Assessing Competition and Stress: The Perceived Effect of Tournament Atmosphere on Students and Coaches

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A persistent and salient concern of forensic educators is the recruitment and retention of students and coaches to engage in competitive forensic events. However, while providing opportunities for students to demonstrate their communicative and interpretive skills, the tournament setting may not afford students (or their coaches, for that matter) a choice regarding the kinds of healthful behaviors they might normally seek to demonstrate. In a survey discussed later in this article, one respondent provided a poignant description of forensic competition: "Try waking up at 6 a.m., having gone to bed at 2 a.m., pour battery acid down your gullet and then try to stay awake watching Lawrence Welk—that's forensics." Although this remark may be a bit extreme, the forensic tournament environment may exact a physical and mental toll from participants.

Little research has been conducted regarding health issues in the forensic tournament environment. A study by Hatfield, Hatfield, and Carver (1989) on this subject, however, has proven to be insightful. They described wellness as an integration of social, physical, intellectual, career, emotional, and spiritual well-being, and revealed through a narrative review of selected tournaments, violations of wellness standards in the forensic tournament environment. The findings of their study, presented at the First Developmental Conference on Individual Events, resulted in the Tournament Management Practices Division of that conference proposing four recommendations:

1. To create a shared vision of what a tournament experience should include for healthy competition (i.e., well scheduled, well managed).
2. To enhance awareness of the stressful nature of forensic tournaments and provide guidance through information for stress reduction and management.
3. To provide information to the forensic community on the wellness approach to forensics by having all national organizations promote programs on that orientation.
4. To encourage tournament hosts to analyze and meet the need of the forensic community even if it places more demands on the host, (p.32)

**The National Forensic Journal,* X (Spring, 1992), pp. 1-10.

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These proposals were designed to enhance the opportunities for forensic competitors to maintain healthful behaviors during tournaments.

Some findings outside the forensic community indicate that adherence to wellness principles aids in preventing burnout. Freudenberger and Richelson (1980) define burnout as, "... a state of fatigue or frustration brought about by devotion to a cause [or] way of life..." (p. 13). Veninga and Spradley (1981) offer a more specific discussion of the connection between stress and burnout. They identify five primary risk factors that contribute to burnout. These include: individual perception of stress, family [or what might be considered squad] pressures, environmental demands, work problems, and faulty stress safety valves (p. 28), all of which seem closely related to the forensic tournament environment.

Individual perception of stress concerns the interpretation of a given situation. Those who are easily frustrated or who have a pessimistic attitude are considered to be high stress perceivers. Those who tend to be flexible and optimistic are considered to be low stress perceivers. The pressures of competition and the frustrations of travel would tend to produce more stress in high perceivers than in low perceivers.

Family pressures or intrasquad stress contribute to anxiety in the forensic competitor. Rivalry, interpersonal relationships, and the tensions of spending significant amounts of time with the same group of people cannot help but produce tension.

Environmental demands concern the pressures produced by the physical and social environment. Such pressures in a forensic tournament environment might include limited time for food or sleep and a general disorientation due to an unfamiliar physical setting.

Stress related to work problems can affect students and coaches. The preparation schedule set by the coach can produce anxiety. Programs that are underfunded and understaffed can also produce stress among coaches.

Faulty stress safety valves concern the ability to release pressures that build up from anxiety. Some opportunities for the healthy release of pressure are associated with exercise, relaxation, or support from friends. Unhealthy release behaviors include drinking alcohol, smoking cigarettes, or consuming other drugs.

This study explores the ways that forensic tournaments may limit the opportunities for coaches and competitors to maintain health-promoting behaviors, identifies constraints that may contribute to stress in students an d coaches, and provides suggestions beyond those proposed by Hatfield et al. for successfully implementing wellness principles when planning and scheduling forensic tournaments. It is hoped that such principles will result in a reform of those practices that do not contribute to a healthful environment for forensic contestants and their coaches.

Survey Procedure and Results

Subjects

The data for this study were obtained from a survey conducted at the 1989 National Individual Events Tournament sponsored by the American Forensic Association. Four hundred surveys were distributed to coaches and students twenty minutes before the awards ceremony. The surveys were collected several minutes before the ceremony began. Two hundred ninety-four surveys were returned, for a response rate of 72.5%. Four surveys, completed by hired judges, were eliminated from the study. The identity of respondents was kept confidential; however, the respondents were asked to indicate their gender, years of experience, and whether they were a hired judge, contestant, or coach.

Closed-Ended Responses

The two closed-ended questions on the survey, pertinent to this study, were focused on two areas. First, respondents were asked whether their general health behaviors at forensic tournaments were different from their general health behaviors in other settings. Later, respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which contestants, tournament schedules, and coaches influenced them, in positive or negative ways, to change their general health behaviors.

As is indicated in Table 1, 76% of the 290 respondents indicated that their general health behaviors were different at forensic tournaments than in other settings.

Table 1
Changes in Health Behaviors

Yes	220	(76%)
No	53	(18%)
Unsure	10	(4%)
No Response	7	(2%)

When asked later in the survey about sources of influence on their healthful behaviors at forensic tournaments, those responding varied in their perceptions. The major source of influence identified by the majority of students and coaches was the tournament schedule. As can be seen in Table 2, 78% of the coaches and 83% of the students indicated that the tournament schedule was influential in affecting their general health behaviors.

Table 2

Influenced by Tournament Schedule

	Coaches (n=67)	Students (n = 217)
Influential	52 (78%)	180 (83%)
Average Influence	5 (7%)	23 (11%)
Not Influential	4 (6%)	11 (5%)
No Response	6 (9%)	3 (1%)

Students and coaches differed to some extent in their assessment of how their general health behaviors were impacted by other contestants. As Table 3 indicates, only 19% of the coaches indicated that contestants were either influential or of average influence in changing their healthful behaviors. Conversely, 56% of the students indicated that other contestants played an influential role or contributed average influence in changing their general healthful behaviors at tournaments.

Table 3
Contestants Influenced by Behavior

	Coaches (n=67)	Students (n=217)
Influential	7 (10%)	56 (26%)
Average Influence	12 (18%)	66 (30%)
Not Influential	38 (57%)	91 (42%)
No Response	10 (15%)	4 (2%)

Students identified coaches as one source of change regarding their general healthful behaviors. As shown in Table 4, 65% of the students claimed coaches were either influential or of average influence in changing their health behaviors.

Table 4
Influence of Coaches on Students

Influence of Coaches on Students (n=217)	
Influential	79 (36%)
Average Influence	63 (29%)
Not Influential	71 (33%)
No Response	4 (2%)

Despite the fact that the majority of coaches and students believed their general healthful behaviors were altered by forensic competition, few respondents indicated that health concerns caused them to attend fewer tournaments. In fact, when asked if a concern for their health caused them to limit their participation in tournaments, the majority of students and coaches said "no." As Table 5 indicates, only 10% of the coaches and 8% of the students responding to the survey said they attended fewer tournaments because of health concerns. The fact that the respondents were NIET qualifiers may have encouraged them to respond as they did. The NIET's qualification procedures encourage students to attend as many tournaments as possible to earn an at-large qualification.

Table 5

Attending Fewer Tournaments

	Coaches (n = 67)	Students (n = 217)
Yes	7 (10%)	17 (8%)
No	54 (81%)	186 (86%)
Unsure	2 (3%)	10 (4%)
No Response	4 (6%)	4 (2%)

Open-Ended Responses

One open-ended question on the survey read: "Please describe how the overall environment of a forensic tournament affects your ability to adhere to your general health behaviors." One hundred ninety-one individuals responded to this question for a single-question response rate of approximately 48%.

Coding. For the open-ended question, a preliminary review of the responses was conducted. Clusters of responses were determined by the authors based upon the subject areas addressed by the respondents. Appropriate titles were created and an operational definition was formulated for each cluster. Each of the authors then analyzed the responses and categorized them according to the definitions. Differences in judgments were discussed and resolved. If a given comment mentioned aspects of more than one category, the comment was coded into each appropriate category. For example, the comment, "The schedule makes me rush so I feel more stress," was coded in the categories of both "schedule" and "stress." If a single respondent offered two complaints about the same category, only the first complaint was recorded. Examples of how the coding system was applied are offered in the discussion segment.

Schedule. Any comment about the time available between rounds or the number of rounds scheduled in a given day.

Nutrition. Any comment about the quality or quantity of food consumed during a tournament.

Stress. Any mention of stress levels due to the circumstances surrounding forensic competition.

Sleep. Any specific reference to receiving specified hours of sleep.

Exercise. Any reference to having opportunities to exercise one's body in the manner desired.

Illness. Any description of a negative physical condition that either developed during the tournament or that was still evident during the week following the tournament.

Drugs. Any reference to increased consumption of alcohol or other drugs, cigarettes, or caffeine during a tournament

Same/Improve. Any mention of improved or maintained health behaviors promoted by the tournament environment.

The vast majority of those surveyed claimed they experienced difficulties maintaining their healthful habits during forensic tournaments. Ninety-one percent of the respondents offered at least one complaint. A total of 350 complaints was recorded for an average of 1.8 complaints per subject. Respondents are quoted verbatim, and [sic] is not used.

Table 6
Summary of Complaints by Category

	# of Complaints	% of N*
Time	87	46%
Food	85	45%
Sleep	57	30%
Stress	57	30%
Exercise	22	12%
Illness	14	7%
Drugs	10	5%
Same/Improve	18	9%

***N = 191**

As is indicated in Table 6, schedule complaints were most common. Nearly all complaints concerning the schedule claimed that typical tournament schedules did not allow enough time for the pursuit of what respondents considered to be healthful behaviors. The descriptions of these behaviors were both general and specific. For example, one respondent wrote, "Just too hectic to do anything properly." Another respondent complained, "Activities should not run so late or begin so early, usually exhausted afterwards." The more specific comments described an inability to eat or sleep properly due to the schedule. Three respondents mentioned that the pace of tournaments was too slow. One such person opined that tournament schedules produced stress due to "... a lot of waiting around."

The second most frequent complaint category was nutrition. Those respondents who claimed they ate less food during tournaments cited both the tournament schedule and a feeling of stress as reasons. For example, one respondent claimed, 'Tension keeps me from eating." Another wrote, "The schedule usually doesn't allow much spare time to relax and eat." Other respondents focused their nutritional complaints on altered meal times. For example, one respondent wrote, "The time between lunch and dinner can be as much as eight hours." Another respondent described how s/he coped with the inability to eat during tournaments: "I usually starve in the daytime and stuff myself in the evening when we have time to eat." Conversely, two respondents indicated that the tournament environment caused them to consume more food than normal: "Lot of social aspect centers around food so I eat much more." "Competition produces stress which promotes overeating and snacking." Finally, one respondent summarized the problem of food quality by writing, "Low cash = fast food."

Table 6 further indicates that complaints about sleep and stress were each recorded by 30% of the respondents. Most respondents who complained of increased stress at tournaments focused their comments on competition and lack of sleep or food. With regard to competition, one respondent wrote: "Rude judges and competitors irritate me and dehumanize the education of the event." Another respondent noted, "[I] feel tournaments are too competitive and unhealthy." Comments regarding the relationship between food or sleep and stress were quite specific. For example, "I don't get enough sleep and therefore, I tend to be more stressed than usual."

Most complaints addressing a lack of sleep were related to the schedule. For example, one respondent indicated, "As in any competition there is stress involved. However, I believe that if tournaments were scheduled a bit differently allowing the competitors more sleep, the stressful environment could certainly decrease and it would allow for a healthier tournament." Another cause for little sleep concerned socializing and practicing late into the evening. One respondent summarized these points by writing, "When with people I like, avoid sleeping; when competition is rough, stay up late and practice and smoke."

Table 6 indicates further that 12% of the respondents complained that they were unable to exercise adequately at forensic tournaments. Virtually all of the exercise complaints focused on the schedule. For example, a respondent noted, "I just don't get enough time to workout or take care of myself." Another person wrote, "Can't run, feel like I could give myself ulcers (were I prone to that)."

Mention of illness accounted for seven percent of the complaints. Complaints of illness focused on problems both during and after the tournament. Two separate responses about health after the tournament read, "I run myself ragged and spend weeks after a tournament recovering." "Completely wrecks me for the next couple of days." Another respondent bluntly described her illness at tournaments: "The nerves in my stomach plus my ulcers acting up prevent proper health habits at forensics tournaments."

As is indicated in the drugs category of Table 6, only five percent of the respondents specifically mentioned that they consumed more tobacco, caffeine, or alcohol at forensic tournaments. Respondents cited fatigue and stress as reasons for ingesting more of these substances. One respondent wrote, "Stress level increases my habitual need for caffeine and cigarette[s]." Another respondent wrote, "Competition increases stress which promotes overeating, snacking, and daily [intake of] caffeine and alcohol."

Finally, Table 6 indicates that nine percent of the respondents felt that their health behaviors were not changed or improved at forensic tournaments. Those who indicated that their health behaviors were no different claimed that they maintained poor health behaviors at all times. One such respondent wrote, "My health behavior is horrid regardless of how/where I am." Another respondent wrote, "Since I never really make an effort in the first place, it doesn't affect me much."

Discussion

This study provides further data supporting the findings of Hatfield et al. (1989). The forensic tournament environment poses serious constraints on what can be termed healthful behaviors. Moreover, these environmental problems seem aligned with what Veninga and Spradley (1981) described as stress leading to burnout. The demanding schedule and subsequent lack of sleep and proper eating habits represent environmental risk factors. The frequent mention of stress due to the intensity of competition suggests that many participants have a high perception of stress. Finally, complaints of an inability to exercise and a tendency to consume more alcohol and tobacco suggest that some forensic participants are employing inappropriate means for coping with stress. These factors suggest that forensic tournaments create an environment that may be conducive to burnout. How, then, can the forensic tournament environment be altered to promote more healthful behaviors?

A large majority of those surveyed felt the typical tournament schedule was related to changes in their normal health behaviors. Competitors and coaches complained that it provided inadequate opportunities to eat, sleep, and exercise. Some also blamed the schedule for their feelings of stress. One solution to the problem might be to extend the length of tournaments. If tournaments were longer, competitors could maintain their current levels of participation, and more time for sleeping and eating would be available. The obvious problem with such an alteration is that time spent at tournaments is itself a cause of concern. Students and coaches need to return to their respective colleges and universities as soon as possible in order to keep up with the demands of their classes.

A second option would be to encourage students to compete in fewer events. By offering only two groupings instead of three, tournaments could begin later, end earlier, and contain more breaks. Similar options might include reducing the number of panelists in each section, the time limits of some events, the number of rounds, or the number of cross-entries allowed for each student. While these seem to be logical suggestions, students often choose to perform in additional events rather than assuring that they will have adequate time for eating and relaxing. It is ironic that such eager commitment to the activity can and does contribute to increased levels o f stress and unhealthful behaviors.

A third option is to reconsider how coaches interact with their students. Nearly two thirds of the student respondents indicated that their coaches influenced their health behaviors at tournaments. As coaches, we can and should give consideration to the health of our students. Encouraging students to take occasional breaks from competition could prove to be an investment in the students' future as competitors. Similarly, allowing students to travel with fewer events could reduce their level of frustration. Coaches themselves might also occasionally seek substitutes in an effort to provide a break from the long and demanding individual events season.

A fourth option involves innovative forms of competition. Interactive video is becoming a more realistic possibility for forensic competition each year (Littlefield & Pawlowski, 1991). Individual events tournaments through interactive video are currently taking place in North Dakota. Many campuses in other states are already connected with such video options. It is doubtful that interactive video will ever replace tournaments as we know them, but such an alternative could supplement the existing schedule. The result could be several tournaments each year where the students would not need to leave their respective campuses.

A fifth alternative is already showing promise in the forensic community. This alternative involves providing healthful snacks and meals for coaches and competitors during tournaments. Hatfield et al. (1989) called for tournament hosts to serve a healthful meal at some point between evening rounds and to improve the nutritional quality of the traditional Saturday morning breakfast. Such alternatives have been carried out at a variety of tournaments, including the 1989 National Individual Events Tournament sponsored by the American Forensic Association. These options require additional time and money from the host school; however, it remains a workable alternative to the status quo.

In summary, this study suggests that the current forensic tournament environment often promotes unhealthy practices. As our society becomes more health conscious, so too must the forensic community. Alternatives for improving the problematic conditions of forensic tournaments are available. The challenge is to incorporate these changes during this decade.

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Analysis of Forensics Program Administration: What Will the 1990s Bring?

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As we enter a new decade of competition in intercollegiate forensics, we face a myriad of challenges. Forensics educators have recently lamented about problems regarding forensics budgets, the decline of NDT debate, and coach/judge burnout (Gill, 1990; Littlefield, 1989; Rowland and Deatherage, 1988; Underberg; 1989). On a more positive note, forensics seems to be thriving, with new schools participating in debate and individual events every year (Freeley, 1990). Thus, as forensics programs enter the 1990s, it seems appropriate to examine the current status of those programs and their administration in order to assess what the next ten years might bring to the activity.

Currently, very little research exists to suggest the direction forensics programs will take in the 1990s. In 1987, Stepp and Thompson conducted a survey of the status of forensics programs in order to aid institutions in fund raising ventures. This study was useful in determining reasons for participation in debate and/or individual events, how much cross-over exists between the two activities, and the size of the budget in relation to the size of the program. In a recent survey, Jensen (1990) found that programs are becoming more specialized and that most coaches have some degree of expertise. Although both studies were insightful, neither indicated what forensics programs were like in the past or what changes could be expected to occur in the next decade.

While a study of the future of forensics programs could be approached from a variety of angles, the purpose of this study is to examine the administration of forensics programs, comparing the current status of programs to the status of such programs one year ago and five years ago. That is, if forensics programs have changed, more than likely they have changed in terms of what activities are offered to students, and, therefore, how the program is administered. By examining trends in program administration, it will be possible to make some predictions as to what the 1990s will bring.

