

A Content Analysis of Individual Events Judge Decision Justifications

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Individual judgments are subject to various biases and inconsistencies that may result in less than optimal decisions. Certainly, a number of factors may influence the decision making process, including decision frame and the availability of information processing aids (see Ashton, 1992; Takemura, 1993). One factor receiving increasing attention is the use of decision justifications, or reasons for decisions. Research from decision science literature concludes that the justification requirement reduces overconfidence, susceptibility to order effects, insensitivity to new information (Ashton, 1992; Tetlock, 1983), and prompts more analytic, thorough, and complex modes of decision making (Takemura, 1993; Tetlock, 1985).

The competitive forensic context provides an ideal setting for examining the use of decision justifications. Judges decide on a rank and rate for students as part of the competitive format. With recent trends pushing toward greater use of a reason-for-rank section on the forensic ballot (Bartanen, 1990), including the American Forensic Association's decision to include such a section at its national tournament (see Burnett & Cronn-Mills, 1994), further study of these justifications is warranted.

We examine the reason-for-decision portion of the individual events ballot and the justifications offered by forensic judges for ranks. Based on the forensic literature regarding decision justifications, we pose several research questions and hypotheses. Next, we describe our method and present our findings. Finally, we draw conclusions and discuss implications of these findings.

REASON-FOR-DECISION RESEARCH

Although a number of scholars pay attention to the related issues of improving judges, criteria for events, and use of forensic ballots, relatively few look directly at the reasons judges provide for their ranks. Among the more frustrating experiences for forensic competitors, and their coaches, are ambiguous ballots with no apparent reasons for the judges' decisions. Ross (1984) argues that weakly justified decisions prompt negative student responses. As Olson and Wells (1988) note, "too often contestants are left with a series of random, occasionally illegible, comments to try to make an educated guess as to their rank and rating" (p. 5).

One solution to the ambiguity is to encourage a reason for decision on the ballot. Although debate ballots have included such a space for some time, this feature on the individual events ballot is still less common (Olson, 1992; Olson & Wells, 1988). Olson and Wells suggest that the reason-for-decision space serves two important functions: (a) to let contestants know what part of the performance needs work, and (b) to give focus to ambiguous comments elsewhere on the ballot. In addition to justificatory functions, we argue that the reason-for-decision space may prompt the judge to make more consistent decisions, a view paralleling research on decision justifications outside the forensic context (Ashton, 1992). Olson (1992) summarizes:

Being faced with having to write the reason for decision, a judge will be more likely to think about what criteria he/she deems to be most important in a performance. They [judges] will be encouraged to reveal their internal ranking process on the ballot. This process may cause [judges] to consider whether their rankings are arbitrary or whether they are being consistent in employing their judging standards, (p. 5)

Use and Frequency of Justifications

Only a handful of studies have researched decision justifications in forensics. Generally, few ballots contain explicit reasons. As Carey and Rodier (1987, p. 16) conclude, "it is very

uncommon for judges to justify their decisions on the ballot" (emphasis in original). Their study of ballot comments in general revealed that 97 percent provided no reasons for the rank given. Mills (1991) found only 6 of 250 interpretation event ballots had reasons for rank, and Pratt (1987) discovered only 1 in 170. Bartanen (1987) found that 12 of 1292 comments analyzed qualified as reasons for decisions. Even Olson and Wells' (1987) study, which found 23.2 percent of ballots containing a justification, demonstrated the small number of decision justifications on ballots.

Bartanen (1990) looked specifically at the reason-for-decision space on the ballot and concluded the reason for decision "did result in a significant difference in ballot comments justifying the competitor's rankings and ratings" (p. 137); however, she still noted an overall paucity in justifications. Burnett and Cronn-Mills (1994) also concluded there were few real "reasons" for decisions. We believe, however, that specifically providing the reason-for-decision space may encourage more decision justifications than past research suggests is typical. Thus, we propose an initial research question:

RQ1: What percentage of ballots will make use of the reason-for-decision space to justify rank?

Closely related to this question is the use of multiple reasons to justify decisions. None of the existing research appears to look at the number of separate reasons given for a rank, which we refer to as the complexity of the justification.¹ We posit a fundamental difference between ballots providing a single reason for decision and those providing multiple justifications. Thus, we ask:

RQ2: To what extent do ballots contain complex reasons for rank?

