto itself into which new arrivals must assimilate. To shed further light on this culture, this study determines where members of "forensic culture" are positioned on Hofstede's cultural spectra. By modifying Hofstede's original Values Module Survey and administering it to current competitors from around the country, insight can be gleaned into the cultural attitudes of the forensic organization, and the values that guide the practice of forensic culture. In light of these attitudes and values, suggestions for coaches to help their novices feel more at ease in collegiate forensics are offered.

"Voici vos bagages. La porte est là. Au revoir." His manner was insulted and dismissive; he practically hurled my luggage out of the trunk of his taxi to the curb. Before I could mutter an "au revoir" in reply, he got back into the driver's seat of the cab, slammed the door and sped off. Ten minutes earlier, I had committed one of the cardinal sins of politeness in the French language: I had addressed the taxicab driver taking me to the airport using the informal version of "you," instead of the formal version. Obviously, this distinction does not exist in English, so it was a mistake I was even more prone to commit thanks to my status as an Anglophone. Throughout my stay in France, working as an English teacher in a French high school, I took great care before addressing anyone to make sure the "you" coming out of my mouth was appropriately formal, especially after receiving a death glare a week after arriving in France from a clothing store attendant whom I accidentally addressed as *tu* instead of *vous*. A hurried apology saved my reputation in that instance, but I had been in such a rush to get to the airport on time that I hadn't minded my pronouns when I told the cab driver my destination. During the car ride, I wondered why my few attempts at chit-chat and observations about the weather were blocked with gruff one-word answers or simply ringing silence. I had written him off as an unfriendly driver, when it suddenly hit me, as I was staring at the back end of his cab zooming back into traffic: I was the one who had been rude, not him.

Tales of study abroad are rife with similar stories of miscommunication. Suddenly finding oneself in a new communicative and cultural environment can produce a sense of disorientation that often results in gaffes where the newcomer feels dramatically out of place. Simple study abroad experiences can instill a notable feeling of culture shock, to say nothing of the dramatic sense of displacement immigrants and others forced into a different cultural milieu must work to overcome in order to function in their new society. The process of

acculturation is studied by scholars from many different angles: from a cross-cultural perspective (Berry, 1970; Kim, 2001, 2005; Samovar, Porter, & McDaniel, 2007; Semlak, Pearson, Amundson, & Kudak, 2008); from an organizational perspective (Gibson & Papa, 2000; Hess, 1993; Jones, 1986; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979); and through the lens of performance (Amaya, 2007). Based on my own experiences, I offer one more setting where these phenomena play out: the world of forensics.

The activity of forensics has been framed and studied using a wide variety of definitions and lenses. Some scholars view forensics as a laboratory, an intensified communicative atmosphere removed from the so-called real world, where participants can try out and receive feedback on a number of communication strategies (Dreibelbis & Gullifor, 1992; Friedley, 1992; Harris, Kropp, & Rosenthal, 1986; Swanson, 1992a, 1992b; Zeuschner, 1992). Others view forensics as an organization devoted to a common goal, with rules (both written and implicit) to which members must adhere in order to experience successful integration into the collective (Croucher, Thornton, & Eckstein, 2006; Friedley & Manchester, 2005; Rowe & Cronn-Mills, 2005). However, my experience as both a forensic competitor and coach has shown me the utility of another metaphor: forensics as *culture* (Miller, 2005; Paine, 2008).

There are many reasons why studying forensics through a cultural lens is justified and important. The world of competitive forensics is fraught with unwritten rules and social norms (Paine, 2005), as well as an extremely specialized jargon (Parrot, 2005) to which participants must adhere in order to experience full assimilation and integration into the activity. Encounters with these explicit and implicit barriers to cultural assimilation are experienced by immigrants to a new country, as well as by novices to competitive speaking. Framing these experiences of initial distress, slow adjustment, and eventual integration as a primarily cultural process yields profound insight. For example, Komisarof (2006) used Berry's (1997) theoretical lens of cultural assimilation to study how new teachers integrate into the JET program, an organization for teachers of English in Japan. Using an intercultural approach, instead of a strictly organizational one, yielded numerous positive acculturation outcomes for newcomers to the JET organization, such as a decreased sense of alienation. Similarly, Mak and Chui (2013) took a cultural approach to how newcomers integrate into daily life of a major corporation. Intercultural concepts of acculturation and assimilation can complement the study of principles of integration that are normally the domain of organizational communication.

Moreover, this study sheds light on the diverse application of the concept of culture, especially to groups not defined by nations or races. Many definitions of culture that are widely accepted by the intercultural community (Cargile, 2005; Gudykunst, 1997) leave ample room for concepts such as *gay culture, teen culture, online culture,* and innumerable others. A study rooted in principles of intercultural communication that examines "forensic culture" further illuminates the relevance and applicability of cultural precepts. Likewise, a look at assimilation and cross-cultural adaptation to a community where these principles are not usually applied deepens our theoretical understanding of the phenomenon.

However, the primary catalyst for this study is an article written by Paine (2008) in the Conference Proceedings of the National Developmental Conference on Individual Events, held in the summer of 2008 in Peoria, Illinois. In his piece, "Etic vs. Emic Values in the Culture of Forensics," he frames forensics as a culture by examining the *values* to which the community appears to adhere. Paine ferrets out these values by applying Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimensions to forensic culture. These dimensions include individualism vs. collectivism, high vs. low power distance, high vs. low uncertainty avoidance, and masculine vs. feminine. Paine asserts the "forensic culture" is highly collectivist, displays high uncertainty avoidance, exhibits high power distance, and falls somewhere in the middle

between masculine and feminine. While Paine has been involved in forensics for decades, he did not provide any empirical backing for his positioning of forensics within Hofstede's dimensions. In the conclusion of his essay, he calls for further quantitative and qualitative studies to examine the issues he is only "scratching the surface of," and that is precisely the kind of study presented here. To that end, the following research question was investigated:

> *RQ1*: Do forensic competitors display the same cultural behavior with regard to Hofstede's spectra as Paine (2008) suggests they do?

Additionally, a primary goal of this study was to examine the acculturation process that newcomers undergo to integrate themselves into the forensic organization. It stands to reason that the longer a competitor is in the activity, the more they will have absorbed the values of the community. This leads to a second question:

> *RQ2:* Do the number of years involved in forensic activity determine where an individual competitor stands on Hofstede's cultural spectra?

However, this study aims beyond simply a check against Paine's (2008) assertions. Munz (2007) posited that knowledge of a target culture's values vis-à-vis Hofstede's spectra can greatly aid a "sojourner" to that culture in successfully integrating. Therefore, implications and suggestions for coaches to help their forensic competitors successfully adapt to their new forensic environment will be explored. A review of relevant intercultural and organizational literature is provided. Once results are reported, how coaches can use these results to help their novice competitors feel more at ease in collegiate forensic competition is discussed.