**National Forensic Journal,* X (Spring, 1992), pp. 11-18.

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METHOD

Surveys of forensics programs were mailed to 375 colleges and universities in the United States. Addresses were obtained through mailing lists from the National Forensic Association, American Forensic Association, and Delta Sigma Rho-Tau Kappa Alpha. These comprehensive mailing lists included schools involved in individual events, the Cross Examination Debate Association, and the National Debate Tournament. Respondents were asked to indicate what type of program presently exists at their school: individual events-only, debate-only, both individual events and debate with separate directors, individual events and debate with one director, or "other."[1] The respondents were also asked to indicate which type of program existed at their school one year ago and five years ago. In addition, respondents were asked to provide some demographic information so that comparisons could be made between types of programs. Finally, an open-ended section required respondents to comment on the advantages and disadvantages of their type of program. Ten of the surveys were returned unopened because of inaccurate addresses; 155 completed surveys were returned, for a response rate of 44%.

A trained coder tabulated the results according to type of program (i.e, individual events-only [22 responses]; debate-only [25 responses]; both activities, one director [76 responses]; both activities, separate directors [16 responses]; or "other" [16 responses]). For each different type of program, the coder tabulated what the program was like one year ago and five years ago. Additionally, the type of institution, the size of the institution, the size of the forensics staff and squad, and the budget were recorded utilizing the same cutoff criteria provided on the survey. A second trained coder independently tabulated results from fifteen surveys (10% of the data); inter-coder reliability was 100%.

RESULTS

As Table 1 indicates, of the respondents, 22 (or 14%) administered individual events-only programs. One year ago, all but two of those programs (91%) were administered the same way. Five years ago, only half were individual events-only programs, with 41% of the programs categorized as individual events and debate programs, and two schools with no program.

In terms of the open-ended responses, the advantages of individual events-only programs focused upon less cost, more student participation, less "win at any cost," ease in managing with one director, and less travel than debate. The main disadvantage that respondents claimed was that students miss the educational advantages of debate. As one director noted, a debate program "can add a dimension to the student's academic growth not afforded when individual events are the only option."

Twenty-five of the survey respondents (16%) indicated that they administered debate-only programs. One year ago, 23 of those programs were administered the same way (92%). Five years ago, 21 of the programs were debate-only (84%); the remaining programs (16%) offered both debate and individual events.

Survey respondents listed several advantages of debate-only programs. Primarily, they argued that budget prevented them from over-expanding their programs. In fact, one director stated that, "We can maintain a national-level...program with our budget if we don't split our squad." Another director agreed: "It is a cost effective way for the school to sell its 'second highest placement in grad and law school for its size in the country.'" Others argued that debate offers the best opportunity for training in argumentation and rhetoric. Disadvantages included the fact that students did not receive exposure to individual events, lack of sufficient funds for travel, and lack of scholarships.

There were seventy-six debate and individual events programs administered by one director (49%). One year ago, 67 of those programs (88%) were administered the same way, while 55 (72%) of the programs were administered in this fashion five years ago.

Table 1
Type of Program One Year Ago and Five Years Ago

	Current Programs							
Type of Prog. by Year	**IE only (22)**		**Deb. only (25)**		**One Dir. (76)**		**Sep. Dir. (16)**	
one year ago								
IE only	20	(91%)	0	(0%)	3	(4%)	1	(6%)
Debate only	0	(0%)	23	(92%)	1	(1%)	0	(0%)
One director	2	(9%)	1	(4%)	67	(88%)	2	(13%)
Sep. director	0	(0%)	0	(0%)	3	(4%)	12	(75%)
no program	0	(0%)	1	(4%)	0	(0%)	0	(0%)
other	0	(0%)	0	(0%)	2	(3%)	1	(6%)
five years ago								
IE only	11	(50%)	0	(0%)	7	(9%)	2	(13%)
Debate only	0	(0%)	21	(84%)	5	(6%)	1	(6%)
One director	6	(27%	3	(12%)	55	(72%)	4	(25%)
Sep. director	3	(14%	1	(4%)	4	(5%)	8	(50%)
no program	2	(9%)	0	(0%)	4	(5%)	0	(0%)
other	0	(0%)	0	(0%)	3	(4%)	1	(6%)

Advantages of debate and individual events programs administered by one director included having a "common philosophy," establishing team unity, offering students a wide range of experiences in forensics, creating a respect among students for both activities, and providing a way to earn more sweepstakes points. Several respondents indicated that the "chain of command" was clearest with this type of program. In fact, one director admitted, "In some ways, it can be a real rush, feeling that I'm the one in charge, who has the full responsibility, the center of the whole program." Disadvantages of this type of program focused upon the lack of time to adequately prepare students to do both activities, the lack of money to travel as often as desired, and the stress on the director to be an expert in both areas.

Sixteen of the respondents (10%) said that they administered debate and individual events programs utilizing separate directors. One year ago, 12 of those programs (75%) were administered in the same way. Five years ago, only half of the programs were administered by separate directors; 25% of the programs had one director.

Those who administered programs using two directors found the advantages centered on specialization by coaches and autonomy in decision making. Also, directors argued that "squabbles" over funding could be avoided, and that activities could be more "efficiently and specifically directed." The disadvantages included the notion that students could develop negative feelings about the other activity ("they could split into gangs"), and directors may not always cooperate with one another. In addition, two directors pointed out that students cannot do both activities in this type of program; "there is never a crossing over process of utilizing debate students in I.E. or I.E. students who might make good debaters."

Finally, sixteen of the respondents placed their programs in the "other" category. Thirteen (81%) respondents indicated that a forensics program no longer exists at their school. Three respondents indicated that their programs are student administered.

Respondents indicated several reasons for the lack of forensics programs at their institutions: lack of funding, apathy and coach burnout. One individual noted, "We had (at one point) a very active forensic team (this was years ago). It deteriorated to 0 - zip - nada [sic]. I came here in 1989 and felt I'd encountered a brick wall of apathy." In terms of student-run programs, the only comment was that this type of program is challenged by the lack of continuity and the ambition of the students involved.

Table 2 provides demographic information regarding the responding schools. Generally, individual events-only programs tend to exist at four-year institutions of between 1000 and 10,000 students, with 11-20 participants on the team, administered by a full-time director and an assistant (paid, part-time or graduate teaching assistant). The budgets range from $1,500 to $18,000.

Debate-only programs tend to exist in private schools of between 1000 and 5000 students, with 6-20 participants on the team, administered by a full-time director and a graduate student. The budgets range from $5,527- $90,000.

Table 2
Demographic Data

Criteria	IE only		Debate only		One director		Sep. directors	
Institution								
private	6	(27%)	16	(64%)	21	(28%)	1	(6%)
two-year	4	(18%)	0	(0%)	4	(5%)	2	(13%)
four-year	12	(55%)	9	(36%)	51	(67%)	13	(81%)
Size of Institution								
>500	1	(4.5%)	1	(4%)	0	(0%)	0	(0%)
501-1000	3	(14%)	1	(4%)	7	(9%)	0	(0%)
1001-5000	8	(36%)	11	(44%)	22	(29%)	7	(44%)
5001-10000	5	(23%)	3	(12%)	10	(13%)	2	(12%)
10001-25000	4	(18%)	8	(32%)	31	(41%)	4	(25%)
<25001	0	(0%)	1	(4%)	4	(5%)	3	(19%)
no response	1	(4.5%)	0	(0%)	2	(3%)	0	(0%)
Participants								
0-5	1	(4.5%)	1	(4%)	1	(1%)	0	(0%)
6-10	3	(14%)	6	(24%)	6	(8%)	0	(0%)
11-20	10	(45.5%)	13	(52%)	21	(28%)	3	(19%)
21-30	6	(27%)	4	(16%)	19	(25%)	2	(12%)
31-40	0	(0%)	0	(0%)	9	(12%)	6	(38%)
40+	2	(9%)	1	(4%)	18	(24%)	4	(25%)
no response	0	(0%)	0	(0%)	2	(2%)	1	(6%)
Staff								
full-time	28		26		97		36	
part-time	2		0		5		5	
gta's	11		21		46		16	
paid asst.	3		9		37		4	
total	44		56		185		61	
average	2.00		224		2.47		3.6	
Budget								
range	$1,500-18,000		$5,527-90,000		$2,000-74,100		$3,000-45,000	
mean	$7,527		$23,157		$19,800		$18,700	
median	$7,000		$18,000		$14,300		$16,000	

Debate and individual events programs administered by one director tend to exist at four-year institutions; most of those schools either have 1000-5000 or 10,000-25,000 students in attendance. Such programs generally have 11 or more participants on the team, and are administered by a full-time director, graduate student(s), and paid assistants). The budgets range from $2,000 to $74,100.

Debate and individual events programs administered by separate directors tend to exist at four-year institutions of mostly 1000 to 5000 students, with 30 or more students participating in the program, administered by a full-time director and graduate student(s). The budgets range from $3,000 to $45,000 for both programs.

CONCLUSIONS

While some of the conclusions that can be drawn from this survey are not startling, the results do point to some interesting trends in forensics. Perhaps the most noteworthy conclusion is found in the comparison of forensics programs from 1985. At first glance, it appears that individual events programs are developing and increasing in number. However, a closer examination reveals that nearly half of the programs that now offer only individual events used to offer debate as well. Thus, in the past five years, many schools have had to make choices regarding the direction of their program, and most directors seem to have selected individual events as the activity that they will continue to sponsor.

One of the possible explanations for this trend lies in the budget figures. As Table 2 indicates, individual events-only programs operate on very low budgets, from $1500 to $18,000. Given that debate entry fees can be higher than individual events fees by comparison and that debate tournaments usually last longer, directors—when forced to choose—may have ascertained that the individual events activity is more cost-effective.

Another explanation for this trend was discovered in the open-ended comments made by directors. Several individuals expressed their discomfort with contemporary debate practices and said that they felt more comfortable with individual events. As one director stated, "Debate has simply developed into some weird dinosaur-like activity which I no longer understand."

While there have been some changes in individual events programs, the number of debate-only schools has remained relatively stable over the past five years, as have the number of schools with both debate and individual events programs. Our survey results may provide some insight into reasons for this stability. For example, there were a striking number of debate-only schools that are located in private colleges (64% vs. 27% for individual events only; 28% for both activities, one director; 12.5% for both activities, separate directors). Because private colleges tend to be smaller, debaters may receive more individualized coaching. Additionally, some private colleges in the survey have access to more resources than the colleges in other categories, thereby making it easier to maintain those debate programs. Even for the debate-only schools located in four-year institutions, the lowest budget was still higher than the lowest figure for any of the other types of programs ($5527 vs. $1500 for individual events, $2000 for both activities, one director; $3000 for both activities, separate directors).

The stability of the debate and individual events programs can be explained by the fact that they seem to reside in schools that have larger student bodies, and more forensics staffing than programs in the other categories. Thus, the numerical survey results suggest that as long as the individual events and debate programs have adequate resources, their existence in the forensics community will continue to be fairly stable.

Interestingly, the open-ended survey comments suggest that broad programs may be threatened by coach burnout. More than half of the surveys completed by sole administrators of debate and individual events programs contained comments related to the excessive amount of time required by such positions. For example, one individual noted that, "I love my job, but there are some hurdles to climb and much of my time is spent at school instead of at home." Another director echoed the same sentiment, "I sacrifice my own time (HA!! What "OWN TIME" might that be?!) to make sure that I serve as many students as possible [emphasis in original]." Finally, a director expressed frustration with the broad nature of the job: "I sometimes feel like a Jack of all Trades and a Master of None. We don't have the time to devote to all events." While none of the comments suggested that such directors would soon be leaving the activity, the level of frustration may lead to some changes in single-directed debate and individual events programs.

Unfortunately, surveys such as this often do not tell a complete story. First, some may argue that it is difficult to predict future trends by examining the past. However, since one cannot look into a crystal ball, this is one way to begin forming an idea of the future of forensics. Second, it would have been useful to get a more complete set of data. The results of this study can only be drawn from the returned surveys. For additional study, it would be necessary to employ a method that assures greater representation of all schools in the nation.

Despite its shortcomings, this study has provided some interesting insight about the past, present and future of forensics. The results of the survey indicate that there have been some changes in the forensics community in the past five years. In the next five years, the biggest changes will be in the areas of dual programs and individual events; the individual events-only program will probably continue to replace the programs that now offer both debate and individual events. By the year 2000, we will need to examine the past decade to see if our predictions were, in fact, accurate.

Notes

[1]Both CEDA and NDT schools received copies of the survey. Because the purpose of this study was to examine overall trends in program administration, we did not differentiate between the two. Further study might be warranted to determine which type of debate programs have been eliminated in the past five years.

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Extemporaneous Speaking and Impromptu Speaking: A System for Differentiating Benefits and Practical Applications

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For the past decade, researchers in forensics have claimed that the activity has entered the age of accountability. As government budgets decrease, the recession places downward pressure on private contributions to universities, and as the job market becomes more and more competitive, consumers of education demand increasingly that educational activities result in some added value to the participants. Moreover, students have little time to engage in repetitive educational activities that do little to add to their value as skilled employees and citizens, while businesses and government stress efficiency—not duplication—in all aspects of the educational system.

In most areas, intercollegiate forensics has been shown to provide extensive added value to its participants, regardless of whether the student stresses debate (e.g, Dauber, 1989; Ziegelmueller, 1991), individual events (e.g., Sellnow & Ziegelmueller, 1989; Karns & Schnoor, 1989), or both (e.g., Littlefield, 1985; Stepp & Thompson, 1988). According to the latest edition of the Intercollegiate Speech Tournament Results (Hawkins, 1991), the greatest number of tournaments offer the reasonable number of 10 individual events—events that for the most part require different skills (p. 35). These ten events (designated "usual ie's" by the AFA Calendar) break down into three discrete categories: four distinct interpretation events (dramatic interpretation, prose interpretation, poetry interpretation, and duo interpretation) which require different skills in terms of cutting, narration, transitions, understandings of literature, and/or coordination with a partner; four distinct original prepared events (communication analysis, informative [expository] speaking, persuasive speaking [public address], and after dinner speaking) which require the students to pursue distinct goals in speech preparation; and two limited preparation events, which differ mainly in time allowed to prepare the speech.

Of the different event genres, only the limited preparation events have not been distinguished by their **treatment of content.** Textbooks often use these two terms interchangeably, and forensics research (e.g., Harris, 1986; Preston, 1983, 1989, 1990a) has suggested that judging

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**The National Forensic Journal*, X (Spring, 1992), pp. 19-32.

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feedback encourages students to pursue the same goals when participating in either event. Preston (1990b) states: As Harte, Keefe, and Derryberry (1988) note, "impromptu has come to be considered synonymously with extemporaneous speaking, as off-the-cuff" (p. 8). Dean (1988) claims that this lack of added value is detrimental to these two events.

Preston (1990b) suggests that in order to clarify these speech genres, the **treatment of content**, as well as the time limits, of each limited preparation event should be defined distinctly. To this end, the investigator outlines ways that in addition to utilizing coaching practices currently in the literature, changing the rules at the national tournaments plus altering judging practices could help distinguish between these events. Specifically, the results of the study suggest that while the extemporaneous speaker should seek to answer literally a significant question about current events, the impromptu speaker should strive for an insightful, **metaphorical** analysis, and provided some suggestions as to how the forensics community should promote such a distinction.

The current essay grounds this distinction in metaphorical rhetorical theory and outlines the benefits of this distinction. Whereas Preston (1990b) focuses on what the forensics community should do to "expedite, by whatever means necessary, steps to differentiate these events" (p. 23), the present study outlines how fostering the literal/metaphorical distinction magnifies the different practical applications of offering both events instead of just one or the other. Thus, the discussion of the present article clearly shifts from how to achieve the distinction to how that distinction would operate in the practice of both events not only in competition but in the here-and-now world. Also, whereas the earlier essay outlined how coaching strategies, judging practices and rules changes could promote the distinction, the current essay focuses on how this distinction would make these events useful in providing students added value in their future career endeavors. In order to do so, the paper a) distinguishes the functions of metaphorical analysis from those of literal analysis; b) outlines the types of benefits a student should accrue from the metaphorical analysis ideally required of impromptu speaking, providing practical applications of these skills in the here-and-now world; and c) outlines the types of benefits a student should accrue from the literal analysis ideally required of extemporaneous speaking, providing practical applications of these skills in the here-and-now world. Although this paper cannot and does not desire to make these events entirely discreet in every respect, it does extend the argument for differentiating the events by illustrating the added value a student would gain by participating in both, should they be differentiated as suggested in previous studies. My argument is that understanding these benefits could not only help the communication discipline better explain the difference between the events, but also to meet the standard of accountability by becoming better able to justify offering both events.

Distinguishing Metaphorical from Literal Analysis

Metaphoric analysis. With regards to differentiating the substance of impromptu speeches from extemporaneous speeches, metaphoric analysis can be defined as providing an **indirect** response to a question by treating the topic as a metaphor for a here-and-now situation. For example, impromptu speakers responding to the maxim, "An embezzler calling a common thief dishonest is like the pot calling the kettle black," would not be very effective in either inventing or delivering an impromptu speech if they discussed real pots and kettles; rather, they would interpret the resolution (on which the student may speak concretely about topics ranging from bad luck, blue-collar versus white collar dishonesty, or disguising corruption), and then take a stand on the topic. In extemporaneous speaking, on the other hand, the speaker ideally would be required to provide a **direct** answer to a question. For example, a good extemporaneous question would ask a speaker to respond specifically to a current events question, such as, "What vested interests shaped Bush's actions against Iraq in Operation Desert Storm?" In the best of worlds, the extemporaneous speaker would have to provide a direct answer to this question, supporting with substantial logical proofs claims about the real Presidents and the real Iraqis.

In her essay on the development of metaphoric rhetorical criticism, Foss (1989) outlines the concept of metaphor in a way that should inform the participant, coach, and critic of impromptu speaking (pp. 187-196).[1] Understanding how the concept has developed over time bolsters the present study's framework for differentiation in three ways: a) by grounding the differentiation in the traditions and study of rhetorical criticism; b) by providing a communication-based means of

[1]Here, we refer to metaphor as an organizing perspective, as articulated by Johnson (1981) and Lakoff and Johnson (1981). Lakoff and Johnson (1981) define metaphor as "understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in experience in terms of another" (p. 289). Clearly, it is this perspective on metaphor that informs Foss's superb summary of the development of metaphor as a device for rhetorical criticism. The outline of Foss's summary also justifies that although metaphor is present in all speech, the use of metaphorical analysis is particularly helpful in assessing the effectiveness of impromptu speeches both in everyday life and the competitive event. For a discussion of the development of metaphor in the study of rhetoric, see Osborne (1967). For applications of metaphoric analysis to here-and-now philosophical concerns similar to those raised in impromptu topics, see Knights and Cottle (1960); Lakoff (1987); Lakoff and Turner (1989); and Miall (1982).

defining the events; and c) by enabling the impromptu speaking scholar to isolate what elements of metaphor distinguish one event from the other.