Justification Themes

The nature of justification reasons is of concern in the forensic context. Past research has coded comments along several dimensions. Olson and Wells (1988) coded reasons into four categories: rules, delivery, content, and judge/audience interaction. Bartanen (1990) used criteria suggested by the Second National Developmental Conference on Individual Events: thesis, links, support, organization, language, delivery, and other. Burnett and

Cronn-Mills (1994) used from eight to thirteen different themes depending on the forensic event. Carey and Rodier (1987) found that interpretation event ballot comments included "being overtime" as a factor. Bartanen (1990) and Burnett and Cronn-Mills (1994) also noted specifically that useless/summary comments (e.g., nice job, thanks for sharing, tough round) were often provided as reasons, even though they give little justification. Clearly, little research exists on what categories best capture the nature of decision justifications or how these categories compare to one another. Thus, we pose a third set of research questions:

RQ3a: What themes best characterize forensic decision justifications?

RQ3b: How do those themes compare to one another in terms of frequency of use?

Comparison to Others

Another means by which a decision maker may attempt to justify a decision is by explicit comparison to other contestants. Burnett and Cronn-Mills (1994, p. 7) concluded that comparisons provided the "clearest reasons." Carey and Rodier (1987) state that comparisons to others were one of the main types of reasons offered for rankings. Olson (1992, p. 7) has argued that "being directly compared to the other contestants they observe in their round can be a valuable learning experience." We believe the use of comparative remarks as a means of helping to justify a decision is interesting. Furthermore, comparative statements, though not all that common on ballots in general, may be more frequently used as a reason for decision. Thus, we pose a fourth research question:

RQ4: To what extent are decision justifications comparative in nature?

Judge Differences

Although varied types of judges appear to differ in their judging preferences (see Nicolai, 1987), forensic research has not really examined how different judge types compare on reasons used to justify decisions. Bartanen (1990) did find that directors of

forensics were best at providing reasons for decisions. Clearly, however, more research is needed comparing various types of judges and the nature of the justifications they employ. Thus, we ask:

RQ5: To what extent do use, valence, comparativeness, and complexity of justification themes vary by judge type?

Rank

Interestingly, few researchers have considered how decision justifications might compare to the actual rank given, though recent research has called for such information (Burnett & Cronn-Mills, 1994). We would expect that a first ranking would include more positive justifications whereas decreasing ranks would be associated with more negative comments. However, the exact nature of this relationship is unknown; also, no evidence exists as to how rank compares to specific justification themes, use of reasons, and justification complexity. Thus, we offer a sixth research question: RQ6: To what extent do use, valence, comparativeness, and complexity of justification themes vary by rank?

Justification Valence

Some of the forensic studies on decision justifications have also considered valence of the reason (Carey & Rodier, 1987; Olson & Wells, 1988). These studies found greater use of negative comments than positive comments on ballots. Carey and Rodier report 48 percent negative comments. They suggest, however, judges may believe they have justified a decision simply by including negative comments. Also, any rank below a first may well include negative reasons. Given the limited data for comparison, we ask a seventh question:

RQ7: To what extent are decision justifications positive, negative, or neutral?

Event Differences

As a final area of research, we consider variations among

forensic events. Olson and Wells (1988) found content issues were more often associated with the public address and limited-prep events whereas delivery comments were most common for the interpretation events. Burnett and Cronn-Mills (1994) found that delivery was the most common reason given for all event types. Bartanen's (1990) research on decision justifications also notes distinctions between events, but her use of different events and justification themes makes direct comparison to our research difficult. Bartanen does observe that justifications based on analysis are used more with extemporaneous speaking and communication analysis, whereas physical and vocal delivery are more often associated with interpretation events. Thus, we pose one final research question:

RQ8: Which decision justification themes will be most associated with different events?

In general, rankings in oral interpretation events are most difficult to justify due to the lack of clear standards on what makes a quality interpretation (Mills, 1990; Olson & Wells, 1988). Conversely, the public address and limited-prep events have more clearly established and recognizable criteria upon which they may be evaluated; subsequently, justification becomes easier. Olson and Wells found more justifications for public address events than for interpretation events. If justifications for public address and limited-prep events are easier and more frequent, we might also expect more complex justifications. We posit two hypotheses:
H1: Public address and limited-prep ballots contain decision justifications more often than do interpretation event ballots.
H2: Public address and limited-prep ballots contain more complex decision justifications than do interpretation event ballots.