Review of Literature

Culture

Cargile (2005) pointed out the difficulty involved in pinning down the concept of *culture* with a definition, noting:

> Culture is likely both the most and least useful construct that communication scholars employ regularly. Academics and laypersons alike rely on the idea to make sense of social behavior. For example, nearly everyone understands the remark, "it's a cultural thing" offered as an explanation for another's unrecognizable actions. Yet, when pressed to clarify what the term means more precisely, people (including academics) generally squirm (p. 99).

Some scholars (Cargile, 2005; Kim, 2005) pointed to Gudykunst (1997) as the premiere intercultural scholar who wielded the greatest amount of influence over the direction of the field during the 1980s, when the communication discipline's definition of culture started to snap into focus. He posited:

> Cultures, conceived as a system of competence shared in its broad design and deeper principles, and varying between individuals in its specificities, is then not all of what an individual knows and thinks and feels about his [or her] world. It is his [or her] theory of what his [or her] fellows know, believe, and mean, his [or her] theory of the code being followed, the game being played, in the society into which he [or she] was born. (Keesing, as cited in Gudykunst, 1997, p. 328)

There is ample room to situate the world of forensics within this definitional framework. Certainly, many participants in the forensic activity could identify concepts and values that they feel their colleagues, as a collective, know to be true and meaningful. Gudykunst (1997) continued:

> We generally are not highly aware of the rules of the game being played but we behave as though there were general agreement on the rules. To illustrate, if we met a stranger from Mars and the Martian asked us to explain the rules of our culture, we probably would not be able to describe many of the rules because we are not highly aware of them. (p. 329)

Forensic scholarship abounds on the unwritten rules and norms of the forensic community (Cronn-Mills & Golden, 1997; Gaer, 2002; Paine, 2005), and many of these "rules of the game" become so embedded in the workings of a forensic tournament that they seem entirely natural – to the point of inexplicability – to an outsider. Thus, it is clear that Gudykunst's cultural framework is a suitable fit for inquiry into the forensic activity.

Values

These assumptions about the world that guide cultural practice – and the beliefs that Paine (2005) ultimately attempted to discover in the forensic world – are referred to in cultural scholarship as *values*. Spates (1983) offered a survey of the evolution of the term as it has traveled from the field of sociology to the discipline of communication. He cited Kluckhohn's (1951) definition as the "primary orienting definition" in the literature (p. 30): "A value is a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means, and ends of action" (p. 395).

Hofstede (1980), in a study that would later prove seminal to the study of organizational culture and the field of intercultural communication in general, sought to find the link between values and behaviors in organizations around the globe. He studied employees' underlying attitudes about authority, initiative, and group dynamics, and synthesized them into several key cultural dimensions. He distributed his World Values Survey to employees of national subsidiaries of IBM in sixty-four countries. The results of the survey revealed four clusters of traits which Hofstede later labeled "dimensions." They are as follows: 1) Power distance, or "the extent to which the less powerful members of organizations and institutions (like the family) accept and expect that power is distributed unequally." Members of high power-distance cultures expect a great inequity in power between an employer and his/her subordinates, for example. 2) Individualism, or "the degree to which individuals are integrated into groups." Individualist cultures place an emphasis on autonomy, self-direction, and the needs of the self, whereas collectivist cultures promote unity, group loyalty, and the needs of the collective. 3) Masculinity, "versus its opposite, femininity, refers to the distribution of roles between the genders," and consequently, how similar men and women appear in the culture. An elevated masculinity index usually implies a marked divide between men and women, whereas men and women fulfill similar roles in cultures with a high femininity index. 4) Uncertainty Avoidance "deals with a society's tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity; it ultimately refers to man's search for Truth." Individuals from a culture with a high uncertainty avoidance index are often bound by intricate systems of rules and expectations and generally appear to be more absolutist in their worldview. On the other hand, uncertainty-accepting cultures are not as proscriptive in their

expectations of behavior, and worldviews espoused by these cultures tend to be more relativist.

Acculturation

Berry (1970) proposed a model of four acculturation modes based on how newcomers to a culture retain their identity and customs, and whether or not positive relations with the larger culture are sought by the new arrivals. In this framework, the four modes are: integration (customs are retained and positive relations sought), assimilation (customs not retained, but positive relations are still a goal), separation (customs kept, but with ill will towards the larger culture), and marginality (neither customs preserved nor positive relations with target culture established).

Kim (2005) noted that Berry's (1970) model – along with many others – works under the assumption that cultural assimilation is a "matter of conscious choice individuals make for themselves, and not a matter of necessity" (p. 376). More recent approaches to cultural assimilation take a more postmodern or critical approach to cultural assimilation, zeroing in on issues of systematic oppression and dominant ideologies. One such example is a study by Semlak et al. (2008) of female African refugees to the United States. Utilizing focus group methods, the researchers found the women's acculturation process could best be described as a navigation of a series of dialectical tensions. They felt happy to be in the United States yet acknowledged discouraging challenges to their integration (positive-negative). They also felt the same struggle illustrated in Berry's model of wanting to feel included in American culture and a desire to be separate from it (inclusion-exclusion). The women also reported a great effort to discern which elements of American culture to accept and which to refuse (acceptance-rejection). Finally, the women reported a marked disconnect between their own romanticized version of American culture and reality (real-ideal).

This sense of psychological oscillation has been fine-tuned by intercultural scholars with the concept of the U-curve (Gudykunst & Kim, 2003). In this model, new arrivals to a culture go through a "honeymoon phase" at the top of the U-curve upon first arriving in a new setting. Once the original feelings of euphoria and excitement wear off, newcomers descend down the U-curve into stages of acculturation difficulties, disorientation, and stress. As time progresses, culture shock wears off, and newcomers ascend up the U-curve as they adapt to their new culture and feel more at ease. Finally (and ideally), the newcomer feels comfortably integrated into the new culture and sits at the top of the rightmost end of the U-curve.

Forensics as Culture

Miller (2005) is one of the few forensic scholars to take a distinctly intercultural approach to the study of the forensic organization. In his study, he framed the forensic community as a macro-culture with many micro-cultures inside it, naming these regional cultures "a culture within a culture within a culture within a culture within a culture" (p. 4). The variations within these micro-cultures are great enough to instill a palpable sensation of culture shock when one moves across these micro-cultures, a feeling he attests to when he moved from the Northeastern United States to the Pacific Northwest: "While regional forensics communities share a great deal in common due to the broader cultural frameworks within which they exist, the differences…are pronounced enough to present difficulties for an individual attempting to shift from one regional forensics community to another" (p. 4). Miller, using an autoethnographic approach, documents his own journey through Lysgaard's (1955) stages of culture shock as he transitions from one micro-culture to the other.