Foss (1989) notes that traditionally, Aristotle viewed metaphor as decoration or embellishment—a decoration that could be used in any of the ten standard individual events. "Metaphor is the transference of a name from the object to which it has a natural application," said Aristotle (p. 187). Tradition at times viewed metaphor as a deviant or even deceptive form of speech. In his *Poetics,* Foss notes, Aristotle held that metaphors "create an unusual element in the diction by their not being in ordinary speech" (p. 187). She further notes that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Thomas Hobbes "considered metaphor to be one of four abuses of speech because we 'deceive others' when we use metaphor" (p. 187).

Hobbes' and Aristotle's objections ring very familiar to many impromptu coaches whose students ask, "Isn't giving the impression that I know more than I do about this topic deceptive?" or "Isn't this 'organized b.s.' nothing but skirting the question?" Indeed, such objections may well apply if we only view metaphor as an embellishment. As well, this traditional usage of the term metaphor does not really distinguish speech events; extemporaneous speakers, in fact, often use indirect comparisons to attract attention in their introductions. Foss (1989), then, provides a more useful definition:

> Metaphor is a basic way by which the process of using symbols to know reality occurs. Whatever language we select as the means through which to view reality, it treats that portion of reality as something, thus creating it and making it an object of experience for us. Reality, then, is simply the world seen from a particular description of language; it is whatever we describe it as. Whatever vocabulary of language we use to describe reality is a metaphor because it enables us to see reality as something. Phenomena in the world become objects of reality or knowledge only because of the symbols/metaphors that make them accessible to us (p. 188).

Such a conception of metaphor enables the student to think up and then discuss objects of experience, and use those objects in illuminating whether or not a topic provides a metaphor for those experiences. In this fashion, metaphors for both the topic and treatment thereof can be approached as those which enable students to make their world accessible to the audience in an interesting fashion. Burke (1945/1969) explains how the process generates the discovery of ideas (pp. 503-504), thereby reinforcing the notion that metaphor can unleash the thought process that enables many students to overcome the blocks that often prevent them from mastering the impromptu event.

The effective impromptu speaker not only acquires skill in preparing areas to discuss, but in expressing ideas just as those ideas come into consciousness. In the one or two minutes of preparation time, the most a student can hope to do is to decide which stand to take on the topic, and a few main points to address the topic. In impromptu, diction and word choice occurs while the student thinks. Here, Richards' (1936) discussion of thought as metaphor applies (p. 94). As Foss (1989) notes, Richards "saw metaphor as 'a borrowing between and intercourse of *thoughts*, a transaction between contexts.' Thus, metaphor is an omnipresent principle of thought and language: *'Thought* is metaphoric, and proceeds by comparison, and the metaphors of language derive therefrom'" (p. 188). In no other event does speaking follow thought so quickly as it does impromptu speaking. Thus, the following example provided by Foss might also work well in approaching an impromptu topic such as, "A fool and his or her money are soon parted":

> The metaphor that "time is money" demonstrates in more concrete terms how the use of a particular metaphor can affect our thought and experience of reality. This metaphor, reflected in common expressions in our culture such as, "This gadget will *save* you hours," "I've *invested* a lot of time in her," and "You need to *budget* your time," has led us to experience the reality of time in a particular way. Because we conceive of time as money, we understand and experience it as something that can be spent, budgeted, wasted, and saved. Telephone message units, hotel-room rates, yearly budgets, and interest on loans are examples of how time is money (p. 189).

As Foss states, "By organizing reality in particular ways, our selected metaphors also prescribe how we are to act. Metaphors contain implicit assumptions, point of view, and evaluations" (p. 189). By viewing impromptu speaking as metaphor, then, the student can in a unique way ponder their assumptions about various elements of life related to a topic, their points of view, and, importantly, the sense of evaluation so necessary in taking a clear stand on an impromptu topic. Thus, metaphor when viewed as a means to unleash an explanation of reality can enable the student to explain clearly and completely the impromptu topic by discussing experiences familiar to the individual.

Two more examples illustrate how metaphor can aid the impromptu speaker explain a topic concretely from an organized perspective. On the topic, "I'm older now, but still running against the wind," metaphor enables the student to first think of many possible **interpretations** of the quotation—interpretations ranging from being stubborn ("the topic reflects how we don't learn from our lessons") to fighting the odds as an underdog ("the topic reflects the courage of those who fight all odds—the poor, the physically challenged, and the child of a broken home"), to fighting to the death for just but at-the-time unpopular political causes ("the topic brings to light memories of many-Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth—who sacrificed everything for the cause of the oppressed"). Whatever interpretation the student makes, only metaphor can enable the student to take a topic nearly impossible to address literally and produce a memorable, concrete speech in an area of the speaker's expertise using only **a** few minutes.

The short topic like, "Haste makes waste," further illustrates the indispensability of metaphor in shaping the audience's perceptions of reality. Here, a student can disagree, using instances where meeting deadlines as instances where being quick is **a** necessity. Journalism majors might find their trade an excellent metaphor for opposing the topic—or, conversely, demonstrate concretely with war stories how the topic provides an inappropriate metaphor for their profession. On the other hand, a budding novelist or artist might find the topic a more appropriate metaphor for his or her profession. Even though such a short topic might seem to call for literal analysis (like just being in a hurry, in general), the metaphoric treatment, again, enables the student to provide a richer, more concrete impromptu speech.

Foss (1989) notes that a metaphor has two parts—a **tenor,** or focal subject, and a vehicle, or frame for explaining the subject. For example, consider the statement, "He is an animal." Here, "he" is the tenor, and "animal" provides the vehicle. Of course, one must explain the context to clarify the metaphor—for example, if the context is the social scene, then the man is a **party** animal; if it is the job, then perhaps the metaphor points up that the man is **workaholic.** In either case, metaphor forces the speaker to consider the context in impromptu speaking. In our above examples, the topic may be viewed as either tenor or vehicle—either way, metaphor by unleashing the explanations of many possible thoughts provides a uniquely beneficial approach to impromptu speaking.

Petrello (1990) has noted the need for impromptu speaking to involve argumentative sophistication. Metaphoric treatment provides argumentative sophistication uniquely suited to this event. Foss (1989) explains:

> In the new understanding of metaphor, in contrast, metaphor serves an argumentative function in a very basic way: metaphor constitutes argument. Metaphor does not simply provide support to an argument; the structure of the metaphor itself argues. It explicates the appropriateness of associated characteristics of the vehicle to those of the tenor and invites auditors to adopt the resulting perspective.. .A metaphor,

> then, argues just as typical argumentative structures do, but it usually does so more efficiently and comprehensively (pp. 190-191).

Hence, metaphor distinguishes impromptu speaking from extemporaneous speaking by enabling the speaker to: a) take an argumentative stand on a topic; b) decide on a stand quickly to accommodate the rigid time limits; and c) address the topic more concretely and comprehensively by realizing that unlike extemporaneous speaking, no literal answer supported by proofs and research in the traditional vein is necessary; proofs from the speaker's areas of expertise should suffice.

Literal analysis. So what is to be said for the literal analysis we associate with extemporaneous speaking? Extemporaneous speaking lends itself to more traditional macroscopic means of interpretation and support, since in this event, the use of logical proofs becomes essential to addressing a topic. Whether or not extemporaneous speaking achieves the desirable goal of tournament directors offering focused topics consistently as suggested by previous research (e.g., Aden & Kay, 1988; Preston, 1990b), a literal approach would ask our students to pursue five objectives in approaching extemporaneous speaking: a) learning to conduct research on contemporary issues more thoroughly; b) learning how to organize the information gathered such that they have quick access in the still-rigid 30-minute preparation period to the proofs expected in the event; c) learning how to address policy issues directly; d) learning how to use metaphors and other figures as **support,** in the traditional sense, when necessary to attract audience attention and to embellish a speech; and e) learning the political agenda of the day.

Aden and Kay's (1988) concern for specificity in topics reflects a concern for literal analysis. In their study, they note that vague topics fail to encourage students to organize a concrete discussion over an issue, and also fail to test the specific research that a student must do to prepare for the extemporaneous event adequately. A literal answer to a focused topic, while it may use some metaphor, better provides the specific analysis essential to being judged a successful extemporaneous speaker (Preston, 1983,1989,1990a).

For example, take the topic, "What impact will Buchanan's strong efforts in the early primaries have on President Bush's chances for re-election?" Certainly, one could use a David and Goliath metaphor to frame the extemporaneous speech. However, the effectiveness of the speech will not so much turn on the metaphor chosen as it will how the data and logic used in the traditional sense to support the point of view taken in the speech as well as the points supporting it. Naturally, a critic must be concerned with documentation, accuracy in citation, and tests of evidence in reasoning, support, and argumentation such as may be found in the Toulmin model in order to assess the extemporaneous speech. In a close round the choice of metaphor to form perspective on the entire issue may be important—but it is the specific organization, documentation, and logic of the position taken that will be in the foreground of this event when the distinction from impromptu speaking is implemented properly.

Overall, then, metaphor provides a method whereby the student can come to understand a healthy distinction between impromptu and extemporaneous speaking. This is not to say that literal supports should be totally absent from impromptu speaking—in fact, the use of metaphor as noted above provides a conduit to which the students gains quick access to concrete examples to support the main points. Nor do I claim that metaphor should be entirely absent from extemporaneous speaking—in fact, Foss's conception of metaphor dictates that it permeates the language of all of the events. As well, I do not deny that events share some skills—after all, they all do fall under "forensics," itself a subclassification of the academic discipline "communication." However, metaphor should provide the central distinction in the **content focus** of impromptu and extemporaneous speaking. The remainder of the present essay outlines how a distinctive focus augments the added value of each event.

Benefits from Metaphoric Analysis in Impromptu Speaking

Students acquire four benefits unique to participation in impromptu speaking by employing metaphor as an approach to this event: a) their thoughts become more easily accessible if they develop a set of metaphorical topoi in preparing for various types of topics; b) they learn how language shapes our conception of reality and response to reality; c) they become better scholars of rhetorical theory; and d) they acquire a greater understanding of how to **act** on a rhetorical view of reality.

As Preston (1990b) notes, Boone (1987) has developed a set of metaphorical topoi whereby students can list areas of expertise for use in many types of impromptu topics (pp. 39-47). Likewise, the expanded thought process drills developed by Reynolds & Fay (1987) are metaphorical in nature, encouraging the student to think beyond the limits of a topic taken literally (Preston, 1990b, pp. 21-22). When students have thought of these areas of expertise and have discussed them with their coaches and teammates, concrete examples otherwise unavailable become available to the student competing in this event. Students can transfer these skills to situations that require a short time to gather ones thoughts, but where thoughts can come quickly if approached metaphorically. Examples would include meetings, interviews, and day-do-day conversations. As well, exercises designed to enhance metaphoric analysis promote a deeper understanding of self—an understanding useful in some very important life decisions, such as career, lifestyle, marriage, and family.

The metaphoric approach to impromptu speaking can enable the event to afford the student a unique means of understanding how language shapes reality. Contestants must consider how their thoughts shape the thoughts of others, and, again, transfer this skill to day to day impromptu-type conversations where, on the spur of the moment, they must both respond to others' thoughts as well as shape those thoughts to an extent. Metaphoric analysis also draws the students to the notions that others use metaphor to shape reality, and that understanding how metaphor works in others would help the students to adapt in here-and-now situations. As well, metaphor enables students to understand better how their symbolic reality relates to the symbolic reality of others, and how to adapt to this exigence quickly and efficiently in order to communicate effectively.

Because the metaphoric approach is grounded in rhetorical theory, the students by taking this approach to impromptu speaking receive a valuable introduction to rhetorical theory. By gaining this understanding, the student can benefit in ways ranging from applying metaphor as a technique in a rhetorical criticism speech, to gaining an entry into the communication discipline as a possible career, and to gaining a greater understanding of the history of rhetoric by studying the history of the development of the term "metaphor" (Ivie, 1986; Osborn, 1967). While learning rhetorical theory seems discipline specific, many spinoffs both within and without of the discipline may occur as this background in metaphor theory might spark student interest in a variety of topics, including literary criticism, political discourse, or legal argument.

As Lakoff and Johnson (1981) state, "metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language, but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature" (p. 287). Hence, such an approach would enhance a student's understanding of how interpretations of reality lead to action. In gaining such understandings, students could better come to grips with their own assumptions, their own points of view, and their own evaluations of various phenomena that lead to action. Such knowledge would not only enable a student to better develop means of reacting to the language and actions of others, but would enable them to evaluate introspectively how their own off-the-cuff interpretations lead to action. Thus, impromptu speaking can enable the student to become more pro-active: not only in contests, not only in class participation, but also in society, whether impromptu communication relates to family, to career choice, to work, or to citizenship in the political arena (ranging from voting to actually running for office, as some forensic students do).

The Benefits of Literal Analysis in Extemporaneous Speaking

Students acquire four benefits unique to participation in extemporaneous speaking through the practice of providing literal answers to focused questions: a) they learn valuable research skills; b) they develop argumentative skills specific to policy issues facing today's leaders and tomorrow's leaders (often, the student); c) they acquire factual knowledge about history, political science, and current events; and d) they become better able to cope with reality by understanding events taking place in today's world. Unlike the original prepared events where the student conveys memorized information on a chosen topic, requiring literal analysis in extemporaneous speaking forces the student to also become **conversant** on a wide range of national and international issues of the day.

Learning research skills affords the student several layers of benefits. First, to prepare thoroughly for extemporaneous speaking, a student must develop research skills such as those required in both policy (NDT) and quasipolicy (CEDA) debate. For a non-debater, extemporaneous speaker can provide an effective introduction to the research needed for debate; for a debater, literal analysis can augment research skills already gained, as well as provide knowledge of the many issues that might possibly be linked to a resolution. Second, the general knowledge gained from research can provide the students with ideas for term papers in various classes, as well as sharpen the skills necessary to do the research in those classes. Most importantly, learning the care in research necessary to address a topic directly can enable the student to form sound habits should they choose a career in specialized fields such as medicine, accounting, academics, or law. The attention to detail thorough research requires, then, could provide a skill the student might use over the course of a life.

Sound research skills provide a foundation for another benefit of literal analysis—the ability to support an argument through traditional, logical proofs. Literal analysis requires that a student understand how, say, a major premise, a minor premise, and conclusion must all be proven before a unit of deductive argument can be proven true. Evidence must be required. As long as critics stick to this requirement, then, extemporaneous speaking can enable students to better understand the traditional notions of logic still central to our society.

The understanding of current events afforded by literal analysis encourages the participant to develop habits that enable them to understand central social, economic, religious, popular, and political trends. This understanding enables students to better make at least four types of decisions they will all face in later life: a) understanding how current events shape business and investment opportunities; b) understanding the need to keep up with **current** information related to the law—an understanding not only useful for business, like liability laws, but for a possible future career in the legal profession; c) understanding the circumstances both favorable and unfavorable to making a career choice; and d) understanding the specific facts that go into effective citizenship, like where to find facts on which to cast a vote in an election. Although this specific understanding of current events leads to benefits in some of the same areas as understanding how to act by participating in impromptu speaking, the **type** of information provided in these areas leads to different and complementary benefits.

Finally, whereas the metaphoric analysis afforded by the ideal impromptu event provides a way to understand how language as metaphor leads to interpretation and action, the literal analysis afforded by the ideal extemporaneous event enables the students to conduct a reality test for those actions. Whereas the impromptu event would thereby promote creativity, the extemporaneous event would promote a realistic appraisal of how a creative idea would operate, if at all, in practice.

Implementing the Distinction: A Word of Caution

All too often, impromptu speaking is treated as a "throw away" (Dean, 1988) event—an event added so that a student becomes eligible for pentathlon. Hopefully, the conclusions of this study will start a more serious dialogue about how coaches, competitors, and judges treat this competitive event. Although the present essay argues enthusiastically that the literal/metaphoric distinction offers a potentially advantageous distinction between the two limited preparation events, educators concerned with these events should implement this distinction with care. For example, students should not be penalized for failing to overtly state, "The metaphor I will be using today is ..." in their speeches. As well, students should be taught to use metaphor in a flexible fashion—whether the tournament director chooses to treat the event in a tongue-in-cheek fashion by offering cynical quotations, uses the extemporaneous model for framing impromptu questions (as I would **not** recommend), or uses topics that do encourage a metaphoric treatment (which I **do** recommend). This essay also discourages the use of "canned" or "generic" approaches to impromptu speaking—the search for a "master-metaphor" for all topics designed to sidestep the development of a contestant's ability to think on his-or-her feet. Rather, the metaphoric treatment affords the student the flexibility necessary to communicate interesting ideas to an audience in a spontaneous fashion, despite having had a dearth of time to prepare. Developing such skills cannot help to be beneficial to those who will face many impromptu speaking situations in later life.

Conclusion

Recent studies have shown clearly that as currently practiced, students receive little incremental value by participating in both limited preparation events, aside from the ability to "speak off the cuff" which can be learned from either event. Coaches, participants, and researchers also note that in order to differentiate the events, there must be some difference other than varying time limits. Utilizing studies by Aden and Kay (1988), Boone (1987), and Reynolds and Fay (1987), Preston (1990b) noted how rules changes (addressing mainly topic wording), altering judging practices, and maintaining and integrating some of the coaching practices outlined in the literature could promote the literal/metaphoric distinction between extemporaneous and impromptu speaking. The current essay extends on the latter study by outlining more fully the how concept of metaphor can distinguish the events by their content-goals. Finally, the essay outlines unique benefits and practical applications of each event that would stem from the full development and implementation of the literal/metaphoric distinction.

Whereas no study can or should make any of the events lumped into the genre "competitive forensics" totally discreet, this study has provided a framework to justify the two events where scholars most often complain about the lack of distinction. It is hoped that the current essay will spur further discussion over the future of the limited preparation events, and that research into how tournament directors and judges treat each event continue with longitudinal studies of the coaching practices, judging practices, and rules that shape their development.