METHODS

The hypotheses and research questions were examined by gathering data from ballots at the 1992 Arizona State University Forensic Fiesta Invitational Tournament. Approximately two dozen teams, primarily from the southwest but from as far away as Wisconsin, participated. Since 1987 ballots at this tournament have featured a special section labeled "reason for decision" on the lower

portion of each ballot. Additionally, judges at the tournament received written instructions from the tournament director directing their attention to the reason-for-decision section and explaining the importance of providing contestants with a rationale as to why they received the rank they were awarded. The instructions also informed judges that written comments would be analyzed after the tournament.²

Procedures

Ballots from three preliminary rounds for eleven of the AFA-NIET individual events were collected for a total of 989 ballots. The reasons for decision offered on ballots were then identified. Comments were identified as reasons for decision when located in the reason-for-decision section of the ballot and when clearly not a continuation of the previous comments. Comments located elsewhere on the ballot, but labeled specifically by the judge as "reason for decision" were also included for analysis. Cases where the judge indicated the general comments on the ballot were the reason for decision—such as when the judge indicated "see above"—were not included. Our purpose was to include only those comments competitors would clearly perceive as reasons for decision.

After the reasons for decision were identified, the comments were broken down into individual reasons. A single reason consisted of the smallest thought unit possible with no judgment made as to the quality of an individual reason. Additionally, if a reason was a restatement it was still considered. We conducted a content analysis of the 2075 individual units using the grounded approach outlined by Glasser and Strauss (1967). In general, grounded theory allows themes/categories to emerge from the data, rather than beginning with apriori categories. Both authors reviewed ballots and identified themes in the data³. Consistent with a grounded approach, themes were collected until a point of theoretical saturation was reached. Themes were compared to derive a common set of justification types. The following categories emerged from the analysis:

Delivery included comments directed at either the physical

or vocal presentation during the performance; this category also included comments about the use of visual aids (but not their content) and notes. *Organization* concerned comments about the structure or arrangement of a presentation; this category also included such things as signposting, use of summarization, and transitions. *Content* focused on the speaker's use of or failure to include supporting material or analysis, including quoted material, evidence, visual aid content (but not their manner of presentation), explanation, reasoning, and humor. *Rules* comments were aimed at whether or not the performance met the event rules; rules were primarily about time but also included comments about the appropriateness of the material for the event in which it was entered. *Topic* included comments about the merits of the material being presented; comments about originality, literary merit, relevance, appropriateness for the performer, or that the material was overdone were part of this category. *Characterization* encompassed comments about visualization, character development, and character differentiation. *General* comments were not about a specific aspect of the piece, but were about the overall performance; "excellent" and "tough round" are sample comments from this category. In addition to the above seven categories, reasons were also coded for valence (positive, negative, or neutral) and comparativeness (did or did not directly compare the performer being evaluated to some other performer). Thus, each comment received three codes: one for valence, one for comparativeness, and one for content. Justification complexity was operationalized as the number of reasons on a ballot.

Both authors initially coded common ballots and then compared differences. After coding 40 ballots, an intercoder reliability between the two coders of 89.6 percent was calculated using Scott's Pi (1950). This level of reliability is comparable to the reliabilities achieved by Olson and Wells (1988), Bartanen (1990), and Burnett and Cronn-Mills (1994). Finally, demographic information recorded for each ballot included event (11 different events), rank (1-5), and judge (AFA District 9, outside AFA District 9, or hired).

Analysis

Research questions were answered predominantly through the use of descriptive frequency counts; additionally, chi-square and/or ANOVA were used to test for statistical differences on Research Questions 5 and 6. Hypotheses 1 and 2 utilized chi-square and ANOVA, respectively. Significance levels for all difference tests were set at $p \leq .01$ to adjust for the large sample and several tests.

RESULTS

Research Question 1 explored whether or not judges justified decisions. Of the 989 ballots, 638 (65%) justified decisions. Research Question 2 asked about the complexity of justifications. More ballots ($n = 159$) contained three reasons than any other number of justifications (see Table 1).