Paine (2008) also viewed the forensic activity as a culture and guided his analysis using a tool developed by Hofstede (1980). The Hofstedian spectra – individual vs.

collectivist, masculine vs. feminine, high vs. low power distance, high vs. low tendency towards uncertainty avoidance – shed light on the forensic world's cultural values, Paine argued. He posited where the community is positioned on each spectrum and examined which values the forensics world has adopted as a result.

He found forensics to be a highly collectivistic culture, citing several facets of forensic involvement that are a group effort: extemporaneous speaking file building, team sweepstakes points, and peer coaching. The collectivistic nature of forensics is also manifested in its demand for decorum, and unwritten proscription of disparaging another competitor at a tournament. Paine argued that we see a clear value of *professionalism* emerge, as well as an emphasis on *communalism*, an ironic conclusion, he concedes, considering that he is studying the "individual events" side of forensics. Next, he situated the forensics community somewhere in the middle between masculine and feminine. The "laboratory" metaphor for the activity that is so prevalent in forensic literature reveals an ontological assumption of the community: "the idea that there is ultimately one 'right answer' – a 'final Truth,' a Platonic ideal, toward which questing students should strive" (Paine, 2008, p. 84). Such an assumption is found in Hofstede's definition of a masculine culture. Moreover, the importance the forensic community places on *competition* – indeed, without it, forensics as we know it would not exist – also places the activity squarely at the masculine end of the spectrum. Nevertheless, Paine also noted a high regard for *interpersonal relationships* in the activity, as well as a sense of *cohesion* between alumni, judges, directors, and competitors that (while highly collectivistic as well) pushes forensics further towards the feminine pole of the gender spectrum. As for power distance, Paine asserted that forensics as a culture retains a high power distance index, noting wide disparities between novices and "big name" competitors, and between judges and competitors. The value that Paine saw manifested here is *hierarchy*, an insistence on top-to-bottom, sequential ordering that appears in how the culture ranks competitors, differentiates novices from veterans, and breaks ties at tournaments. Finally, Paine looked at Hofstede's uncertainty avoidance dimension. He saw forensic culture as one with a high tendency toward uncertainty avoidance: "the unwritten rules which boundary the activity operate to create a highly structured forensics world" (p. 87), a rigidity valued by high uncertainty avoidance cultures. Paine observed that the community appreciates *standardization* as a cultural value, as a result of its aversion to uncertainty. Paine found this value especially troubling in an activity devoted to critical inquiry, a notion other forensic scholars find equally problematic (Gaer, 2002; Ribarsky, 2005).

Method

First, Hofstede's (1980) original Values Survey Module, which was originally given to employees of the IBM corporation in countries around the globe, was modified. The original syntax of Hofstede's questions was retained, but certain phrases were changed to reflect the organizational structure of a forensics team and not a major corporation. This practice of modifying well-established survey tools has been used to success in research where respondents were still being tested for the same construct, but due to demographic or cultural traits were unlikely to understand certain nuances of some of the questions (Bouldin & Pratt, 1998; Quina et al., 1999).

Because forensic competitors do not – or at the least, very rarely – compete for cash prizes, every mention of "earnings" was changed to the closest forensic equivalent of a quantifiable reward for a job well done: trophies. To preserve the validity of the study, the term "salary" was translated into competitive success with every subsequent mention of earnings. The concept of advancement within a job appeared as the opportunity to hold

office on a forensics team; in a sense, serving as the team's president is the clearest equivalent to getting "promoted" in a corporate setting. Likewise, "fringe benefits" (as they appear on several of Hofstede's questions) appear in the measure as "scholarship opportunities." Since many teams do not monetarily compensate their competitors, receiving money for competing on a team truly would be a "fringe benefit" in the forensic world. References to managers and bosses were switched to mentions of coaches and Directors of Forensics. If a question referred to a general manager, the term "manager" was replaced with "coach" to signify that the term could be alluding to anyone within the coaching staff. If, however, a question referred to a manager that clearly served as the chief of operations, or was referred to as an "immediate manager," the reference was replaced with "DOF" or "Director of Forensics." In a forensic setting, the DOF often sits at the pinnacle of the decision-making process and often has the most direct control over team practices; therefore, the references to DOFs seemed particularly justified. Finally, references to technological advancements in the questionnaire were simply replaced with the term "innovations." The practices of forensic competition are in a state of tension between adherence to tried-and-true norms, and critical analysis of these norms that leads to innovation (Gaer, 2002; Ribarksy, 2005).

The modified survey was uploaded to an online survey website, the link to which was then distributed by email over a national listserv devoted to collegiate forensics. Competitors who subscribe to the listserv were directed to the survey itself, while coaches were asked to provide their students with the survey link. Individual emails were sent to Directors of Forensics in Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, South Dakota, North Dakota, South Carolina, and Florida, asking them to furnish their students with the link to the survey. The survey remained active on the website for two weeks to ensure a large sample size ($N = 120$), and, consequently, strong statistical power for analysis.

Results

RQ1 sought to find out whether or not current forensic competitors situate themselves on Hofstede's (1980) cultural value spectra as Paine (2008) claims they do. Using Hofstede's original study as a guide, Power Distance (PDI), Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI), Masculinity/Femininity (MAS) and Individualist/Collectivist (IDV) indices were computed for the entire body of respondents, treating them as if they were all members of the same culture.

Power distance is calculated using answers from questions that asked survey respondents to what extent they prefer their DOF to be autocratic or democratic. One question, in particular, probed the likelihood that a student would be punished for bringing a complaint to the DOF. Using the formula Hofstede provides, a PDI value of 54.79 was computed. In Hofstede's original study, power distance values were calculated for 53 countries and ranked from highest to lowest. A PDI score of 54.79 would rank the forensic community between 32nd and 33rd relative to Hofstede's original findings (between Pakistan and Japan). Considering there were 53 countries in the original study, this power distance index does not display an elevated inclination towards high power distance. Additionally, the United States ranks 38th on Hofstede's original findings regarding power distance, which implies that forensics, as a micro-culture within American culture, displays a small propensity towards power distance, but not to the extent that Paine claims.