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A Review of Survey Results on the Desirability of Announcing Decisions and Providing Oral Critiques at the 1990 AFA-NDT District V Debate Tournament

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This paper provides data to evaluate two controversial practices of debate judges: disclosing decisions and providing immediate oral critiques after a debate. In this paper, we report the results of a survey taken at the conclusion of the 1990 AFA-NDT District V Debate Tournament, analyze the rationales for and against the system of disclosure and feedback reported in the survey, and discuss some of the implications of managing change in the debate community.

Rationale

Disclosure practices should be studied for three reasons. First, the disagreement reflects a conflict grounded in discussion of how tournament practices affect educational outcomes. Some students and coaches favor disclosure, others do not. As long as the practice is inconsistently followed, one group will be dissatisfied with the tournament experience. The inconsistency can be seen in the conflict between invitational tournaments which allow disclosure and the AFA National Debate Tournament which prohibits disclosure in its standing rules. Since many members of the debate community perceive the NDT to represent a model of tournament practice, the inconsistency between the NDT and invitational tournaments suggests that either the NDT is out of step with the times or that there are indeed valid objections to disclosure. It is important, then, to determine if disclosure is a desirable practice or not. At the very least, such inconsistencies create awkward moments for judges who are uncomfortable in disclosing their decisions while setting up students for disappointment, frustration, or anger at the prospect of not being able to find out whether they won or lost.

Second, disclosure can affect overall satisfaction with tournament debating in two important ways. First, disclosure can affect the efficiency with which tournaments are administered. Judges who disclose and discuss decisions can delay tournament progress by preventing

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**The National Forensic Journal,* X (Spring, 1992), pp. 33-48.

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debaters from going to their next debate and preventing the next debate that they have been assigned to judge from starting on time. Second, since disclosure and discussion is controversial and inconsistently practiced, values of both students and coaches can potentially conflict. Some judges provide little or no discussion after disclosing while other critics provide comprehensive oral critiques. While brief comments decrease the length of delay between rounds, some students come to expect meaningful critiques after debates. When tournaments prohibit or discourage such interaction, some students experience disappointment with their tournament participation. Thus, judges and students are caught between two conflicting expectations. Tournaments should be run efficiently, but should also maximize the educational benefit of debating. Sometimes, judges who disclose decisions and discuss issues at length risk a hostile reaction from the tabroom while earning the appreciation of the students who find the immediate commentary useful for their next debate.

Third, the disclosure controversy has not been acceptably resolved by the forensic community. While disclosure has occurred significantly over the last few years, discussion of the issue in the debate community has only just begun and the dialogue has taken an adversarial form where supporters of the practice argue its benefits (Rhodes, 1991; Lingel, 1991) and opponents outline its problems (Aden and Pettus, 1989; Ziegelmueller, 1991). While these discussions present useful departure points for considering the desirability of revealing decisions, the arguments for and against disclosure must be considered in relation to actual practice.

Disclosure is an issue of relevance to all debate communities. If disclosure enhances the education of our students, then it should be pursued in policy and value debate; if not, then it should be rejected as pedagogically unjustifiable. In NDT debate, disclosure is already a widespread practice, but it has not been adopted as a formal component of tournament design. Disclosure is becoming an issue in CEDA debate (Aden and Pettus, 1989). NDT and CEDA divisions are often run side by side at tournaments committed to both types of programs. Moreover, as some coaches shift between NDT and CEDA, they exchange practices and expectations from each community. In short, the social, stylistic, and pedagogical boundaries that mark NDT debate, CEDA debate, and the American Debate Association do not function as insurmountable barriers to practices perceived to be unique to each subcommunity. It makes sense, then, to consider the pedagogical implications of disclosing decisions in NDT debate so that we might better understand how it can potentially affect other elements of the national debate community.

Oral critiques are controversial for three reasons. First, even though three developmental conferences recommended oral critiques as a component of judging (McBath, 1975; Parson, 1984; Roden, 1991), two of these conferences indicated there was no consensus on this recommendation (McBath, 1975; Roden, 1991). Second, while both the first and second AFA developmental conferences called for research to investigate tournament practices (McBath, 1975; Parson, 1984), we know of no research investigating the role and value of oral critiques in debate. Third, the issue of providing feedback is integrally linked to the role that a judge plays as an educator. According to Bartanen (1991), "the educator-critic's responsibility to provide constructive, reasoned criticism... is the focus of considerable debate among current members of the forensics community." Bartanen (1991) summarized the issues facing the forensic community in the following way:

> In what form should the criticism come—only through the written ballot or also through oral critique? At what point in the tournament should criticism be rendered—only after a round is completed or through direct intervention in the progress of the round? How much information should be revealed? Should decisions, rankings, and ratings be kept secret until the tournament is concluded or should they be made known to competitors after each round? What types of ballots should be used? Which formats best facilitate constructive feedback?

Although our report does not answer all of these questions, the data presented here addresses issues of disclosure and the value of oral critiques and written ballots.

Experimenting with Tournament Practices

During the 1990 District V Debate Tournament, the coaches of District V decided to experiment with a system of disclosure in order to gather feedback because of perceived changes in the practices of tournament judges. Immediately following the debates, as soon as all three judges had made their decisions, the outcome of the debate was announced to the two teams that had debated in each round, and the judges were encouraged to provide feedback to the debaters after the decision was disclosed. To allow for disclosure and discussion, the tournament schedule provided an extra thirty minutes for each round of debate.

Tb assess the impact of this experiment on the District V debate community, a survey was taken to obtain the reactions of students and coaches to this system of disclosure with feedback. Two issues were addressed: (1) Is disclosure and/or immediate feedback desirable? And if these two practices are desirable, how should they be implemented? (2) How can we manage change in the academic debate community?

More specifically, how can we experiment with practices, document their effects, and develop consensus on values and practices that shape the debate community?

Procedures

The questionnaire was designed to obtain two basic types of information. First, we sought to discover how many students and coaches were in favor of the change. We asked the students to indicate whether they wanted to see the new system of disclosing decisions continued, if knowing their decisions affected their performance, and if they benefitted from the immediate feedback from the judges. From the judges and coaches we wanted to know if announcing the decision affected their motivation to provide a complete written ballot, whether they wanted to see the new system continued, and whether they preferred that their teams knew their records.

A second type of information concerned reasons for preferring one system over the other. From the students, we wanted to know how the knowledge of their decisions affected their performance in the debate; and if they found the feedback beneficial, what were the specific benefits. For the coaches, we wanted to know in what ways the new system affected their desire to provide a complete written ballot and what their specific reasons were for or against continuing the system.

Our analysis focuses on the arguments reported in the survey. The results reflect our summary of arguments from the variety of responses obtained by the questionnaire. Where more than one respondent offered the same or similar rationale, we consolidated those responses as one reason in favor of the position in question. In order to align competing claims, we have tried to summarize somewhat varied responses in language that reflects some degree of parallel structure. In short, we have tried to compile an accurate list of reasons based on the responses, but in doing so, we have sometimes altered the exact words of the respondents.

Results of Student Responses

Question One: Do you want to see the new system of disclosing decisions continued? Of the students returning the survey, 15 were in favor of continuing the disclosure system while 10 were opposed. These results indicate that the effects of disclosure were still regarded as controversial after the system had been tried.

Question Two: Did knowing your decisions affect your performance in the debates? We have divided the results of this portion of the survey into two categories: desirable effects of disclosure and undesirable effects of disclosure.

Desirable Effects of Disclosure

1. Knowledge of success develops, maintains, or increases confidence.
2. Knowledge of one's record can be an effective motivating force. If students discovered that they were winning, they desired to continue. If students discovered that they were losing, they redoubled their efforts.
3. The uncertainty of not knowing results was eliminated. Knowing results prevented/diminished frustration of uncertainty about a team's record.

Undesirable Effects of Disclosure

1. Knowledge of defeat erodes, diminishes, or destroys confidence which can affect subsequent performances.
2. Knowing that one has been eliminated from the tournament makes debating a chore. This destroys the academic purpose of the activity.
3. Knowing that one has lost a debate can lead to frustration.
4. Knowing one's record turns the attention away from the "fun and excitement of debate to an intense battle ground." Knowledge of defeat increases anxiety [presumably over the possibility that a team will not qualify for the NDT].

Question Three: Explain how you were able to benefit from the immediate feedback provided by the judges. Most of the responses received under this question are presented under the heading "effects of feedback." Two responses dealing with "on balance assessments" are discussed together after the results.

Effects of Feedback

1. Immediate feedback allowed debaters to correct flaws in their arguments for future debates.
2. Immediate feedback allowed debaters to correct problems in their argument strategies. For example, students debating a similar case and could avoid make the same mistakes they did the first time.
3. Immediate feedback helped diagnose problems of a team debating for the first time.
4. Immediate feedback helped debaters to adapt to judges if they had them a second time in the tournament.
5. Immediate feedback was desirable because the issues were still fresh. The feedback enhanced the educational process: debaters could learn from their mistakes and set aside any doubts about their performance in that particular round; the immediate feedback was superior to some ballots which are often hastily written long after the fact; the immediate feedback was superior to the ballot by itself because it allowed two way interaction between the debaters and the judges; immediate feedback was better than discussions about the debate that occurred long after the fact.
6. The feedback contributed to preparing for the NDT if a team qualified.
7. The act of justifying a decision directly to the students encouraged judges to pay more careful attention and increased the coherence of their decisions.
8. The effect of disclosure depends on the context in which it occurs. "Normal disclosure" is a practice that does not always or consistently acknowledge

the role of feedback in the educational process. The disclosure that was experimented with at the District V tournament could be viewed "as an effort by our District to help improve everyone's performance." "If disclosure were seen as a part of this process (not just ballot counting), problems like debater demoralization, confrontation of judges, etc., could be reduced."

9. The immediate feedback revealed how subjective the decision-making process was.
10. The immediate feedback was not helpful because most judges' explanations were too short to be helpful.

On Balance Assessments

1. Knowing wins does not help as much as knowing losses hurts.
2. The overall effect on my confidence seemed to balance out.

Results of Coaches/Judges Responses

Question One: Did announcing the decision affect your decision to provide a complete written ballot? Yes—12 No—8

Reasons Why Some Ballots Were Less Extensive

1. There was not enough time to write extensive ballots given the number of rounds, the tournament schedule, each team's need for coaching before rounds, and selecting judges for the next debate.
2. Ballots were less complete because there was an opportunity for an extensive oral critique.
3. Ballots were less extensive because they would have been redundant with the system of oral critiques/explanations.
4. Ballot writing seemed to be time poorly invested since those who lost would be too disappointed to read them while those who won would not care. Another respondent believed that "no one reads District/NDT ballots any way—why bother."

Comments Reflecting Specific Functions for Ballots Versus Oral Critiques

1. Ballots were able to address broader educational concerns like delivery, coverage, general strategy, etc., while the oral critiques allowed the judges to explain the critical arguments that decided the round.
2. Some judges found that they could provide substantially greater feedback in the oral critiques than was possible with ballots alone.
3. Ballots do not provide two way interaction between judges and debaters while oral critiques can and do.
4. The ballot can be an important instrument of learning in the sense that a written explanation of the decision provides a more enduring account of the reasons for a decision than an oral critique.
5. The ballot is an important instrument of learning because students cannot always offer an accurate account of the critique or the debate given the fact that their egos are so closely tied to the phenomenon they are describing.

Hence, the ballot becomes an important source of information for coaches about what happened in the debate.

Question Two: Do you prefer to see the new system continued? Yes-11 No-8

Rationale for Disclosure with Feedback

1. Oral critiques enhance the educational function of debate. They allow debaters and judges to interact. Debaters are able to benefit more from the oral critiques together with the ballots than they do from ballots alone.
2. Disclosure reduces student stress levels. Not knowing the results can be more stressful than knowing the results.
3. Disclosure allows teams to make meaningful improvements during the tournament.
4. Disclosure with feedback can cause a tournament to function more efficiently if there is a designated period for feedback built into the tournament schedule.
5. It is a practice that is consistent with most major tournaments in the country.
6. Everyone has equal access to information about win-loss records.
7. "It is up to the students. It is their education, their peace of mind and their activity. If they want disclosure, that is OK. If they feel better without it, I have no objection." The students deserve to know how they are doing.

Rationale for Discontinuing Disclosure with Feedback

1. Knowing decisions increased stress/tension on the part of some debaters.
2. Knowing losses decreased motivation to debate on the part of some students.
3. Knowing teams' records increased the pressure on judges.
4. Coaches and judges should have discretion concerning when to reveal results. Because coaches have a more complete and sensitive understanding of their students' emotional makeup, they should have the right to decide whether the team knows their record. People should be able to know and should be able to withhold information about records.

Question Three: Do you prefer that your teams know their records? Yes—9 No—9

Rationale for Disclosure

1. Knowing decisions eliminates the frustration, anxiety, and uncertainty of not knowing. Even knowing a loss creates a sense of closure on that particular round at the tournament. That sense of closure helps a debater to put the round behind him and focus on the next debate.
2. Knowing a team's record can help a coach motivate a team: if the team is winning, they have every reason to look forward to the next debate; if the team is losing, they have every reason to debate well in the next round (assuming that they have not been eliminated from the possibility of clearing).

Rationale for Nondisclosure

1. Disclosure can adversely affect motivation.
2. Disclosure can adversely affect performance.
3. Nondisclosure has worked fine in the past.
4. Disclosure can adversely affect confidence.
5. Disclosure can cause students to become frustrated or disappointed about previous debates making it more difficult for coaches to focus their students' attention on the debate that is ahead.

Rationale for Coach's Control Over Knowledge of Record

1. It depends on the team. It is their activity. If the team prefers to know, then they should be able to discover their records. If the team does not prefer to know, then they should not be forced to confront the knowledge of their record in the course of the tournament.
2. Coaches have a better chance of keeping a student's morale high if students think they are doing poorly but do not know for sure. In short, there might be some value to maintaining control over uncertainty about records.

Discussion of Student Responses

These results suggest that disclosure provides benefits to those who win the debate. However, since only one team can win, the undesirable effects of disclosure must be taken into consideration. No team should be forced to accept the psychological threats of losing their confidence, losing their interest, and becoming frustrated or anxious in addition to suffering the loss of the ballot. Such a system would seem to magnify both the benefits of winning early and the emotional setbacks of early losses.

While not knowing whether you are winning can be the source of frustration, as noted in number three under desirable effects, that frustration is distributed equally between both teams under a nondisclosure system. Thus the frustration that stems from uncertainty does not constitute a strong reason for disclosure. Additionally, the frustration of not knowing is ultimately relieved when a team discovers they have qualified or cleared for elimination rounds. On the other hand, under a system of disclosure, the frustration of the team that continues to lose and does not qualify is relieved only when the tournament has finally ended.

The second desirable effect listed above, that disclosure can contribute to motivation, constitutes a stronger rationale for disclosure. There may be some value to providing a student with a clear reason for debating well in the sense that if they do not, they will be eliminated from the tournament. This perspective carries some unarticulated assumptions, however. First, this rationale applies only to those students who lack a focal point for their efforts early in the tournament. Additionally, this perspective assumes that students who lose early are capable of making appropriate adjustments in later debates in order to achieve victory. Not all students have this ability. Consequently, when they are confronted with the clear need to win a particular debate but are unable to transform themselves from an unfocused participant to a skilled, purposeful debater, substantial frustration can develop. In short, some debaters debate as well as they can most of the time and if they discover that their skills are not sufficient to keep them in the tournament, the negative effect of disclosure can decrease their confidence and confound the coaching situation. Second, and more importantly, there is the critical element of qualifying—either for the NDT or for the elimination rounds. If a team discovers that it has been eliminated, the immediate goal motivating them is no longer relevant. While a desire to avoid a losing record or a poor record may remain, disclosure, at that point, loses its motivating force.

The first four benefits identified by respondents indicated that feedback contributed substantially to the chances for success in subsequent debates. Immediate improvements could be made in arguments, strategies, teamwork, and judge adaptation. To an extent, these adjustments can offset some of the negative effects of disclosure cited above. If students can set aside their emotional responses to knowing their losses, they have the opportunity to learn how to improve their performance for the next debate. There are three exceptions to this point, however. First, if the most significant learning comes after the round that eliminates a team, then feedback cannot completely alleviate the negative effects of disclosure on a team which has lost a debate. Second, some of the respondents indicated that most judges' explanations for their decisions were too brief to be helpful. Thus, for the maximum benefits of a disclosure system with feedback to be realized, not only must all judges must be committed to providing detailed critiques for each of the debates that they judge, but the tournament must provide adequate time for a post debate discussion. Third, students must be able to focus on the rational aspects of the decision if they hope to learn from the critique and improve their performance. If students are unable to learn how to deal with the immediate knowledge of a loss, they will be unable to benefit from feedback. Most importantly, one respondent drew a distinction between disclosure that occurs at other tournaments during the season and the procedure of disclosing with feedback experimented with at the 1990 District V tournament. This respondent argued that dialogue between judges and debaters could reduce debater demoralization and dissatisfaction with judges' decisions. If students are dissatisfied with a judge's decision and initial explanation, the discussion period that follows the debate allows debaters to clarify a judge's explanation with questions concerning his/

her voting rationale. The interchange between debaters and judges can increase the detail of the judges' justifications, increase students' understanding of the decision-making process, and thus potentially reduce dissatisfaction with unfavorable decisions.

The responses summarized under item number five suggest that there is great value to the immediacy of the feedback provided with disclosure. Some of the responses indicated that the feedback was much superior to a system that provided only a written ballot long after the fact. Additionally, the combination of immediate feedback and a written ballot would seem to provide the most education for students. One of the coaches responding to the survey indicated that the oral critique and the ballot were able to serve two different purposes. In the oral critique, the judge can explain in detail the process by which s/he evaluated the arguments and arrived at his/her decision. On the ballot, the judge can address a series of other issues including but not limited to issues of strategy and tactics, style, and communication skills. Because debates tend to be rather complex exchanges of reasoning, it seems to make good sense that the details of the decision are discussed as closely as possible to the time that the decision is made before those details fade from memory. Also, because debaters' egos are involved, the ballot serves an important function for coaches in that it provides a direct contact between a critic and a coach. Ballots bypass the filtering process that may be at work on the part of a student who selectively recalls portions of a judge's comments in order to avoid the more painful aspects of the critique. Often, these are the aspects of performance that need to be addressed if a debater is to improve. But unless a coach can obtain that feedback through the ballot or find other judges to cover the entry so that s/he may observe the team, that information cannot be translated into goals for improvement by the coach.