Uncertainty avoidance is computed using answers to questions on the survey dealing with rule orientation, stability, and stress associated with change. Attitudes these questions probe include respondents' levels of tension or stress associated with the activity, how long respondents plan to stay with their current forensic team, and how closely a team's policies

should be followed, especially to the detriment of individual desires. Responses to these questions produced an overall uncertainty avoidance index for the forensic community of 52.75. This score places the forensic community in roughly the same location on Hofstede's original taxonomy as PDI (between 35th and 36th), close to the Netherlands and East Africa. Again, this value is not as high as Paine would have predicted. The United States places 43rd on this ranking, so Paine's claim about forensic culture's tendency towards uncertainty avoidance is slightly supported. However, these findings do not completely reinforce Paine's assertion of a marked aversion to uncertainty.

In Hofstede's original study, individualism and masculinity were calculated using questions on the survey that, after a factor analysis, were revealed to be asking about similar work goals and, consequently, which values these goals manifest. The questions used in these calculations all ask respondents how much importance they place on a given concept, such as family, competitive success, cooperation, team unity, good working conditions, and the division between a competitor's public and private life. Forensic culture, for the purposes of this study, displays an individualist score of 58.14, and a masculinity score of 6.77. The individualism score would rank between 18th and 19th out of 53 in Hofstede's taxonomy (close to Austria and Israel), and the masculinity score a very low 52nd, by Norway and Sweden. The relatively high IDV value runs counter to Paine's contention that the forensic community is a relatively collectivist community, and the remarkably low MAS score reveals a sharp inclination towards femininity, a finding at odds with Paine's stance that the community displays qualities of both masculinity and femininity in its values. When these values are compared to Hofstede's findings regarding American culture, the masculinity findings are thrown into even greater relief; the United States places 15th on masculinity of all the countries Hofstede surveyed. Forensics portrays extraordinarily feminine characteristics when compared to both American culture and the world. As for individualism, the United States sits at the peak of the individualism dimension at number one. Forensic culture, then, does display some collectivist tendencies within American culture, but when put up against the world, does not exhibit marked collectivist traits.

RQ2 asked whether number of active years in the forensic activity changed where competitors stood on Hofstede's spectra. To answer this question, individual values of power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, and masculinity were computed for each survey respondent. These values were then divided into four groups, based on how many years a respondent competed in the activity, and a one-way ANOVA was run on each index to test for significant mean differences in each value dimension. The results of the analysis were insignificant at $p < .05$ for all four indices: $F_{PDI}(3, 115) = .636$, $p = .593$; $F_{UAI}(3, 113) = .071$, $p = .976$; $F_{IDV}(3, 115) = 1.127$, $p = .341$; $F_{MAS}(3, 115) = .695$, $p = .557$. The mean score for each cultural value did not differ significantly between groups of competitors divided by experience; therefore, position on Hofstede's spectra did not appear to be affected by number of years of experience in the activity.

Conclusion

Forensic Implications

Several implications for the forensic community emerge from this study. Initially, interesting implications are raised by the extremely feminine score from the survey results. Competition is considered by Hofstede to be a distinctly masculine value, yet how could an activity that is established on the concept of competition register as so averse to it, at least in a Hofstedian paradigm? Perhaps a more feminine conception of competition is necessary to understanding this finding. When students are focused on crushing the competition, they cannot really prioritize getting to know their opponents. Competitors who successfully

integrate into the forensic culture, then, may have a less masculine predilection towards domination, but instead display a more feminine desire to uphold interpersonal connections and the needs of the community. Indeed, Paine points to "interpersonal relationships" as a cherished value of the forensic community, and these quantitative results seem to bear this out. Those who have successfully assimilated into the community appear to be those who are able to manage the duality of wanting to win and respecting and enjoying the people around them.

The power distance results highlight a tension that Paine himself points out in his 2008 article. It is evident to anyone who has been to a forensics tournament that the forensic community displays a marked predilection towards power distance: the difference in attire between competitors and judges, the emphasis on politeness and decorum, and competitors asking to be excused before they leave a round in which they are double-entered are all hallmarks of a high power-distance atmosphere. Paine indicates this tendency by naming "hierarchy" as a central value held close by forensic culture. However, he offers "cohesion" as a second value, pointing out the high degree of camaraderie exhibited by coaches, students, graduate students, and directors alike. This emphasis on a cohesive community may serve to mitigate the effects of a high-power distance atmosphere and may account for the small PDI score from the survey. Many students perform and debate for the same community of judges from tournament to tournament, and grow close to them as a result. This effect is reinforced when a competitor immediately enters graduate school at the end of their undergraduate competitive career, and students find themselves speaking in front of an ex-opponent whom they now consider a friend. So, while forensics culture certainly displays external instances of high-power distance behavior, the close-knit nature of the community may decrease the level of actual power distance present. Moreover, while these quantitative findings seem to contradict Paine's claim regarding elevated power distance in the community, they reinforce his assertion of the dual values of "cohesion" and "professionalism" working in tandem within the community.

The pronounced bent towards individualism is also intriguing and may have implications for the results of RQ2. With no mean difference between first-, second-, third-, and fourth-year competitors in their position on Hofstede's spectra, we do not see a fundamental shift in competitors' cultural attitudes (at least as Hofstede frames them) the longer they remain in the activity. We could say that students' reported sense of individualism is what contributes to the lack of change in their cultural attitudes as time progresses. On the other hand, if there are no mean differences between competitors' scores, one could also argue that students' cultural attitudes have already coalesced around a given trait, especially within that first crucial year of competition. The individualism/collectivism dynamic is, as Paine (2008) notes, an extraordinarily complex one, and future research into how this dynamic manifests itself in forensic culture is warranted.

Finally, the unexpectedly low uncertainty avoidance score may be an encouraging sign for Paine (2008) and many others who note the forensic community's bent towards standardization. The forensic community certainly has a number of unwritten norms to which competitors are encouraged to adhere, and competitors undoubtedly have been penalized unjustly for working outside of those norms. However, the low uncertainty avoidance score hints at competitors' willingness to try new approaches and methods, and this creativity could serve to help the "unwritten rules" of the activity to become less of a structuring force.

Clear directives to coaches and directors of programs also emerge from these findings. Coaches could take the cultural metaphor of forensics out of the abstract and directly share with their students the phenomenon of culture shock and the U-curve. If students are able to name the apprehension they feel at the outset of their competitive career,

they may make more distinct steps toward climbing up the U-curve out of their initial distress. Also, coaches must walk the oft-repeated line between allowing a student to pour their own identity into a performance, and ensuring that said performance will have a chance to do well in competition. Explicit instructions about the norms of the forensic world may be useful in this arena. A student who wishes to perform in oral interpretation an overdone work of literature may do well to hear that the forensic community places a cultural value on novelty in oral interpretation, and can be directed to find a newer work of literature that displays the same qualities that drew the competitor to the work in the first place.