Related to the issue of decision-making and explanation is item number seven which asserted that judges might have made better decisions and offered more coherent rationales for those decisions than they would have had there not been a system of disclosure with feedback. This difference, it seems, would be difficult to measure. However, given the comments above indicating how much the students appreciated the detail of the critiques made possible, perhaps, by their immediacy, these results suggest that the students are more satisfied with the overall outcome of their tournament experience if it features feedback. This seems an important finding to keep in mind as it provides some evidence that students are not motivated solely by the prestige of winning and that they really do value the intellectual exchange made possible by a system that acknowledges the role of feedback and provides opportunities for dialogue between debaters and judges.

Finally, there were two other educational benefits of the feedback provided after disclosure. One respondent indicated that the feedback helped in preparing for the NDT. While this benefit would be limited to only those who qualified, the important point seems to be the effect of feedback on future performance. While both the District tournament and the NDT are tournaments that conclude the debate season, if feedback became a standard practice with the purpose of contributing to a student's understanding of the decision-making process and increasing a student's advocacy skills, it would seem that consistent, detailed oral critiques, designed into the tournament experience could dramatically increase the educational benefit of the activity as well as the level of student satisfaction with tournament participation. Second, one respondent indicated that they discovered how subjective the decision-making process was. This discovery, if made on the part of students early in their careers, would seem to increase their understanding of the ways in which language works to create competing conceptualizations of truth. From this point, it would seem that coaches would be more able to discuss innovative strategies, the importance of style and delivery, and the importance of all other nonverbal aspects of advocacy. In addition, coaches would be more able to assist students confronting disappointment in their losses as well as discuss how subjective elements must be taken into account in understanding human decision-making. In sum, feedback provides the data for a theory of advocacy. The more a student understands the psychological process of decision-making, the more likely it is that s/he will develop a practical theory of advocacy that will serve him/her in subsequent competition.

Two of the respondents offered on-balance assessments. One comment noted that the system seemed fair given the fact that it was natural to be pleased with victory and disappointed in defeat. But a second comment noted that knowing losses hurt more than knowing victories helped. Both comments seem to underscore the importance of understanding how emotions affect performance. Presumably, if we can teach students how to deal with the emotions that arise from losing, we will have accomplished much as educators. On the other hand, there is the question of fairness. Why should students be forced to contend with their emotions in addition to confronting their losses and the prospect of putting their self-esteem at risk in a subsequent debate?

Discussion of Coaches'/Judges' Responses

For some judges, disclosure with feedback decreased the motivation to write extensive ballots. This should not be interpreted as a drawback of the disclosure system because respondents explained that the oral critiques provided what the ballot might have lacked and that, in some instances, an extensive ballot might have been redundant. What seems more important to note, however, are the comments reflecting specific functions for ballots versus oral critiques. Two conclusions seem apparent. First, both ballots and oral critiques are desired by coaches and students. The more feedback judges can provide, the more satisfied debaters and coaches seem to be. Thus, the best system is one which utilizes both methods of feedback since each form of feedback fulfills a different educational function. Second, the survey reinforced the need for ballots. Coaches indicated that they desired a more enduring form of feedback on the part of the judges than an oral critique. While oral critiques are useful for students and can be useful to coaches, coaches are not always able to be present for the oral critique. Thus, a written ballot insures that the coach remains a critical part of the educational process.

The first argument listed in favor of disclosure is really an argument in favor of some kind of system of feedback after a debate. Disclosure is not necessary to provide the educational dialogue between debaters and judges. The same is true of argument number three, that debaters can make meaningful improvements with feedback. While feedback can allow debaters to make meaningful improvements, disclosure is not absolutely necessary for improvements to occur.

Arguments number two and five are also unpersuasive. While disclosure might reduce stress levels for winning teams, the same effect is not true for losing teams since students react differently to competition. If the activity is to provide equal opportunity for success, the emotional burdens should be distributed equally. The fact that some tournaments embrace disclosure does not constitute a pedagogically sound purpose for the practice. If disclosure is to be adopted in the debate community, it should be adopted on the grounds that it contributes substantially to a student's educational experience, not because everyone else is doing it.

Better reasons for disclosing are found in items four, six, and seven. If disclosure is valued by most in the debate community, but tournaments are not designed to deal with the dialogue that inevitably follows after a debate, then we will continue to be faced with tournaments that run behind schedule. Scheduling a period of time to disclose and dialogue might contribute to more efficient tournaments because it anticipates and plans for the discussion that would follow disclosure. This procedure worked well with the 1990 District V Tournament.

The fact that disclosure provides equal access to information about records is true and consistent with a concept of fairness. Many have been dissatisfied with the arbitrary way in which teams learned of their losses under a system of nondisclosure. While disclosure does stop the inevitable leaks, the winks in the hallway, or the partial disclosure to friends, it may constitute a problem for those who wish to try a system of coach's control over disclosure. Proponents of this system believe that coaches should be able to decide whether a team can learn of their record. They argue that when coaches control disclosure, the harmful effects can be avoided while the beneficial effects can be obtained for teams which are- not affected as greatly by knowing their losses. This approach may indeed constitute the best of both worlds but only if judges and debaters agree to abide by the assumptions of the system. Given our most recent experiment with full disclosure and comparing that to the previous system of nondisclosure, it is interesting to note that both coaches and debaters have become more interested and committed to designing a system that can satisfy those who desire disclosure as well as those who do not want to force debaters to confront their records. As response number seven indicates, the debaters are the ones competing and they are the ones that have to live with the system, so they should decide what is best for them. Such a system, then, of disclosure only for those who want it, and not for those who oppose it, seems to make sense. Finally, this approach, if a workable version can be devised, might make the most sense across all situations. During one season, a coach may have a team that thrives on disclosure while during another season, that same coach may have a team that is younger and more sensitive to losses. A system of coach control over disclosure might allow a coach to make the decision of disclosure based on his/her knowledge of the team's needs.

The first two reasons for discontinuing disclosure both relate to the effect of disclosure on students' experience of stress, motivation, and confidence. These issues have been addressed previously in terms of fairness. For a system of disclosure to overcome the problem of negative psychological effects, the debate community would have to decide that students must learn to deal with losses, that there are effective ways of teaching students how to deal with losses, and that the positive effects of disclosure do not bias the tournament experience in favor of teams winning early. The other alternative is to develop a system of disclosure with coach discretion as discussed above and in item number four.

The problem identified in item number three above is a more difficult issue to assess. While most of us would want to believe that we would not be affected by the knowledge of a team's record, the fact is, that if we know that one team needs to win to clear and that the other does not, such knowledge provides unnecessary psychological tension during our decision-making process. On the other hand, while none of us welcome this pressure, it does not seem to be a strong reason for discontinuing disclosure since we operate with this kind of knowledge any time we judge an elimination round.

Implications and Issues for Consideration

According to the findings in this survey, disclosure is a practice that has a disproportionately negative effect on the team that loses a decision. Admittedly, the evidence for this claim is anecdotal. An equally anecdotal objection to this position is to argue that disclosing a victory can galvanize a team's confidence at a critical point in the tournament. Disclosure forces those who lose to confront their disappointment while nondisclosure prevents those who win from discovering their victory. Under a system of disclosure, only the psychologically strong survive and the opportunity for a coach to nurture more fragile cases of self-esteem comes long after the sting of disappointment and criticism have already left their mark.

Concern should be focused on how to distribute the costs and benefits of competing in the most equitable manner. In short, teams should have equal chances of gaining access to the knowledge of their victory or of being protected from the disappointment of their loss. A system of coach's discretion over disclosure might be a move toward this ideal state. Certainly, after having experienced both nondisclosure and disclosure, we have established a basis for understanding the limits of both systems and can consider yet further improvements in our tournament designs. However, both a system of nondisclosure and a system of coach's discretion over disclosure assume a shared value of discreetness. While discreetness has not been forthcoming in recent years with the trend toward disclosure, this survey may contribute toward reinforcing its value in maximizing educational outcomes for students.

One important finding of this survey is that, with the exception of only two respondents, the feedback from the judges after the debate was very beneficial. Whatever choice we make with respect to disclosure, oral critiques, when provided by conscientious, caring, sensitive critics, contribute greatly to the educational experience of the tournament participants. Additionally, despite some comments indicating that the ballots were of limited use to debaters late in the season, some respondents indicated that ballots and oral critiques represent two different, but equally important, types of feedback. If it is possible to convince judges to provide both oral critiques and written ballots, students will benefit from the immediate feedback of the critic as well as the feedback from the coach. The value of the disclosure with feedback was summarized by one respondent in the following way:

> It helped to find out what we [were] doing wrong. At the District meeting last year, one of the reasons for implementing disclosure was to get

> feedback to help teams from our District do well at the NDT. If judges and debaters viewed 'disclosure' in this light—as an effort by our District to help improve everyone's performance—instead of disclosure as it normally occurs (each team is desperate to see if they won or lost and don't care much about the decision if they won), then a lot of the problems would be solved. Instead of hanging around like vultures after the decision, the debaters/judges/coaches could discuss what went wrong. . . .If disclosure were seen as part of this process (not just ballot counting), problems like debater demoralization, confrontation of judges, etc., could be reduced.

There are two implications to consider here. First, if we can develop throughout the debate community the kind of maturity and commitment to rational dialogue evident in this student's response, we will have gone a long way toward our goals as educators. Second, what is most encouraging about this student's response is the fact that this individual exhibits faith in the process of rational dialogue as a means of resolving complaints about debate tournaments. In the future, we should do more to include students in the dialogue over tournament practices.

The experiment with disclosure and feedback was not undertaken without some gnashing of teeth. However, one of the outcomes of this experiment has been the discovery that we can try new things and still live with each other. One of the things that made the change livable was the fact that it did represent a move in the direction of a broader trend but also included the element of feedback as a part of the new practice. What seemed to guide those in the District calling for change was a sincere concern for the educational quality of the tournament experience. From a conservative standpoint, then, we would argue that as long as changes in tournament practice can be based on their capacity to improve the educational quality of tournament experience, they maybe worth trying. The other thing that has made the change feasible is the attempt to gather reactions to the experiment through the survey reported here. Without this kind of data, assessing the value of the change seems impossible from a rational perspective. The reactions contained in the survey, then, constitute a basis for rational dialogue about the desirability of disclosure with feedback.

Conclusion

We should experiment with a system of coach's discretion over disclosure. Such an approach might be able to integrate the best of both systems and might be most capable of succeeding given the new found sensitivity to the demoralizing effect of disclosing losses. Second, we might think about documenting in a more systematic way the finding that debaters were more satisfied with a tournament that provided ballots and oral critiques instead of only written ballots. If this is the case, the next step is to design tournaments that feature such dialogue periods in an attempt to improve tournament efficiency while maximizing students' satisfaction with the educational outcome of their tournament experience.

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SPECIAL TOPIC

Forensics as a Laboratory Experience in Communication Studies

Don R. Swanson

Introduction

There seems to be a disturbing trend over the last two decades for intercollegiate forensic programs to become more isolated from the mainstream speech communication curriculum. Earlier in the century, forensic activity was responsible for the growth and development of many speech communication departments. Forgetting their roots, today many of those departments have divorced or distanced themselves from their forensic programs, much like they might distance themselves from an unfamiliar relative. On many campuses forensics is a stand-alone activity program. Forensic educators have speculated on reasons for the evolutionary direction for many programs. Those reasons include: programs being supported by activities funding sources rather than by institutional instructional budgets; forensic programs being staffed with positions that are non-tenure track or worse, with only graduate teaching assistants; a lack of commitment to teaching rhetoric, public address or argumentation; and a new generation of faculty comprising the majority of department that are simply unfamiliar with forensics. These are all concerns that the forensic community desires to address, and methods of addressing these issues may spring from ideas contained in this unique set of articles that considers forensics as a laboratory experience in communication studies.

The 1990s are witnessing renewed interest in improving the quality of teaching and learning techniques. Many universities have developed active faculty development programs with an emphasis on helping faculty develop participative and collaborative learning experiences for their students. Interdisciplinary courses and programs are touted as the way to develop students' skills of analysis and synthesis. In the pedagogy of most disciplines, increased writing and speaking assignments are encouraged. Forensic educators know that our programs inhere these desirable qualities and often serve to provide experiential exercises that force students to synthesize what they learn in a range of courses. Because of the diverse features of a forensic program, it can provide an exceptional laboratory experience in communication for undergraduate students. In particular, forensic programs provide an opportunity for communication studies majors to apply the principles they learn within their major curriculum.

Many forensic educators have extensive graduate preparation and a teaching emphasis in foci of the speech communication discipline other than rhetoric, oral interpretation, and argumentation. Some forensic educators are generalists; some are specialists. The four authors who prepared the following articles have all directed successful forensic programs for many years and focused the bulk of their teaching in areas of the speech communication discipline other than the traditional forensic emphases. The area of interpersonal communication is considered by Sheryl Friedley, small group communication by Raymond Zeuschner, organizational communication by Don Swanson, and mass media by Gary Dreibelbeis. The articles discuss a variety of means of making the communication department's forensic program a broad-based laboratory in communication studies. Earlier versions of these essays were presented at the 1991 Speech Communication Association Convention held in Atlanta, Georgia. The authors wish to express gratitude to Stephen King and Michael Osborn for their comments and suggestions.

Don R. Swanson

Forensics as a Laboratory Experience in Interpersonal Communication

*Sheryl A. Friedley**

Traditionally, forensics pedagogy has focused on the creation of a "product" to be evaluated before an audience. In individual events, that product has ranged from the creation of a persuasive speech to the interpretation of a poem—both performed before a judge. In debate, that product has included the development of affirmative and negative argument as well as the clash that ensues as the product (the debate) evolves; again, the product created is performed before a judge. Regardless of whether the activity is individual events or debate, forensics pedagogy has focused primarily on the "product" created and performed.

After years of being a forensic educator with a primary interest in interpersonal communication, I have come to realize that my fascination with this activity is not so much in the product created, but with the interpersonal communication process used to create that product. As an educator in a mid-size university with only an undergraduate degree in my discipline, the majority of my teaching experiences are in lecture classes and over-sized seminars. The opportunity to relate to students in dyadic, small group, or even small organizational settings is extremely limited.

Over the years, my forensics teaching has afforded me the opportunity first-hand to observe, create, and practice mastery of interpersonal communication skills with students in those settings—dyads, small groups, and as part of a small organization labelled a "forensic team." Those interpersonal experiences have proved to be extremely valuable and rewarding for me as a communication educator; in turn, I believe those interpersonal experiences have served to develop some of the most valuable and rewarding communication skills ever acquired by my students. In short, long after the speeches have been delivered and the poems have been interpreted, long after the debate arguments have been won or lost, I believe the interpersonal communication skills students develop through participation in this educational activity will prove to be invaluable.

While the interpersonal communication skills used in the forensics context maybe explored at the dyadic, small group, and organizational

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**The National Forensic Journal,* X (Spring, 1992), pp. 51-56.

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level, for purposes of this essay I will limit my discussion to the basic interpersonal unit—the dyad. More specifically, I will focus my discussion on the coach-competitor dyad found in every facet of the forensic activity. As with all dyads, this dyad is transactional in nature; that is, each participant affects and is affected by the other. Furthermore, this dyad is unique, allows for intimacy, and is a complete interpersonal unit unto itself (Wilmot, 1987).

The Coach-Competitor Dyad as a Laboratory in Rule-Based Communication

The study of symbolic interactionism in communication emphasizes the importance of interaction and focuses on the meaning derived from the human experience; the rules approach to communication provides both form and substance to the study of this interaction-meaning cycle. According to Susan Shimanoff (1980):

> In order for communication to exist, or continue, two or more interacting individuals must share rules for using symbols. Not only must they have rules for individual symbols, but they must also agree on such matters as how to take turns at speaking, how to be polite or how to insult, to greet, and so forth. If every symbol user manipulated symbols at random, the result would be chaos rather than communication (pp. 31-32).

Although such communication scholars as Thomas S. Frentz and Thomas B. Farrell (1976), Robert F. Nofsinger (1976), Donald P. Cushman (1977), and W. Barnett Pearce (1977), have all generated writings on a rules approach to communication, Susan B. Shimanoff surveyed the literature on rules and developed an overview that incorporates some of the best thinking in the field as it applies specifically to the study of communication.

Writes Shimanoff (1980), "a rule is a followable prescription that indicates what behavior is obligated, preferred, or prohibited in certain contexts" (p. 57). While this definition appears rather simplistic, it posits four important principles necessary to understand a rules approach to communication. First, *a rule must be followable.* This principle implies that a rule-user must have some degree of choice—to follow *or* not to follow the rule. Unlike other approaches to communication, the rules approach does not view behavior as a mechanistic response to an action that has come before it. Second, *a rule is prescriptive.* This principle implies that rules direct behavior and hold consequences if they are not followed. As Shimanoff explains, rules can prescribe behavior that is "obligated, preferred, or prohibited" (p. 57). Third, *a rule is contextual.* This principle explains why different rules may be appropriate in different contexts; as a result, a rule's generalizability of appropriateness may range from one that is understood and followed by relatively few to one that is understood and followed almost universally. Recognizing that rules may appropriately differ from context to context is an important characteristic of this approach. Finally, *rules specify appropriate behavior.* Specifically, "rules may function to regulate, interpret, evaluate, justify, correct, predict, and explain behavior" (p. 83). In fact, Shimanoff explains that to observe rules operating in everyday interaction, rules *must* be tied to observable behavior.

When a rule is explicitly stated, we can easily identify it as a rule. A contest "time limit" provides us with a rule that may or may not be followed, prescribes a consequence if it is not followed, has meaning only in a given context, and specifies appropriate behavior. Although many rules are explicitly stated, most rules are implicitly developed and accepted. Raising our hand to speak in class is not a clearly-posted rule; however, most of us have learned this implicit rule and follow it willingly. Whether explicit or implicit, Shimanoff (1980) contends that rule-governed behavior is "controllable, criticizable, and contextual" (p. 89).