Coaches can also cultivate an attitude of low uncertainty avoidance in their students by encouraging them to try new approaches to traditional events. The dialectical approach employed by Semlak et al. (2008) provides a helpful frame to approach this conversation with students. To aid in their acculturation and integration into the wider community, students should speak on topics and literature that hold meaning to them, while also working within the confines of the "rules of the game." How much the student wants to respect or break any unwritten norms of the activity should be a conscious decision made by the student and aided by the coach. This way, their performance is as authentic to the student as possible, and this authenticity will help the student feel more at home in forensic culture.

Finally, coaches can help their students acculturate to collegiate forensics by encouraging the dual-minded approach to competition discussed earlier. The drive to win must be tempered by the need to uphold the cultural value of "cohesion" Paine (2008) indicates. Students who are able to balance their internal competitive drive with the need to forge strong interpersonal connections are likely to find a healthy integration into the forensic community.

Intercultural Implications

This study first and foremost emphasizes the utility of applying the lens of culture to levels more specific than a national one. Culture exists in varied forms on many strata; Gudykunst's (1997) conception of culture as "the game being played" and "the code being followed" and Hofstede's (1991) metaphor of the "software of the mind" hint at the ubiquity of culture's influence. The more we are able to study this pervasive phenomenon, the more we are able to shed light on the totality of human communication.

This study also hints at the prominence of the concept of *identity* in the acculturation process. Even when not moving across cultures, communicators are in a constant state of identity negotiation, and this identity construction undergoes even more stresses during cross-cultural adaptation. Outward actions and words form only the tip of the identity iceberg, and if we are to understand acculturation better, we must focus on research and techniques that delve into issues of identity negotiation. Amaya (2007) shows how the construction and subsequent performance of identity determine nearly every other factor in communication and acculturation. Ultimately, it is how successfully one is able to balance one's identity between the old and the new culture that predicts the success of the acculturation. Studies of acculturation must focus on the construction of identity in order to reveal the most profound insights into the assimilation process.

Returning to the notion of "balance" in the discussion of acculturation, note that in many narratives of acculturation, the newcomer must negotiate a tension between two poles. For newcomers to a new country, they must balance their expectations of what the target culture is like and what they actually come to experience. In a coaching career, one must balance one's perceptions as a coach and the needs of the students. The forensic community itself exists in a state of tension on many spectra: the struggle between competition and education (Burnett, Brand, & Meister, 2003), between innovation and adherence to tried-and-true precepts (Ribarsky, 2005), and between individual and group identity (Rowe & Cronn-

Mills, 2005). The preponderance of these binaries argues for the efficacy of dialectical theory in shedding light on the acculturation process. Semlak et al. (2008) used the concept of dialectics to great success in their study of cross-cultural adaptation; this theoretical approach offers singularly useful insight into acculturation on many levels. Newcomers to a culture must manage the dialectic of excitement and disappointment, of feeling accepted and feeling rejected, and of deciding which values to accept and which to reject. Models of acculturation like the U-curve display a sort of psychological oscillation; the theory of relational dialectics could shed more light on this vacillation and give it a stronger theoretical basis.

While a dialectical approach to acculturation could yield many useful insights, when culture itself is examined with a tool like Hofstede's – a measure that situates an entire culture within a network of binaries – limitations start to appear. Hofstede's value dimensions are reductive in that they essentially force respondents to "pick sides." It is entirely possible, even likely, for an individual to exhibit a collectivist reaction to one stimulus and an individualist response to another. A dialectical approach to the acculturation process is relevant and valid, but reducing culture to a system of binaries cuts out a middle ground that many individuals inhabit.

Limitations

This study does display a few limitations in its methods. First, the modification of Hofstede's survey could have skewed the validity of the instrument when applying it to the forensic world. For example, one factor that contributes to the computation of Hofstede's uncertainty avoidance index is a question which appears on the original survey as "How long do you think you will continue working for this company?" Though this question was modified to ask how many years a respondent has left in the activity, students at a university are unable to stay in their positions indefinitely. Therefore, there is a natural cap on how long a student can stay associated with the forensic association, a fact that could have contributed to a decreased UAI score. Likewise, questions that were specially altered for the purpose of this study ended up being instrumental in computing other cultural dimension variables. Also, the respondents self-selected to participate in the survey, which means they may have more pronounced attitudes towards forensic culture that may have incorporated more outliers into the population sample.

Future Directions

I must mirror Paine's statement that this study "only scratches the surface" of cultural dynamics within the forensic organization. Other directions for this style of inquiry into forensics could include research into attitudes about acculturation held by coaches within the organization. Interview research with coaches that delves into how they train their students for assimilation into forensic competition could reveal interesting similarities and differences with the themes uncovered in this study. Also, research on students from large, "powerhouse" teams on the circuit, teams capable of having many micro-cultures within their own over-arching team culture could prove illuminating. Students on these teams may find themselves undergoing a double acculturation process, both into the massive culture of the team itself, and into the forensic community as a whole. Additionally, these powerhouse teams constitute a micro-culture within the forensic macro-culture, and as Cronn-Mills and Golden (2007) point out, it is the competitors from these successful teams that establish many of the unwritten norms that develop in competition, illustrating perfectly the cultural phenomenon where one dominant micro-culture establishes the values of the macro-culture that encompasses it. Research into these forensic cultures could shed light on questions of

team dynamics, power distribution, and the hierarchy of status within the entire forensic community.

Finally, a study that uses the lens of relational dialectics could illuminate additional issues of acculturation within the forensic organization. Semlak et al. (2008) propose useful examples of dialectical contradictions experienced by new cultural arrivals: positive-negative, inclusion-exclusion, acceptance-rejection, and real-ideal. Further research could evaluate the utility of these pairs in the forensic arena, and provide new ones, as well. By directly examining the various dialectical tensions that both newcomers and veteran competitors must navigate, a researcher could provide yet more insight into the assimilation process that newcomers undergo, as well as understanding of the interplay between interpersonal and intercultural communication.

I eventually caught my airplane that day in France when I offended my taxi driver. To continue (and hopefully not belabor) the travel metaphor, my involvement with forensics has taken me to the most fulfilling destinations of my academic career, as an undergraduate competitor, a graduate assistant coach, and eventually, DOF of a team of my own. Any research we as scholars can offer into this community rife with opportunities for newcomers is warranted and important. All aboard and *bon voyage.*

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Traversing the Terrain: Paths and Roadblocks to Conscientization in Forensic Competition

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Paulo Freire (1973) articulated the notion of conscientization in his groundbreaking book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* as the faculty of observing contradicting messages communicated by overarching power within societal, political, and economic structures and second, actively opposing oppression in those structures. Intercollegiate forensic competition is often the place where students are provided an outlet to achieve conscientization. The profound process or speaking problems into existence not only develops the competitor but provides a unique opportunity to spark further critical discussion. However, the conversations often remained trapped in the speech world. Therefore, it is important to expand the scope of our teachings beyond tournaments and the team room.

So much of coaching is a practice of orientation; helping students process the knowledge they have researched and experienced. I often have difficulty steering the ways in which these knowledges intersect and, more importantly, how those knowledges can be used to help students progress. Often, I have felt like a pilot with faulty equipment: *Where are we going? How do we get where we need to go?*

It can be daunting. Considering every forensic competitor pursues the activity for many varied reasons, coaching involves navigating pedagogy. Part of coaching requires understanding motivations. Then cultivating motivations in a productive manner tailored to each student's unique needs. A uniform approach to coaching all competitors in one way is an ineffective approach to facilitating a student's personal growth, but how can we determine if we are helping students reach their full potential? After all, only so many people can win an event at a tournament. How do we help students achieve a sense of pride in performances they have produced even when they do not have competitive success?

Early forensic scholarship centered around pedagogy practice. Klopf and Lahman (1967) stressed the importance of detailed goal setting in order to determine achieve desired learning and competitive outcomes. Keefe (1989) articulated the significance to favoring co-

curricular over extracurricular as a defining parameter for the activity. Later Burnett, Brand, and Meister (2003) described education as myth often side stepped for competitive sophistry. Hinck (2003) quickly fired back in support of forensic competition as dialectical tension between education and competition. Littlefield (2006) introduced forensics as epistemic knowledge acquisition, which thus called for a greater emphasis on the role of coach as the facilitator of student discovery. The undercurrent of student discovery then compelled Dimock and White (2007) to describe forensics as a unique space to both communicate for students to and critique modes of cultural power. However, a critical pedagogy needs more than space in order to flourish. Tyma (2008) thus developed pragmatic approaches to adopting critical forensic pedagogy. There is no one way to adopt a critical forensic pedagogy. However, if humanization is the destination for our students, then, like any long van ride, there are many routes to get there.

Perhaps it is the nature of forensic individual event participation that allows students to carve spaces of resistance or maybe it is being harnessed and accepted by coaches, judges, and competitors. Whatever path has lead our students towards this process they seem to be achieving conscientization. Freire (1970) presented conscientization as "beings who exists in and with the world" (p. 452), concluding the ideal as being *with* the world. Friere defined conscientization as the liberating process of oppressed people communicating their oppression through dialogue. Knowing the boundaries of power and the ways in which someone can fit into interstitial spaces of resistance to effectively alter hegemonic control are imperative to achieve what Freire dubbed "humanization." Humanization occurs when someone is able to effectively articulate their lived experience in the world. A defining aspect of humanization is freedom to act. Many people do not attempt to conquer cultural hegemony because they do not see themselves as free to be capably achieve liberation. Only consciously aware citizens possessed fully humanized qualities that allow for reality transformation.

Building upon Antonio Gramsci's notion of problem-posing pedagogy, Graman (1988) proposed, "learners must identify problems and come to recognize and understand the significance of those problems in relation to their own lives and the lives of others" (p 436). Problem-posing pedagogy critically challenges assumptions about living in the world in order to promote living *with* the world. Conscientization is achieved when students express the need to act in the best regard for others out of their own understanding, in order to expose and depose cultural power. Sleeter, Torres, and Laughlin (2004) define the role of the liberating educator as one that "prepares materials, frameworks, and the environment to facilitate critical dialogue among students, to decode their reality and unveil the myths about such reality" (p. 84).

Exposure to the realities of cultural power happens in a multitude of ways through forensic participation. Therefore, if we wish to produce conscientized students, it is the job of forensic coaches to actively participate in a critical pedagogy to aid student conscientization. Forensic participants are frequently encouraged by peers, ballots, and coaches to adjust messages to best articulate their experiences to an audience. The role of a forensic coach embracing critical pedagogy would be to provide students with the tools for them to speak their lived experience in a way that consistently critiques hegemony.

Roads to Conscientization

Conscientization can provide a means for students to better navigate preexisting structures or take the roads less traveled. Someone without conscientization is unable to effectively reflect on the pavement they have trekked. The path towards conscientization is achieved through the process of research, interaction, and performance.

Research

Too frequently, classroom pedagogies and research encourage a banking model of education. Freire (1973) critiqued the notion of students being mere depositories of information. Bartlett (2005) furthered a tacit rejection of this banking model as a foundation for adopting a critical pedagogy. Often the banking method is employed in top-down modes of research, but intercollegiate forensic competition provides a mode for research to function as a living text to uncover hegemony. Exposing hegemonic power is the first necessary step to breaking free from its exploitative grasp to achieve conscientization.

Conscientization is the irrevocable process of knowing and speaking oppression. Once it is discovered, it is then an active process uncovering how hegemonic power produces and reproduces messages of control. There is a divide in consciousness between those that know of their oppression and those that do not. Freire (1970) distinguished between beings that lived in the world (lacking self-knowledge and worldly knowledge) and beings that lived with the world (having objective distance and reflexivity). To live in the world means that a person is completely bound by the will of other, an existence marked only by going down preordained paths. Someone living in the world, therefore, is subjugated to predetermined systems.

Exposure to the numerous ways in which hegemonic structures infringe upon the lived experience of others is a radical act for young people with varying awareness of cultural tyranny. Forensic performance introduces students to causes to help them re-examine their relationship to hegemony. Even students who do not have direct experience with oppression can become empathetic agents opposing hegemony. Sleeter, Torres, and Laughlin (2004) say:

> In this highly stratified capitalistic society, the great majority of people experience some form of exclusion, whether it is on the basis of social class, religion, disability, gender, and so forth. Forms of exclusion those with privileges face may lead them to empathizing with exclusion others experience, and may work as a springboard for examining their privileges (p. 83).

Learning the trials of others can be a transformative act if students are able to empathize with the oppressed. Exposure to counterhegemonic messages prompts audience members of even potentially privileged perspectives to reflect on their worldview, subsequently encouraging production of more counterhegemonic messages.

Research promotes discovery. Learning about the world can help students gain an understanding of where they are located in relation to hegemony. Recognition of stratified power is necessary in order to combat it. Allison and Mitchell (1994) posit, "In practicing interpretation students learn to recognize how the text they are studying connects with and reproduces other cultural texts" (p. 206). The facet of analyzing and interpreting a text helps students understand their situatedness in the world. Competitors develop an awareness of culturally produced texts by digging into deeper meanings from a text, frequently done in interpretation events. Analyzing texts and developing an understanding of cultural consciousness are evident in limited preparation events. Limited preparation events can serves as a means of finding stories that matter and applying them to broad cultural contexts in order to recognize how and why they matter in cultural contexts.