The forensic activity itself is a unique context; more specifically, the coach-competitor dyad within that context is a unique relationship. When the coach-competitor engage in a coaching session, they will define the rules they will use to carve out this specific relationship in this specific context for the purpose of mutual influence and mutual benefit. As the coach-competitor move to the tournament setting, the classroom setting, or even those long van rides home, the rules that guide and direct appropriate behavior may change. If both parties are encouraged to consider the choices they make given the explicit and implicit rules that operate in this relationship, the development of this relationship over a variety of contexts can be a valuable training ground for other similar relationships each of us encounter throughout life. Though the "specific" rules will differ, as they do among any given relationships and contexts, the "rules" framework still provides both the coach and competitor with a valuable training laboratory. Knowing a specific rule that transfers across all contexts and all relationships is not nearly as important as developing "rule sensitivity"—knowing when and how to adapt to the specific rules of a given relationship in a given context most effectively.

The Coach-Competitor Dyad as a Laboratory for Appropriate Disclosure

No other communication behavior is so closely linked to the development of close relationships as disclosure. As relationships increase in intimacy, so too do they increase in both the breadth and depth of information shared. Yet, in any relationship there are times when we choose to share as well as withhold information about ourselves. Perhaps what makes disclosure most effective for relationship enhancement is knowing the "rules" for appropriate disclosure that guide a given relationship. According to Wilmot (1987), disclosure is most appropriate when it meets the some of the following criteria:

1. it is a function of an ongoing relationship;
2. it occurs reciprocally;
3. it is timed to fit what is happening;
4. it concerns what is going on within and between the persons;
5. it moves in relatively small increments over time;
6. it creates a reasonable risk (pp. 238-39).

While these criteria could be used to assess disclosure in a variety of dyadic relationships, it is certainly appropriate to consider how disclosure affects the coach-competitor dyad. While this relationship may be short-term, the relationship may have the opportunity to span months and years. If so, the nature of this relationship may provide both the coach and competitor the opportunity to engage in disclosure in small increments over time. Also, the very nature of the dyadic relationship, a joint effort focused toward creating an product, lends itself to reciprocity; the back and forth flow of communication essential to the creative process can encourage the participants to become attuned to what is happening both within and between each as they communicate. Again, if both participants are able to practice the use of appropriate disclosure over time as they define the nature of their relationship, this relationship can serve as a training laboratory for learning to develop appropriate disclosure skills in a variety of relationships.

The Coach-Competitor Dyad as a Laboratory for Confirming Communication

The term "confirmation" first appeared in the writings of theologian Martin Buber (1957) who noted that one develops his or her own identity through interaction with others; as a result, individuals need constant recognition from others to experience their own humanness. R. D. Laing (1961) further defined confirmation as a process through which individuals are "endorsed" by others, including both recognizing their existence and acknowledging their perceptions. While confirming communication does not require praise or even agreement, it does involve sending messages that validate another human being. In the end, most communication scholars agree that confirming communication is probably one of the most significant factors in assessing human interaction.

According to Sieburg (1976), human communication is confirming when it performs the following functions:

1. it expresses recognition of the other person's existence;
2. it expresses recognition of the other as a unique person, not as a role or an object;
3. it acknowledges the significance of the other person;
4. it expresses acceptance of the other person's way of experiencing the world;
5. it expresses concern for the other person and a willingness to be involved (p. 32).

Again, the coach-competitor relationship is a prime opportunity for both participants to engage in confirming communication. Rather than use such disconfirming behaviors as topic switching, tangential responses, or source denial, the forensic educator can become a confirming communicator by sending clear and consistent messages that facilitate understanding and enhance the competitor's feeling of worth. Within this educational context, both the coach and competitor can employ confirming communication behaviors to validate the roles that each play and the common goals that each share.

The Coach/Competitor Dyad as a Laboratory for Empathic Communication

Broome (1991) defines empathy as a "set of interpretive and communicative processes by which a person represents another's perspective or point of view on a situation" (p. 173). It is through the process of empathy that participants are able to reach levels of mutual understanding in a dyadic relationship through a series of "successive approximations." According to Broome (1991), empathy is developed as the participants pass through a three-stage process that involves the following: 1) de-centering, or the ability to shift one's focus from "self" to "other;" 2) role-taking, or the ability to consider another person's perceptual, conceptual, and affective perspective simultaneously with our own; and 3) a commitment to communication that is nonevaluative, problem-oriented, and receptive. The ability to develop the skills necessary to become an empathic communicator is vital in an increasingly diverse and complex world.

The coach-competitor dyad is a relationship that can be enhanced by empathic communication. Though the role that each participant plays may be defined very differently, the ability to understand and appreciate the other's perspective is essential for mutual success. The coach-competitor are inherently linked by common goals—each needs the other to realize success. If each participant can begin to develop empathy for the other's concerns, constraints, limitations, vulnerabilities, talents, and skills, then each can begin to develop a better understanding of the other and the relationship. A dyad that is created from a mutual interest in education and communication can provide an excellent basis for the participants to develop empathic communication skills.

Conclusion

As forensics educators, I think we are sometimes so consumed by our specific activity that we approach its value with "tunnel vision." Rather than study this activity primarily from the rhetorical and performance methods we've traditionally used, perhaps we should begin to explore this activity as a communication context with important interpersonal dimensions.

I have a friend who conducts interpersonal communication skills training in business and government. In her training, she likens the development of communication skills to the tools in a toolbox. The more tools we have in our toolbox, the more likely we will be able to "fix" whatever is broken; similarly, the more communication skills we have at our disposal, the more likely we will be able to communicate effectively in different relationships across different contexts. The interpersonal nature of the forensic activity can provide an excellent training laboratory for the observation, development, practice, and eventual mastery of those skills.

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Forensics as a Laboratory Experience in Small Group Communication

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Introduction

The notion of approaching a forensics program as a laboratory for small group communication is certainly not any more original or new than the idea of discussing forensics as a training group for leadership or for research skills, or for the development of critical thinking. Each of these ideas has been used formally and informally to justify the activity to decision-makers and to counter critics who decry the costs or values of such programs. This essay will try to add to that part of the discussion which concerns the small group interaction and training students are likely to receive through participation in organized, competitive forensics.

Beginning with a definition of both forensics and small group, this essay will discuss the connections between the two, and relate the notion of "small group" to definition of "teams." The unique situation of the forensics team will be examined and then the organizing taxonomy of Mills' six models for analyzing and studying groups will be applied to the forensic program to indicate how a teacher might identify and apply the small group elements at work in a typical forensic program.

Definitions

The standard definition of *forensics* has been provided by the National Developmental Conference on Forensics in 1974, "Forensics is an educational activity primarily concerned with using an argumentative perspective in examining problems and communicating with people....forensics activities, including debate and individual events, are laboratories for helping students to understand and communicate various forms of argument more effectively in a variety of contexts and with a variety of audiences."[1] These events have sometimes included one called "discussion" although that one has fallen almost completely out of the scene with the exception of the annual "National Discussion Contest." For purposes of this paper the definition is taken to include the entire program, not just the "events." An interesting note here at the beginning is that forensic educators see themselves as providing

**National Forensic Journal*, X (Spring, 1992), pp. 57-64.

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laboratories for helping students through the events to become more competent communicators. Adding small group communication skills to this list of competencies seems an easy and perhaps implied extension or application of this definition.

Anyone who has ever been even briefly associated with a forensics program will be able to sense the *small group* nature of the activity. The qualities of small group interaction are clear: the numbers are right, the motivation to remain part of group is present, goals are usually overt, there exists an organization of roles, there is interdependence, and the participants certainly perceive themselves to be part of a group. In fact, these exact qualities were identified by small group researcher Marvin Shaw as the defining components of a small group.[2] The immediate face-to-face quality of practice sessions, competition and social interactions makes the forensic participant a small group member from the moment they become involved in the activity. While it is possible for a contestant to prepare individually, practice with just an instructor, travel to and from a contest site alone, and interact with no one during a tournament, such a person is virtually unheard of on any forensic team and probably would not last long in the activity.

Is there any value in drawing a distinction between the forensics interaction as a small group as opposed to calling it a "team"? Some researchers have made a minor distinction, with the term "group" indicating the more general concept, while "team" is simply a specialized type of group.[3] For example, Larson and LaFasto define a team as having "two or more people; it has a specific... goal to be attained; and coordination of activity among the members...is required for the attainment of the ...goal."[4] Certainly the narrow example of a single two-person debate meets this definition, but the interaction among all the participants who debate, and their instructors, would seem to pull in the broader concepts from the original Shaw qualities. Again, the team is a subset of the group. A final example of the notion that teams integrate into groups is seen the definition offered by Dyer: "teams represent a collection of people who must collaborate, to some degree, to achieve common goals..."[5]

So the notions of small group and forensic team seem to mesh regardless of which perspective is used as the starting point. The expanded nature of a *forensics program* is the most viable definition for this discussion, although it does put the emphasis on the interactions which surround the competitive events, rather than the events themselves. Since you can't get to the events without first going through the ancillary activities, team meetings, work sessions, long drives, and practice rounds, this programmatic approach seems justified. In addition, the unique opportunities of team or group focused on *communication* activities delineates this activity from others. While a football, swimming, dance, or even chess team probably could be viewed profitably from the small groups perspective, the unique combination of having communication events provides the forensics educator with a potential laboratory experience not open to others. With the type of background preparation provided by most broadly designed undergraduate majors in speech communication, directors of forensics programs should have training in the major facets of small group communication. The standard appeals offered in support of any collegiate team activity usually include the development of leadership and perhaps the creation of teamwork experiences. These are often claimed as having "real world" transfer benefits, and could be used by a variety of contest groups. In addition to all of those benefits, however, forensics can add the ability to use the principles of effective communication as an aid in both the interactions which pertain to any group or club, and the content of the events practiced. For this reason, the entire sense of the "forensics program" will be included, so that both the situations where a group of debaters or readers theatre participants work together on the preparation and presentation of a contest event, and the social situations which surround that preparation and presentation can be included as an extended "laboratory." Add to this mix a teacher who may well be trained in small group procedures, and a unique blend is created for an educational experience. Instead of taking the standard approach of leadership and team building, the expanded notion of laboratory may benefit from more encompassing views.

Now that the definitional context is presented, the application of Mills' six models of small group communication will show the variety of ways in which forensics programs can be approached from small group perspectives. Mills' perspectives were selected because they are commonly taught in introductory small group courses, and thus may be familiar to a wide spectrum of persons who find themselves directing forensics programs.

Mills' Models and Forensics

Mills' six models are an organizing framework to summarize and conceptualize the ways small group researchers have approached their study.[6] Virtually any piece of research conducted on small groups could be placed into one of these categories, based upon the assumptions about the nature of small groups operating in the research. The six ways people have viewed small groups include: 1) the quasi-mechanical model; 2) the organismic model; 3) the conflict model; 4) the equilibrium model; 5) the structural-functional model; and 6) the cybernetic-growth model. Each of these will be discussed in terms of their application to the world of forensics programs. The first five will be briefly covered due to their somewhat limited value, while the sixth one will be covered in greater detail because of its integrative and explanatory power.

The *quasi-mechanical model* means that small groups are approached as if they were machines with various parts and functions. Actions of the group are categorized and quantified so that group dynamics becomes a somewhat detached, mathematical proposition. It assumes that people are interchangeable parts in this grand engine, and that individual personality or differences are not significant to its functioning. Readily, most communicologists reject this notion and, if pressed, so would most directors of forensics.

Yet forensics programs do exhibit some quasi-mechanical qualities and may function at times from this perspective. Is one member of a debate team ill? Well, just unplug that name from the entry and plug in a spare. Two teams = 1 judge required. The van will hold seven, it does not matter which seven ride in van #1 and which other seven ride in van #2. Perhaps directors of forensic programs *wish* their small groups were more like a machine, but experience tells us that some combinations work for a team, others do not, and some van rides are more pleasant than others.

The *organismic model* refers to seeing the group function similar to a biological organism. Birth, life, and death cycles are seen in the formation of the group, its development and activities, and finally its dissolution. Analogy may be made to various biological functions and systems as a small group divides up roles and tasks.

While forensics participants would probably jump at the opportunity to select certain individuals from the group and assign them an anatomical equivalent, the overall notion of a team coming together at the first meeting, evolving, growing through the season, and ending with a final activity of the year is perhaps more what small group researchers had in mind with this model. The term, "forensic *season*" further connects the activity to the biological analogy. Even a tournament has a "life-cycle." Anyone wishing to use this perspective to describe the forensics laboratory would find quick and obvious applications, but ultimately these applications become limited because they depend on a rough analogy. A limited insight into both small group interaction and the forensics activity comes from this perspective.

Closer to the mark may be the *conflict model.* Mills identifies the assumption behind this perspective as seeing the group as an endless series of conflicts. The small group studies in this area look at the tensions between independence and interdependence, between individual values and group norms. Conflicts become the staple interaction. This perspective looks mainly at the divisive factors which operate in small groups, while ignoring other pressures such as belongingness, inclusion, or conformity needs.

Breathes there a forensic teacher who could not classify a program from the conflict perspective? Conflicts are endless - whose case should we run? Who gets to speak in which position? Should I change my program? That judge hates me. Who gets to drive, room with whom, show up at the library, or go to which tournament? Each of these questions is an opportunity for group conflict. If the forensics program allows the group to be part o f the decision-making process, then that program is functioning as a laboratory for small groups in the conflict model for at least part of the time. If the instructor makes most of the policy decisions without consulting the group, there will still be personal conflicts which the team may handle outside the purview of the instructor. The obvious shortcoming is that most small groups do more than have conflict. They also cooperate, change, and provide positive interactions for at least part of their interactions.

The *equilibrium model* works from a perspective of balance. People familiar with Heider's work, or cognitive dissonance, will recognize this perspective. Small groups have a normal state of balance or equilibrium, so conflict is viewed as aberrant; any episodes of conflict are followed by efforts to restore order and reestablish interpersonal harmony.

Again, some measure of this model can be useful in looking at what the forensics activity can teach students about small group behavior. When there is a team disagreement, the debaters still need to compete together the next round. If there is going to be a successful readers theatre team, there needs to be sufficient tolerance or harmony so their work will be smooth and integrated. Even on the personal level, some measure of harmony needs to be apparent on multi-hour drives to and from tournaments. The small group can be an agent working towards equilibrium by inducing elements of peer pressure and conformity. The member who may be the source of the conflict and unwilling to harmonize, may find the remainder of the group banding together to produce either the desired change in behavior, or to exclude the affronting person from the group. Teachers in forensics programs are frequently presented with requests to "do something about" individuals who are continuous sources of tension and conflict in the group. Such teachers who wish to emphasize the small group laboratory nature of the activity can take that opportunity to discuss these pressures for conformity, and will be using an equilibrium perspective as they do so.

The *structured-functional* model may at first seem similar to the mechanistic approach. This model, however, is dynamic in that it sees the group as adapting to new demands to meet evolving goals. It assumes the goal is what motivates the group, and that individual members will take on and alter roles and functions as those changes are dictated by goal achievement demands. Group maintenance behaviors become important, and some members will engage in identifying, assigning, or taking on task behaviors to keep the group on its path. This perspective assumes that members can learn from their interactions and develop, or take on, a variety of roles as needed.

A good model for the forensics small group, this perspective would be operating when people shift jobs or responsibilities in the team as needed to help the team survive and develop. For example, one person may be doing "all the research" for the team (a common complaint—for those who have never coached a debate program), and the task of the team is to develop a new function for the person who may not be contributing. Sometimes teams will chart out jobs, and various persons will volunteer or be assigned to function in one or more of these jobs in order to help the entire group. These jobs may be as simple as going to find a specific item of research or a certain literary selection, to more complex roles such as keeping a master file of evidence or developing an extemp file. If the teacher deliberately rotates these group roles so that the entire team develops and adapts, the small group is probably moving beyond the structural-functional model to the final one considered by Mills.

The *cybernetic-growth model* is the most complete and includes an integration of the best features of the previous models. The emphasis leaves the survival of the group and shifts to the growth of the entire unit. This model looks at the primary role of feedback to the system, and sees the group as the agent for developing and responding to feedback. The feedback may be related to the goal of the group, to the structure of the group, or to the personal development of the individual's sense of self.

A forensic team which is well-run can be seen as a laboratory for this perspective, learn members work together for the purpose of providing feedback to each other and for themselves. They most likely focus on the task demands dimension of feedback - critiques, for example. Sessions where students critique each others' work is part of this process. While it may produce tension and conflict, the goal-improvement of the event—usually overrides the conflict. Feedback on the goal behaviors also comes from coaching sessions, and especially in reacting to the ballots received at tournaments. One of the most interesting moments in any forensic team routine is the distribution, reading and reacting to the ballots from a just-completed tournament. Some teachers never return the ballots until the class meeting day after the tournament. Some return them instantly at the tournament site. Either choice will provide plenty of opportunity to watch small group interaction at work. The best reactions will usually involve an appraisal of the feedback in terms of what can be modified for the next competition. The control and change elements of the cybernetic growth model are clear in these behaviors.

Next, the feedback related to structure can also be seen. The changes needed in some debate team combinations are quick examples, but larger changes in the way the forensic group is structured may be ongoing elements of feedback. Jobs may need to be altered, the personnel doing them may need to change their approaches, or entirely new personnel may be assigned to tasks. All of these changes come in response to feedback and are opportunities for the forensic program to function as a laboratory experience in cybernetics and growth.

Finally, some self-awareness should be a product of the forensic small group experience. People get intense, direct and often immediate feedback on ego-involving issues. Watch any stressed debater reading an unflattering ballot comment, and you know that issues of "self" are operating. Individual events speakers invest much of themselves in creating and presenting their speeches and readings. Sometimes the feedback is not subtle or kind - students are advised, for example, to "give up on this high school literature and find some quality material." If the material selected is not very challenging, the student has an opportunity to grow from this comment. More to the point of small group interactions, if fellow team members comment that the material in a poetry program isn't very interesting, or something they have all heard before, the *group* is providing direct feedback. Coupled with peer pressures which operate, the individual may then try to stretch appreciation of poetry by seeking new material. Similarly, if the group norm is established that debaters are ready on the day of assigned practices, it becomes an opportunity for someone who procrastinates to see alternative models from peers, and perhaps develop new, timely behaviors.

Clearly, this model looks at different roles which small group members can play, it borrows the notion of growth from biological frameworks, it recognizes the place of conflict in promoting that growth, and how pressures to conform to a group norm can create self-awareness. It recognizes three areas of feedback, including the relationship to the group structure. Forensic activities probably can be used as a laboratory for this perspective most appropriately because it is the most complete and integrated approach.

Conclusion

Obviously, this essay argues that forensics programs are laboratories for small group processes, whether they are explicitly recognized or not by either the participants or their teachers. Small group dynamics, as identified by Shaw, are present and clearly define the forensic activity as a small group. The combination of being a small group, spending extended amounts of time together, longitudinal requirements, the presence of a teacher probably trained in small group communication, and the focus of the activity on communication create a unique experience and setting for the forensics laboratory not found elsewhere. The six models offered by Mills provide ample illustrations of how common forensic teams practices can be easily incorporated into any of a number of small group perspectives. The cybernetic-growth model, because of its sophistication and completeness, would seem to be the best one to adopt for teachers who wish to make a conscientious decision to make their program a laboratory for small group communication.

Endnotes

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Forensics as a Laboratory Experience in Organizational Communication

Don R. Swanson *

A forensic program on any campus is a complex organization. A forensic program is comprised of people, their communication skills, emotions, values, and interdependent relationships. A forensic program operates within an academic environment which expects the program to be an open system that is constantly influenced and constrained by external forces simultaneous with the maintenance of an appropriate internal culture. A forensic program is comprised of messages that flow through a network of roles to provide the necessary information to all members. Goldhaber's (1990) definition of organizational communication represents the communication that must occur in an effective forensic program: "Organizational communication is the process of creating and exchanging messages within a network of interdependent relationships to cope with environmental uncertainty" (p. 16). Forensic programs are usually supported and administered by a department of communication, speech communication, or speech and theatre. Pace, Johnson, and Mills (1990) conducted a survey that reported 82% of the basic courses in organizational communication were offered by these sorts of academic units, while only 12% are taught by business and management departments (p.44).

In most academic departments of speech communication the forensic program may be the clearest example of a generally autonomous organization, oriented to specific tasks, which is readily available for study. Thus the forensic program can provide a department with a laboratory example for study by students of organizational communication. The educators responsible for forensic instruction and the direction of the forensic program can enable the program to become a productive laboratory in organizational communication. There are stimulating opportunities for a degree of synthesis among what are usually two distinct areas of communication study and practice, argumentation/forensics and organizational communication. This essay addresses the notion of employing the forensic program as a laboratory in organizational communication. Major approaches to the study of organizational communication, skills training, functionalism, information equivocality, organizational culture, and organizational evaluation and intervention, are examined for possible laboratory study applica-

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**National Forensic Journal,* X (Spring, 1992), pp. 65-76.
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tions. Numerous references in this discussion are made to the three dominant textbooks employed in the basic course in organizational communication. They are Goldhaber's fifth edition of *Organizational Communication*, (1990), Daniels and Spiker's second edition of *Perspectives on Organizational Communication*, (1991), and Kreps second edition of *Organizational Communication*, (1990). 60% of the schools responding in the Pace, Johnson, and Mills (1990) survey employed one of these as their basic text (p.45).

Skills Training

The study of organizational communication is often approached from a skills perspective. This perspective poses the question, what are a few essential communication skills that a professional person should develop? The three basic settings of increasing interpersonal effectiveness, dyadic (interpersonal) communication, small group communication, and public (mass) communication, usually provide the specific skill foci. More specific subsets of these are interviewing, negotiating, conflict management, report presentation, listening, and answering questions. In most departments of communication the three basic settings form a grouping of courses and the organizational communication course reviews and illustrates application of those skills in the organizational setting. Companion essays in this NFJ issue consider how interpersonal, small group and mass communication can be studied in the laboratory of forensics. Tb the extent that a course of study analyzes organizational communication from the skills perspective, the suggestions of the other essays are also relevant to forensics as a laboratory in organizational communication.

In many curricula the specific subsets are the components of a "business and professional communication" course that provides practice in communication skills, and in others there are distinct courses to deal with these various interaction settings. Although it may seem obvious that forensics teaches students to make appropriate rhetorical choices to conduct particular types of interactions, it is the rhetorical principles that are significantly the same, while the method of arriving at a desired outcome may differ. For example, organizational communication students who have learned the virtue of collaboration and working for a win-win outcome will find the desired output of forensics to be quite different. Forensic students strive for a win over an opponent's loss. Consequently, there may be hesitancy in suggesting that the performance skills taught in an organizational communication curricula are directly applicable to forensic performance.

The following discussion attempts to illustrate that the most valuable laboratory experience results from examining the organizational setting (the forensic team and the forensic community), and how it is shaped, molded, maintained, and changed through organizational communication, rather than focusing on a skills perspective.

Functionalism

Frequently organizational communication is studied in a manner similar to the "scientific management" treatment of organizational behavior during the first half of this century. This perspective visualizes the organization as a machine or employs an organismic metaphor to focus the observer on a study of the functions and structure of the organization. An emphasis is placed on the adequacy of information flow through structural networks that can be defined by a careful plotting of the functional features of the organization. Both the formal and the informal structures are examined. The traditional function categories of production, maintenance, and innovation can be differentiated.

Students of organizational communication applying a functional template to a forensic program might begin by examining the function categories. For example, the production function represents the accomplishment of an organization. How successful is the forensic team? Do the team members produce significant results? Can the program's production be adequately evaluated on the basis of trophies or a win-loss record? The maintenance function is concerned with how the system's processes are regulated and operate to maintain a steady state by correcting deviant behavior. A forensic team's ethical standards, rules, norms of team coordination, and effort to fit forensic tournament regulations provide examples. The forensic coach's communication that expresses value, boosts morale, and motivates further member efforts are also examples of the maintenance function. The innovation function in forensics often results from the desire of participants and coaches to foster change and improvement in the techniques employed in performance. The dynamic forensic team, like any dynamic organization, will periodically foster necessary change in its goals, structure, and function.

A forensic team can provide a challenging study vehicle for examining the blend of formal and informal communication. Many teams function with a limited formal network and expect necessary information to be carried by the informal network. The nature and impact of "grapevine" messages on a loosely structured forensic team could prove to be a fascinating study. The formal structure that a Director of Forensics develops for the program is intended to carry the necessary information efficiently. Do team members receive essential information that relieves uncertainty? How is the information transmitted to them? Does the network function as the director intends? Is there a tendency for network distortion?

Student members of a forensic program/organization should not find it strange that other students and other communication perspectives are employed in the attempt to study the process and function of their efforts. Since forensic participants tend to put enormous amounts of energy into the consideration of their individual functions, the "right techniques" and methods of preparation and performance as well as others' attention to the group organizing function to produce the desired output can be perceived as a helping organizational development effort.

Organization as a Response to Equivocality

Some organizational communication study springs from a "contemporary theory of organizing" (Weick, 1979; Kreps, 1990). Employing this focus is appealing to some communication scholars because it considers the connection between the organizing process and the need to resolve ambiguities (equivocality). Humans in organizations need to process information collectively in order to reduce the information uncertainty they face in their activity. This approach to the study of organizational communication in forensic programs can be employed to examine how new members of forensic programs make sense out of, and adapt to, the forensic environment. This theory may be particularly relevant because of the large amount of turnover in personnel in forensic programs and the consequent need to incorporate new memberships rapidly. New members must quickly resolve the equivocality they feel. Continuing members find that each new forensic season brings new team members, new topics for competition, and slightly altered norms for success in intercollegiate competition.

The organizational environment is a key component of Weick's theory. The type of environment envisioned by the theory is not a physical environment, but a kind of human software environment; i.e., interactions and messages comprise the organizational environment. This is particularly true of forensics, since forensics participation is accomplished in a variety of locations and the glue that holds the activity together is the information environment and the effort to control information equivocality. Information uncertainty may be a concern in the particular forensic program or in the larger forensic organization, the forensic community that holds tournaments. The principle of "requisite variety" provides a useful analytic tool. The essential analytic question is: does the organization "...react to message inputs with the same amount of equivocality that is present in the messages themselves"(Kreps, p. 109). To answer this question the observer must consider how the forensic organization employs "rules" and "cycles" to deal with information uncertainty.

Rules are prescriptive because they determine a procedure for forensic participants to apply in response to the messages they listen to. Kreps explains the nature of rules:

> First, rules are used to ascertain the level of familiarity, or equivocality, in any message input into the organization. Second, rules are used to search the pool of standardized message responses available to the organization that are compatible with (appropriate to) the specific message output. (1990, p. 109.)

When messages are unambiguous and simple in focus, rules specify appropriate responses.

But when messages are ambiguous and complex, "cycles must be employed by organization members in order to reduce the equivocality of the complex inputs" (Kreps, 1990, p. 110). Cycles are a series of communication behavioral tools, "interacts," that bring organizational members together in ways that allow them to process equivocal information. A cycle includes an communication act, a response and adjustment. A transactional cycle takes place as participants seek to deal with complex messages. For example, in a forensic program the group can posit a simple rule for an unambiguous message situation, such as all members will arrive on time for practice. However, a rule is probably not appropriate for more complex issues. For example, the rule that "no debater will run counter-warrants" or "no persuasive speaker will deviate from the problem-solution pattern of organization" are best dealt with in cycles. In the broader context of the forensic community this information equivocality theory might also be applied to analyze issues. There seems to be a contemporary desire in the forensic community to respond to excessive uncertainty about evaluating and judging forensic performance with new rules. Yet an organizational communication analyst could consider whether it is new rules that are needed or more cycles that could increase the interaction and decrease the uncertainty regarding the nature of the performance.

Organizational Culture

The study of organizational communication during the past decade has increasingly included the perspective of organizational culture. The popularized notion that each organization has a unique culture, with a set of features that can be identified and promulgated has become a unit of study in most organizational communication courses. Peters and Waterman's *In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America's Best-run Companies,* (1982), and Deal and Kennedy's *Corporate Cultures: The Rites and Rituals of Corporate Life,* (1982), examined numerous organizational communication features of "successful" organizations that were identified as "strong" cultures. Rosabeth Moss Ranter's (1977) *Men and Women of the Corporation*, and (1983) *The Change Masters*, demonstrates how exceptional organization members perform cultural activities. The characteristics they popularized have influenced organizational communication textbooks and the focus of undergraduate applications of theory to laboratory examples.

The simplistic approach to organizational culture of Deal and Kennedy provides four features: "values, heroes, cultural communication networks, and rites and rituals." An active functioning forensic program inheres each of these features in a manner that can be examined by students of organizational communication. Values may be explicitly stated in a team slogan, but it is more likely that the shared philosophies and goals are best observed by listening to participants talk about what is important to them as members of the forensic team. Forensic coaches talk in particular and unique ways about the importance of the program and what is expected of participants. Effective coaches make statements that assist students to feel good about their involvement and motivate them to exert significant effort toward team goals.

Every forensic team has had exceptional participants or leaders that could be labeled as heroes because they demonstrate and promote the values of the organization. There are the contemporary heroes that serve as role models and mentors for the new team members. There are historical heroes whose exploits and efforts become legends in the organization's cultural communication network. The network carries procedural information, anecdotes, and stories that illustrate and glorify the success of the team.

A forensic team is the counterpart of any active organization. The group develops repeated patterns of formal and informal recognition that may be considered rites and rituals. Ceremonial expressions of success are often more important to the successful forensic speaker than trophies. Strong forensic teams utilize numerous periodic methods of recognition for participants. Examples of such rites may be weekly recognition of outstanding performances in a team meeting, special locations for team meals after a successful competition, memorable awards at an annual banquet, or formal initiation into a forensic honorary. The number, strength, and consistency of rites and rituals are important defining characteristics of a forensic team's culture.

The Deal and Kennedy cultural characteristics can provide an efficient vehicle for a forensic instructor to explain concisely to students the desirable characteristics of a strong team culture. Consequently, the forensic students can also be instructed that these characteristics represent significant organizational communication concepts. But for the students of organizational communication, who employ the forensic program as a laboratory example for observation, a more complete cultural analysis methodology will be appropriate. For example, Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo (1982) defined a set of indicators of organizational culture. "Relevant constructs, facts, practices, vocabulary, metaphors, stories, and rites and rituals" are the seven components suggested for cultural analysis. These indicators should be discernable in most forensic programs.

The concept of organizational culture can also assist the forensic director in explaining the diversity of organizations that function to promote and control forensic activities. This is particularly important in the training of new forensic educators. The student who understands the features of organization culture is more capable of understanding why there is a divergence of philosophy among CEDA debate, NDT debate, ADA debate, NIET individual events, NFA individual events, and Interstate Oratorical Association oratory. The university forensic honorary fraternities, Pi Kappa Delta and Delta Sigma Rho - Tau Kappa Alpha, and junior college honorary, Phi Rho Pi, serve their membership in diverse ways. Each of these organizations has a proud history, distinctive philosophy and goals, a unique operating structure, and memorable individuals about whom legendary tales are repeated. The socio-emotional environment of each organization's forensic tournaments varies from the others' because of a difference in its culture. Each forensic director and sponsoring department of speech communication has choices to make with regard to affiliation with each of these organizations and their allied activities and philosophy of forensic education. Each institution should ask: "Which of these forensic organizations best represents and places value on the particular mission and culture of our forensic program?"

The analytic value of an organizational culture perspective has proven valuable to this observer of the forensic scene. My keynote address to the 1989 Pi Kappa Delta Developmental Conference was both a reflection on the organization's cultural characteristics and a challenge to the membership to maintain those characteristics (Swanson, 1989). In 1991, while preparing comments for the 20th anniversary development and assessment conference on CEDA debate, a cultural perspective was applied. The task was to examine the philosophy and structure of the organization and its practices over that period of time (Swanson, 1991). As a preface to the writing of that paper, I wrote the following two paragraphs that were not included in the conference paper, but served to remind me of the value of the cultural perspective I was applying:

The approach to preparing comments for the CEDA development conference is difficult, because it seems that there is so much to say, yet I wonder, is it worth saying? At once I am struck by the palpable nature of my reactions to the past and current status of CEDA. Perhaps, however, these observations are only obvious to me. I tend to think broadly and culturally about CEDA as I reflect on the last twenty years of coaching and judging. Are my interpretations and concerns unique to my perception and experience or do they reflect what many others believe CEDA to be? Do they fit the "real" culture of CEDA? But then do we as a community of educators have a CEDA culture? Inescapably we must, for as Krebs indicates:

> "Every organization has a culture. The cultural themes that an organization develops have powerful influences on both the interpretations that organization members make about reality and the activities in which they engage (1990, p. 132).

"A culture exists when people come to share a common frame of reference for interpreting and acting toward one another" according to Daniels and Spiker and This common frame of reference includes language, values, beliefs, and interpretations of experience" (1991, p. 119). Culture as a feature of an organization derives from a familiar metaphor. Morgan indicates the derivation as "the idea of cultivation, the process of tilling and developing land. When we talk about culture we are typically referring to the pattern of development reflected in a society's system of knowledge, ideology, values, law and day to day ritual" (1986, p. 112). Conceptually, organizational culture, the CEDA culture, functions as a overarching frame of reference for some scattered thoughts. Does CEDA debate inhere a systematic set of cultural features? Is it possible to identify initial cultural features? Have the initial features been cultivated? How have those features developed, been refined and changed? Do we have the took to cultivate those features?

The analytic framework of organizational culture thus provides a valuable tool in the foregoing example, but in addition to organizational culture the perspectives of skills training, functionalism, and organization as a response to equivocality can provide methods of viewing forensic programs and forensic organizations in order to evaluate their organizational effectiveness.

Organizational Evaluation and Intervention

In an evaluation, practicum students of organizational communication apply the theoretical knowledge they have gained to the specific instances of communication they observe. Questions posed by examination may lead to evaluation. Organizational communication students will select and employ systematic methods of data collection such as the ICA audit procedure (Goldhaber, 1979). The usual basic methods are examination of documents, interviews with members, application of survey instruments, and observation of interactions. The campus forensic program is likely to have a team handbook that specifies procedures, members who are willing to be interviewed and surveyed, and plenty of meetings and practices where interaction patterns can be observed. In order to design an evaluation procedure the auditor must first gain a basic familiarity with the organization to be studied. Then the methods of data collection will be designed to fit the goals of the evaluation. In many student audit experiences it is difficult to acquire the cooperation of the organization's management. But on a campus the forensic director and other forensic educators should be available to assist the organizational communication student in the determination of appropriate elements of evaluation of the forensic organization.

Once evaluative data regarding a forensic organization has been gathered, should an intervention be undertaken? If a student of organizational communication has a type of client agreement with the forensic director, this may be possible. But direct intervention activities with the forensic program may not be necessary because intervention is not necessarily distinct from evaluation. In virtually all of this author's personal consulting experience it has been clear that clients consider the data gathering/evaluation phase as an intervention. It may be fair to surmise that creating greater awareness of organizational features and communication effectiveness can foster change among the participants in a forensic program who are relatively mature in their understanding of the impact of communication principles applied in a communication evaluation procedure.

If intervention with the forensic program is desired or possible, it adds a significant dimension to the laboratory experience for organizational communication students. It provides the organizational communication student with experience in packaging and providing descriptive feedback to the organization members. The choice of whether a written report should be filed, what sort of meeting should be held to report, and how much response interaction is desired with the participants, are all very realistic concerns. If further organizational development intervention is desired then the organizational communication student, functioning as a consultant, can plan interactions with the forensic team members. These interactions could focus on one or any combination of the three general foci of organizational communication intervention (Daniels, p. 332-334). Team members could be brought together for conceptual analysis to consider the philosophy and goals of the forensic organization. Team members could be brought together to consider a process analysis of their group efforts. What successes or outcomes can be identified, and how have those outcomes been achieved? Team members could be brought together to consider their agenda setting. Is effectiveness facilitated by the subgroup task structure, the group's rules and roles?

Discussion

How might the academic program in speech communication benefit from using the forensic program as a focal point for the study of organizational communication? There are numerous benefits.