Causing people to question hegemonic myths that have been sold to them is prominent in forensic individual events that frequently promote advocacy. I have had students commonly comment that they feel "woke" after observing a round, a common expression used to express that they were exposed to something that they had never thought to critique. Being "woke" is often followed by students further learning about and engaging with others about their new-found knowledge. Usually "woke" is attached to the notion of

"staying woke." Similarly Sleeter, Torres, and Laughlin (2004) suggested, "Conscientization rarely is a one-time awakening, but rather it is a process with multiple avenues of insightful moments as well as difficult times of denial and pain" (p. 83). It is often difficult to reach a heightened awareness to oppression especially if someone has typically benefitted from the status quo. However discovering and uncovering cultural hegemonic power provide in roads to conscientization.

Interaction

A student's identity is heavily cultivated by interactions shared with fellow competitors, coaches, audience members, and judges. Identities are not permanently fixed. They are almost entirely in flux depending on whom we are conversing with and when. A critical aspect of achieving a conscientized ideology is to communicate living *with* the world to others. Freire (1973), articulated conscientization as the liberating process of oppressed people communicating their oppression through dialogue. Sleeter, Torres, and Laughlin (2004) expressed, "Liberation through dialogue and transformative communal action can involve both those who recognize their own oppression, as well as those in privileged statuses" (p. 83). Conversations about existing *with* the world can be a radically subversive act. Dimock and White (2007) affirmed the forensic community as a sight of open dialogue for students to interact with student, faculty, and community members from across the country. Each of these differing identities come together in a crucible of competition recognizing and validating critique from all involved parties. Bartlett (2005) constructed knowledges as not only inventions but reinventions, uncovered through inquiry. Tournament interactions serve as a means for students to establish experiential knowledge.

Forensic participation guides students towards texts that inform their worldviews. Students are introduced to different worldviews and arguments. Allison and Mitchell (1994) contended, "criticism is most effective when it is based on the critic's recognition of his or her own values that have arisen through membership in some group or groups"(p. 206). The forensic community is a group that fosters critical dialogue with competitors, judges, and coaches, developing a larger sense of heightened awareness of cultural power. Awareness of cultural power is further compelled by social interaction between competitors. Mitchell (2000) argued that dialogic student exchanges promotes insightful cultural understanding and solidification of self-identities. When students interact within the forensic community, they develop a stronger understanding of cultural underpinnings of power and how they uniquely play out in a social setting. Discussions about differing team ideologies, coaching philosophies, budgets, tuition, etc., all play into an increased consciousness surrounding explicit and implicit hegemonic dimensions. However, the more impactful conversations are when students absorb differing world perspectives. Internalizing messages communicated by respected peers can be a powerful tool to promote conscientization.

Performance

Forensics is a practice of establishing the venue to critique, providing a forum for students to criticalize the world and to speak the critique into existence, thus offering a mechanism for social change. Freire (1970) articulated conscientization as establishing beings that are "simultaneously transforming the world by their action and grasping and expressing the world's reality in their creative language" (p. 453). Students in forensic competition become keen observers of performance. Performance language is more than words but also the body. Warren (1999) stated that the body is often ignored as a significant location for pedagogical attention and educational praxis. In contrast forensic performance opens up the body as an extension of identity. The body is a frame for others to gauge end engage in identity.

Epping and Labrie (2005) identified specifically how bodies are scrutinized during forensic performance. Furthermore, the contested site of the body is a means for students to study, adopt, or actively defy norms. Presenting the students with the variety of norm conscriptions and allowing students to choose their professional identity while at tournaments is one way in which forensic participation facilitates praxis of conscientization.

The very act of performing is a transformative act. Fox (2007) posited performance as a powerful act to understand one's own perception of the world, and Reid (2012) articulated, "performance is not only a way that people understand culture, it can also be a site to change views about culture" (p. 24). The process of performing puts research and interaction into a reflexive cultural context. The student simultaneously is reflecting on the ways in which cultural power impacts themselves in addition to the identity being performed. Competitors go through the active process of expressing realities of the world thrusting them into beings that live *with* it.

The act of performance promotes the lived experiences of others, contributing to a wider field of experience for dialogic communication. Bartlett (2005) clarified how critical pedagogy foregrounds dialogic communication for students to name the world. Performance also uniquely allows for voices living *with* the world to be heard. Forensic performance tends to favor stories of oppression, which validates experience. Furthermore, differing experiences to similar oppressive structures can provide urgency to social justice movements. Consider the differing intersections of oppression expressed in a single round of oral interpretation. Forensic performance of literature can offer a platform for opposing cultural experiences to be made known thus achieving a dialogue.

Sleeter, Torres, and Laughlin (2004) articulated that dialogue seals the act of knowing by helping it move from an individual perspective to a communal transformative recognition of pain, guilt, and anger. Obviously, the higher the skill set of the performers in the round help to better articulate living *with* the world. Critiquing the pain of hegemony can cause people that feel comfortable with the status quo to question their comfort and happiness in the world. The audience could shift towards empathizing with the oppressed thus forming a path towards conscientization. Performing multiple oppressed identities in conflict with each other creates a cacophonous cry for change. It is a unique facet of forensic performance that, in many ways, goes beyond Freirean notions of conscientization.

Roadblocks to Conscientization

Freire (1970) emphasized conscientized praxis as both reflection and action. Forensic participation may indeed inspire reflection; however, it rarely promotes action. It is critical to mention that although forensic participation enables conscientization, the degree to which that is achieved can be limited in scope. Therefore, it is essential to process impending roadblocks on the path towards raised cultural awareness: competition and banking norms.

Competition

If we accept the premise that forensic participation raises students' consciousness, than what does it mean to rank speeches that foreground voices living *with* the world against each other? Inherently, competitions will name a victor, which inherently validates some oppressions over others. There is also the troublesome notion that some competitors might glean more conscientized awareness than others. In what ways does forensic competition communicate oppression? Which lived beings are worthy of speaking oppression? Frequently heterosexual students perform pieces as members of the LGBTQ community. Should we reward the performer who is straight for challenging themselves toward a higher level of

conscientization, or do we reward an LGBTQ competitor for speaking their lived experience in a profound way?

Ultimately, I believe Freire would be frustrated by the notion of rewarding certain modes of oppression over others. However, forensic competition does much more than provide a forum for oppressed voices; therefore, rewarding arrangement, ethos, technique, and aesthetic of presentations are all valid mechanisms for evaluating a performance act. Mitchell (2000) warned that the competitive nature of forensic competition can silence dialogue. To pick up one oppressed voice can discourage forensic competitors to speak their realized oppression or one that might not be a "successful topic." Students might shy away from topics about indigenous people because they do not fair well at competitions. Hinck (2003) summed, "When our practices lead students to engage in cultural behaviors for the exclusive sake of winning, of appealing to standards of performance that reflect a closed system of unwritten and unjustifiable expectations for performance, we have lost our way" (p. 64).

Critique absent of overthrowing hegemonic power, according to Freire, was inauthentic language: "Human nature cannot be nourished by false words" (p.76). In many ways, forensic speeches promote reflection over action. I have heard commentary about people needing to toss out persuasion topics because the government had the audacity to solve their problem. The cynical nature of such a comment highlights how forensic competition selfishly promotes an insular or inauthentic approach to world problem solving.

If we wish to foster citizens that live *with* the world as fully realized agents of social change, then conscientization is not enough. Gallavan and Webster-Smith (2012) cautioned conscientization is the first of many steps towards establishing competent cultural consciousness. Awareness without follow through limits the voices of beings living with the world. Every season thousands of students are honing persuasive messages in order to improve society; many of those speeches are only heard by forensic competitors, judges, and coaches. The scope of forensic advocacy currently exists in an isolated vacuum, limiting the efficacy of social mobilization. Freire (1970) warranted:

> What is important, nevertheless, is that once the cracks in the structure begin to appear, and once societies enter the period of transition, immediately the first movements of emergence of the hitherto submerged and silent masses begin to manifest themselves (p. 462).

Forensic participation does not warrant that change will happen once the cracks in the oppression are communicated to a willing audience. The silent masses may never call for change if the mere vocalization of hegemonic power subdues the desire to act. Giving a place to vent the frustrations can be something that stagnates social momentum. Powerful forensic speeches should not only exist at tournaments. Critical pedagogy would warrant a further need to take issues raised by our students' speeches and get them heard by more people or even enacted.

Banking Norms

Speech competitors will frequently self examine and actively choose to adhere or reject conventions. Schunk and Zimmerman (1997) maintained that students develop self-value through self-comparison. Self-comparison absent of reflexivity leads to the problematic reproduction of norms. Many forensic scholars have critiqued norm adoptions in forensic competition (e.g., Billings, 2002; Burnett, Brand, & Meister, 2003; Cronn-Mills & Golden, 1987; Duncan, 2013; Epping and Labrie, 2005, Gaer, 2002; Morris, 2005; Ott, 1998; Paine, 2005; VerLinden, 1996. Paine (2005) went so far as to state that norms regulate and infiltrate

all aspects of forensic culture: dress, performance, interactions, and pedagogy. Forensic culture promotes the banking model of education, oft critiqued by Freire. Graman (1988) described the banking model as the process of transferring, endorsing, remembering, and reproducing messages through testing. Forensic competition replaces traditional testing with the rank and rating system. Ranking and rating competitors inherently rewards and disciplines the banking of forensic technique. This might come in to play when students are rewarded in a limited preparation event because they speak fluidly without providing argumentation to justify their interpretation of the prompt. If students develop one aspect of the skill and are rewarded, they may not see the educational value in honing other remarkable skills in the event. A student who can achieve moderate success with that approach is often then modeled by other students. The modeling of technique over learning the educational intent of an event promotes banking. As further proof, coaches and competitors frequently discuss banking attention getting device, examples, and transition devices for limited preparation. Our rhetoric casually endorses banking norms rather than creative freedom with a text.

But to claim that forensic competition is inherently defined by how well students compare themselves would be a disservice to the students who do achieve conscientization. Students can liberate themselves from conventionality once they correctly identify the uniformity. By finding the precise places of weakness in dominant presentations, students can thus find ways to operate within and outside of the norms simultaneously. Defying norm constructions through performance establishes an ethos of resistance towards hegemonic constructions inherent in forensic participation. However, cultural conscriptions of society are similarly laden at forensic tournaments and often staunchly enforced. Critical forensic pedagogues must insure that forensic norm enforcement is not a mechanism for hegemony.

Although Duncan (2013) maintained that norms are minor conventions to forensic competition that do not impede on the inherent educational value, those conventions do serve as props for hegemonic influence. If the mentality of coaches and judges is to rank messages of resistance lower, then many students could be influenced to conform for validation. Intercollegiate forensics is an activity tinged with technique so specialized it can stop liberation before it begins. Reynolds and Trehan (2010) cautioned experiential learning often reinforces a culture of consensus and is prone to rebuff differences. Forensic competition is no exception to this critique of experiential learning. Consider the student with a truly innovative approach to solving a world problem in a persuasion round. How much work is done to solve the problem after nationals? Furthermore, think of the frequency in which judges are quick to critique an overdone topic without reflexively thinking about the lived experience they are being exposed to. Competitive success can cause people to shut out attempts towards conscientization. Articulating a winner thus determines which lived experiences with the world are worth praising and which are worth neglecting. Therefore, the forensic community is sending mixed messages about power. Critical forensic pedagogues should be as mindful to the how students learn oppressions. I contend that our students are indeed learning, but I have to admit our students may not be learning how to actively resist oppression, a road far less traveled in this activity.

Conclusion

Fassett and Warren (2007) articulated, "critical pedagogy is a journey, not a destination" (p. 27). To belabor a metaphor, all roads of forensic pedagogy may lead towards conscientization, but not all roads guarantee conscientization. We provide the path, but students choose to live *with* the world or not. Reflection on the roads we have traveled helps to forge paths we have yet to travel. Not every student we mentor will choose to resist

hegemonic power. Not every student who competes in forensics is looking to change the world, nor do the recognize the full power of their voice to attempt to do so. However, that should not discourage coaches from trying to help students achieve conscientization. There are many beautiful and messy terrains to explore. Hopefully, as students mature, they trek off road, and we can carve new passageways together. Graman (1988) wrote, "The act of liberation can occur when teachers and learners both recognize that learners have the ability to pose their own problems and to struggle to achieve their own solutions" (p.436). Often students believe that to graduate means to mature to the "real world." Such a transition could make students disillusioned to living within the world. The easy choice is to live with rather than living within. Many find solace merely living in the world. However, prescribing to a pedagogy of liberation means we must not let students merely follow the paths set for them.

Dimock and White (2007) summed: "Our capacity to transform forensics into a critical pedagogy is limited to the extent that as pedagogues, we are only half the equation and we are not the most important half" (p. 94). If we wish for our students to become active agents of change, than we must provide them with not only the means to critique but to instill the desire to continue the praxis of conscientization after they complete forensic competition.

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