Students in an organizational communication class are typically looking for organizations to study for their application assignments. The forensic program is essentially in-house; i.e., studying the forensic program is analogous to a human resources unit in a corporation doing a study or communication audit of a particular unit in their corporation, for example the accounting division. Consequently, a group of communication students should have ready and convenient access to the forensic program.

The forensic program can benefit enormously from critical and constructive examination by students operating from an organizational communication perspective. Typically the members of a forensic program measure results and success based on win-loss records in competition and the degree to which they fill the trophy case. The many diverse human communication elements that lead to the quality of the output of the organization are not consciously considered in the pressure of the everyday rush to prepare for competitive speaking. The organizational communication study perspective can cause members of the forensic program to examine their functional structure, consider whether their systems adequately convey the necessary information, and consider the nature and impact of the program's culture. Observation by an outside entity can produce the dynamic Hawthorne effect; i.e., the self-conscious awareness that others are interested in the process by which the individuals in the organization perform their tasks. The result is an increased quality of performance and the skills needed to become and maintain a successful forensic team.

It is probably fair to assume that the students and faculty involved in forensics are usually not the same group that are actively involved in the study of organizational communication. Bringing diverse groups of communication students and faculty together can result in increasing the participants holistic perspective regarding the field of communication. Rhetoric/argumentation students will see the relevance and contributions of social science/organizational communication perspectives to their focus. And, of course, the converse should be just as relevant. In the pragmatic world of organizations, this could be analogous to a team-building exercise, as diverse groups become involved together and learn to empathize with each other's concerns and learn to appreciate each other's methods.

Perhaps a sort of reverse Hawthorne effect could also occur. Those students of organizational communication, doing the observation, could become more aware and appreciative of the relevance and value of rhetorical principles, argumentation strategies, public performance techniques and aesthetic sensibilities, since they have most likely studied these principles in only a tertiary manner. As the students of organizational communication observe the forensic students they gain a more complete understanding of the types of communication performance that is the output of the forensic team efforts.

It is becoming obvious that faculty members who coach forensics tend to be youthful with few years of teaching experience (Swanson, 1991). However, 70% of the faculty who teach organizational communication classes are at the Associate or Full Professor rank (Pace, Johnson, & Mills, 1990). Bringing diverse faculty together in the spirit of departmental cooperation and collaboration could have significant benefits.

In the recent decade, only very limited attention has been afforded to the analysis of how effective forensic instruction is structured and conducted from an organizational perspective. Today there is only sporadic teaching of the pedagogical courses that once taught prospective teachers how to organize a team, develop an organizational mission, and select procedures to accomplish that mission. Few convention papers and journal articles examine the structural, human interaction, or group culture problems with which every new forensic educator must grapple. It is fallacious to assume that the effective forensic director is only required to deal with the teaching of the principles of argumentation and rhetoric. The forensic landscape is littered with examples of directors who lack adequate sensitivity to or the understanding of organizational dynamics. These directors unwittingly provide negative, dysfunctional examples of human organizational dynamics. Of course, it can be argued that no competent department of communication will allow that to occur; in reality, however, it is extremely difficult for a department to have a sense of what is occurring in a forensic program without some careful attention focused on the concepts that the discipline of organizational communication employs.

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Forensics as a Laboratory Experience in Mass Media

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Many forensic educators attempt to sell the idea of participating in the forensic activity by presenting students with arguments that highlight the long-term and short-term benefits of the activity. One of the long-term benefits (and this is certainly a short-term benefit as well) is that forensics assists in developing and improving communication skills in a variety of communication contexts. A casual reader of employment classified ads in any metropolitan newspaper knows that most employers are looking for individuals with good oral and written communication skills; therefore, the long-term pragmatic benefits are usually easy for the forensic educator to support.

Forensic educators and students often associate forensics as an activity that is excellent communication skills training for those who wish to become lawyers, teachers, and politicians. Recent forensics participants have found employment as trainers and communication consultants. There is one area of the communication discipline that seems to be excluded from the discussion of the transfer of knowledge and skills coming from the forensic activity—those professors associated with electronic media area (primarily radio and television).

Based upon a review of the literature, there is little or no information concerning the transfer of theories and skills from forensics to electronic media professions. Forensic educators sometimes mention that a prominent person in media was a speech participant (for example NBC newsperson Jane Pauley and actress Shelley Long competed against each other in Indiana state high school forensics in both extemporaneous speaking and oratory while Cable News Network head Ted Turner was a champion high school debater in Kentucky). These are interesting pieces of trivia; however, a more formal discussion of the benefits of forensic training for those interested in electronic communication professions may be in order.

The focus of this article will be the transfer of the principles learned in forensics to the field of electronic communication (radio-television). Several ideas will be discussed: first, the transfer of forensic principles of audience analysis to television/radio programming; second, the benefits of limited preparation events for on-air talent,

**The National Fonnsic Journal*, X (Spring, 1992), pp. 77-82.

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especially those involved as reporters or anchorpersons; and finally, the importance of imagery in writing and presenting ideas via electronic media. The scope of this article is limited to principles learned from individual events, although one may also recognize principles that may be transferred from debate as well.

It is the authors' opinion that there will be more employment opportunities for students in the "invention" side of the electronic communication industry (programming, research, talent, promotions) than in the production side if the industry. In many electronic media curricula students are becoming more specialized and "hand-on" in their orientation discipline. Parcells and others suggest that fundamental elements of communication such as interpersonal communication are often neglected and that there is an emphasis on specialization and technology.[1] From a pragmatic perspective, there is already a trend in the electronic media industry of downsizing production staffs and in some cases using robotics and other automation to produce programs. Forensics may assist in not only broadening a student's perspective towards communication, it may also make the student more marketable and competitive in the electronic media industry as well.

Audience Analysis

Students participating in forensics must do some basic formative audience analysis before presenting their ideas to audiences and judges. Most students and coaches do not prepare events without some speculation concerning the acceptance of a given topic or material choice and how these choices might "play" for the judge and audience.

In most cases, students seem to be concerned about audience analysis in the formative sense, whereas electronic media research often relies upon ratings and other forms of summative research in making decisions about messages. Blythin and Samovar advocate a basic approach to audience analysis that appears to be firmly based on some central elements of audience analysis found in communication textbooks and taught by forensic educators.[2] These elements are kinship, composition, and audience intensity. Blythin and Samovar introduce these concepts in the context of students doing audience analysis for the creation of television programs.

Kinship describes the homogeneity or the heterogeneity of the audience. When producing programs for a mass audience, those indi-

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[1]See Frank Parcells, "Interpersonal Communication in the Broadcast Curriculum: A Missing Link?," *Journal of the Illinois Speech and Theatre Association, 36* (1984), pp. 47-55.

[2]Evan Blythin and Larry Samovar, *Communicating Effectively on Television,* (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing, 1985), pp. 20-24.

viduals involved in the creative process must form some impressions of audience characteristics and what types of program content they will accept and enjoy. The forensic competitor spends much time in determining what types of material and topics may be successful with regard to audience, so there are special considerations for the forensic participant when determining performance ideas (i.e., Has the audience heard this topic or material before? Are the themes in my oral interpretation material universal in nature? Is this the material that did well last year at national tournaments?)

Composition (age, gender, racial-ethnic background, etc.) is a consideration that any forensic participant should use in preparation for competition. Public address topics and literature for oral interpretation are either developed or discarded based upon the demographics of the audience and the judging pool. Many students often become aware of regional preferences and differences concerning material and performance styles.

Intensity is the degree of interest an audience has towards a presentation or program. Concerted listeners demonstrate a good deal of active interest and loyalty to a communication event or program. Concerted listeners may even arrange their lifestyles so they may watch or listen to a favorite program or communication event (for example, viewers who watch "Sixty Minutes" on a regular basis would be a concerted audience).

Forensic competitors face audiences who are concerted because there is usually a high degree of interest in either participating in or judging the activity (although those who have judged an early Saturday morning round may disagree with this notion) and they must present information at a high level of quality in order to maintain acceptance and recognition from audiences and judges. Forensic competitors can benefit from this concerted audience analysis to the world of electronic media. Forensic audiences tend to process information in a more critical way so concerted audiences can be an excellent experience and laboratory for the forensic competitor who eventually wishes to create messages for electronic media.

Learning about and applying formative audience research can serve as a major advantage for those forensic competitors entering the electronic media industry. Eastman and others have discussed aspects of formative television programming research such as concept testing and focus groups as methods for testing television programming ideas.

Methods of formative audience research do exist in the industry, but much of the research done in commercial television seems to be after the fact of summative instead of formative. Forensic competitors who are interested in the creative or research side of radio or television may make contributions to the industry by placing emphasis on a more formative approach to testing program content, concepts and ideas.[3]

Transfer of Principles Learned in Limited Preparation and Internal Structure of Messages to On-Air Talent

Another broad area for consideration that could be an advantage for those students involved in forensics are the skills learned in limited preparation events and the principles of internal structure learned in all forensic public address events. Limited preparation events, such as impromptu and extemporaneous speaking, require students to present speeches and construct arguments in a short period of time. There is an obvious transfer between the skills learned in these events and the skills employed by many broadcast journalists. Broadcast journalists are required to present facts quickly and accurately under intense time constraints and, in some cases, literally under fire (reporters on location during "Desert Storm" or covering the April, 1992, riots in Los Angeles).

Broadcast journalists must think quickly and present information "on their feet" while on-camera or on-mic. Limited preparation events can assist the student in developing skills where they can present information in concise and structured manner. As is the case with any profession requiring an interview, limited preparation skills can assist the student in employment interview skills and "getting one's foot in the door" in this highly competitive field. Gross and others emphasize the importance of the employment interview and the total packaging of the perspective employee as an important aspect in seeking an internship or employment with any electronic media organization.

Transfer of Speech Writing Skills to Writing for the Media

Another benefit of public address individual events is one of developing writing skills for the media. Most speech educators would agree that there is a difference between speechwriting where the writer must "write for the ear," and report or research writing that is often "print-based." Those who teach speechwriting teach an aural style of writing so the written speech will sound more conversational and match the cadences and style of the speaker. Beginning speakers in both classroom and forensics presentations are often frustrated because they try to write a speech the same way they would write a research paper. The result is often a less than conversational delivery style and a

[3]Susan Tyler Eastman, Sydney W. Head and Lewis Klein, *Broadcast/Cable Programming: Strategies and Practices,* 2nd Edition (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1985), pp. 12-20, 41-42.

style that makes speakers sound as if they are reading to instead of talking to the audience.

Electronic media writing is different than writing for print. It is similar to speechwriting and playwriting because it is meant to be spoken. Speech students may have an easier time writing in an aural style if they have written their various speeches in this style throughout their forensic careers. "Television writing is writing for the eye as well as for the ear because one is often wring words that will accompany pictures.[4] Forensic students often tend to write in a more "imagery based" style that lends itself to writing for pictures. Such speech devices as metaphors, analogies, case studies/stories, and humanizing statistics help the audience to visualize images while also simplifying information. This aural writing style can give the speech student as advantage over those who may not be accustomed to writing in this style.

Speechwriting skills can also assist those who are writing questions for news and public affairs interviews and in the actual organization of the interview process. Blythin and Samovar suggest the following devices as transitions during the interview:

1. Bridging—This is one of the most popular transitions in inter viewing because it gets you in a sentence or two from where you are in the interview to where you want to be. For example: "Why don't we look at the entire problem instead of this small issue?" or "There's a little background information I should deal with before I can deal with your question."

2. Partition—Partitions preview points to be introduced by the interviewer and lets the audience and the interviewee know that there may be more than one part to the question. For example: "First can you tell me the problems caused by the firing of Mr. Smith form the city council and secondly how you plan to deal with these problems."

3. Signposting—Allows both the audience and interviewee the knowledge that there is going to be a shift to a different area of questioning or that we are moving from one area of focus to another. For example: "We've talked about some of the highlights of your last years with the Cubs. Let's talk about some of the difficulties you've faced during retirement."[5]

Forensic educators and students should have little difficulty with using these transitional devices when writing or asking interview questions because they are second nature to effective speech composition.

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[4]Jane Blankensteen and Avi Odeni, *TV Careers Behind the Screen* (New York: John Wiley and Sons Inc., 1987), Chapter 5.

[5]Blythin and Samovar, p. 121.

Public address events promote internal structure/signposting as an integral part of the communication process.

There is a high demand for writers to perform various kinds of writing tasks (including newswriting, research/interview writing, commercial spot writing, etc.) in the electronic media industry. Steve Neno, Vice-President of Entertainment for ABC, says that students who can write have best chance of landing jobs both in front of and behind the camera.[6]

Fade to Black

Speech educators can probably think of more transfer and application of the theories and skills learned in public address events to the electronic media field. This article should serve as a starting point for educators to consider how forensics can be a laboratory for those who are mass communication majors(educators may also consider the value of oral interpretation events as well as public address events).

Forensics coaches should encourage students to pursue activities where they can transfer and display the theories and skills they have learned in forensics to student media productions both on-campus and off (especially where good internship programs exist).

Special consideration should be given to ways that forensics students and coaches can interact and form alliances with those who teach various electronic media courses. Involving forensic students as writers and talent for various on-campus production can provide a service to the media people while also providing valuable experience for students who may want to pursue careers in electronic media.

Public speaking events can provide excellent preparation for those future electronic media professionals in the same way these events prepare students for such fields as law, politics, teaching and consulting. Forensics can be one of many aspects of a liberal education that teach students to be responsible communicators via the media and in the tradition of Quintillian being "good persons communicating well."

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[6]Speech to the International Radio and Television Society Faculty Industry Seminar, New York City, New York, February 5, 1991.

REVIEW OF PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

Jack Kay, Editor

Communicating Literature: An Introduction to Oral Interpretation, by Todd V. Lewis, Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 1991.

If you are searching for a new text to use in the basic oral interpretation/performance studies course or are seeking a text well-suited for training forensic competitors in the interpretation events, *Communicating Literature* just may end your quest. To my knowledge, this text is the only one devoted exclusively to oral interpretation written by an active member of the forensic community. Dr. Todd Lewis combines his academic training in oral interpretation and rhetoric and public address (Ohio State University and Louisiana State University) with his practical experience as a successful teacher and forensic educator (Biola University). The result is a text that effectively bridges the gap between the competitive and non-competitive spheres. For those who view the interpreter's task as one of identifying a literary selection's communicative center and making performance choices which justify that message, this text comes as a welcome addition to the field.

The text is divided into twelve compact chapters. Chapter 1 provides the reader with an interesting historical perspective on the discipline and offers a communication-based definition of oral interpretation. Chapter 2 expands this notion using the author's own model of the process to illustrate the relationship among literature, interpreter, and audience. While Lewis effectively makes the case for viewing the process as a persuasive one, this chapter also reminds the reader to avoid altering the inherent textual message in the adaptation and performance of literature. Chapters 3 and 4 focus primarily on the nonverbal aspects (both vocal and nonvocal) of performance, including suggested exercises for skill development. Chapter 5 outlines the essential elements necessary to analyze a literary work, and Chapter 6 provides valuable practical direction in such matters as cutting and editing, selecting focus, composing the introduction, and making a strong initial impression.

Chapters 7, 8, and 9 focus exclusively on the three basic categories of literature—namely, prose, drama, and poetry. These three chapters not only provide an expanded view of each genre's characteristics, but also provide invaluable suggestions concerning performance choices and decisions relevant to each type of literature. Unique to the text (and particularly valuable to those in the forensic community) is the inclusion of duo performance in the chapter on drama. For those especially interested in group forms of interpretation, Chapter 10 provides an overview of readers theatre, chamber theatre, and choral reading including material on script preparation, staging, and blocking.

Chapter 11 focuses on oral interpretation performance evaluation; Lewis suggests appropriate listening behaviors and specific questions that can be used to provide constructive criticism. This chapter should be most helpful to both teachers and students, since it discusses key elements of the evaluation process including introductions and transitions, literary choices, portrayal of personae, delivery techniques, nonverbal aspects of communication, and concluding comments. Chapter 12 addresses some specialized performance formats, including program oral interpretation and religious scripture interpretation as well as various performance formats available outside the classroom setting. Finally, the text's Appendix contains 15 different perforated evaluation sheets that can be adapted to in-class as well as out-of-class assignments and/or observations.

When these twelve chapters are viewed as a complete entity, several major strengths emerge. First, the author presents a very *balanced* perspective on oral interpretation that combines textual analysis, theory, and practice. Since discussion of theory and concepts are continually linked to practical application, the text is well-suited to the needs of both the four-year institution and the community college. Second, the author's writing style is clear and concise. While Lewis provides a thorough treatment of the subject matter, he clearly does not attempt to impress the elite in the discipline. Instead, the language choice in this text reflects a genuine concern for students who desire a basic foundation in the performance of literature. Finally, in contrast to most texts in the field, Lewis does not cram excessive literary examples between the covers. The result is a text that not only appears less threatening, but one that is less expensive to purchase because the publisher didn't have to dole out large sums to writers' agents and estates for permission to reproduce entire works. Since my experiences mirror those of the author when he writes in his preface that "experience shows that most students skip over samples of literature if they become excessive or lengthy," I believe Lewis made a wise choice. Instead, the text employs excerpts of works for illustrative purposes as well as lists of suggested works for performance at the conclusion of the appropriate chapters.

So, is *Communicating Literature* the "perfect" text? One might argue that the information on paralanguage (pitch, volume, rate, etc.) presented in Chapter 4 actually belongs more appropriately in Chapter 3 entitled "Nonverbal Communication and Oral Interpretation" or that

Chapter 11 on evaluation might better be placed before or after the chapters on readers theatre and specialized forms (Chapters 10 and 12) rather than sandwiched between them. Or, one might wish that the lists of suggested literature for performance include more women writers, minority writers, and non-Western writers rather than such a heavy does of Western, white male writers. Yet, such concerns are indeed minor if not simply a matter of personal preference and, as such, do not detract from the quality and value of the text. In short, *Communicating Literature* should be given serious consideration when seeking a new text for the classroom course in oral interpretation or performance studies. Additionally, this book should provide invaluable assistance to forensic educators who desire to increase their competency as critic-judges in oral interpretation or who wish to provide their forensic students who are potentially interested in competing in any of the interpretation events with the fundamental principles. I, for one, intend to use *Communicating Literature* to assist in the education of *all* my students—both those in my college oral interpretation classroom and those on my forensic team.

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