The third set of research questions asked about decision justification themes and how they compare to one another in terms of frequency of use. As noted in the methods section, seven justification themes emerged: delivery, organization, content, rules, topic, characterization, and general. The delivery, content, and general categories were the most prominent, comprising 24, 25, and 26 percent of the comments, respectively (see Tables 2 and 3). None of the remaining four categories accounted for more than 8 percent of the total justifications. Research Question 4 explored the comparative nature of decision justifications. Only 428 of the 2075 (21%) justifications were comparative (see Table 4).

Research Question 5 asked about a number of judge differences regarding decision justifications. A chi-square revealed differences between the three judge types on use vs. non-use of justifications [$X^2(3, N = 989) = 22.06, p < .001$]. Although only 54 percent of non-district judges offered justifications, 69 percent of in-district and 70 percent of hired judges gave reasons. When contrasting judges on comparative justifications, individual chi-squares revealed differences between in-district and non-district judges [$X^2(1, N = 1380) = 55.62, p < .001$] and between in-

district and hired judges [$X^2(1, N = 1513) = 80.61, p < .001$]. In-district judges used comparative justifications 32 percent of the time, whereas non-district and hired judges used them 14 and 12 percent, respectively.

Individual chi-squares revealed differences between all pairs of judge types on justification valence. In-district judges used more positive reasons than did non-district judges [$X^2(1, N = 1295) = 7.17, p < .01$] but fewer positive reasons than did hired judges [$X^2(1, N = 1410) = 7.02, p < .01$], who actually used more positive than negative justifications. Hired judges also used significantly more positive reasons than did non-district judges [$X^2(1, N = 1163) = 24.64, p < .001$]. Similarly, an ANOVA revealed that judges differed on justification complexity [$F(2, 981) = 11.67, p < .001$] with in-district, non-district, and hired judges averaging 2.11, 1.71, and 2.52 justifications per ballot, respectively.

Research Question 6 explored differences on ranks. Chi-squares revealed no difference between ranks on either use/non-use of reasons or comparativeness of justifications. An ANOVA also indicated that there was no difference among the ranks on justification complexity [$F(4, 984) = 1.42, g = .225$]. However, rank and justification valence were related quite strongly. Number one ranks include 82 percent positive reasons and number two ranks include 52 percent positive justification. Third, fourth, and fifth place ranks drop to 31, 28, and 18 percent positive reasons, respectively (see Table 5). Neutral comments were fairly stable across all ranks, although the middle positions did have higher percentages (9%, 10% and 6%) than did the two extreme rankings (3% and 5%).

Research Question 7 asked about the valence of decision justifications. Negative comments occur slightly more than positive comments, both of which occur more than neutral comments (Table 4). Research Question 8 asked about the justification themes in relation to different events. Table 2 indicates delivery comments were more frequent with interpretation events than with public address events, which were more centered on content. Limited-prep events were even more associated with content reasons than were the public address events; but delivery reasons were also common with the limited-prep events. General comments were rare for

limited-prep events, but among the most frequent reasons for the other two event types.

Hypothesis 1 directly compared event types on use of decision justifications. A chi-square revealed that reasons were given more frequently for the public address and limited-prep events (70%) than for the interpretation events (58%) [$X^2(2, N = 989) = 16.44, p < .001$]. Hypothesis 2 compared event types on justification complexity. An ANOVA indicated public address and limited-prep event (mean=2.3) reasons are significantly more complex than interpretation event (mean =1.9) reasons [$F(1, 959) = 8.49, E < .005$].

CONCLUSIONS

We conclude the paper by first discussing the findings in greater detail. Finally, we explore implications of the current research for future efforts in this area.

Discussion

One of the primary observations we make concerns the large number of decision justifications. Judges do seem willing to provide justifications in the reason-for-decision space, as indicated by the fact that nearly two-thirds of the ballots contained justified decisions. Providing the space and encouraging judges to use it appears to have resulted in much greater compliance than in any of the other studies reviewed in this paper; however, we also recognize that the information given to judges about the nature of the research may have prompted some to complete the reason-for-decision section when they may not have done so otherwise. Most of the justifications are, however, fairly simple, averaging only 2.09 reasons per ballot. Additionally, the largest single justification theme is the general category, which may not include very satisfying justifications (e.g., "good job," "tough round").

We used a grounded approach to inductively derive the justification categories due to the fact that existing schemes are geared more toward ballot comments in general. Because justifications may differ somewhat, we allowed the data to suggest

the themes. Seven distinct justification categories emerged. Although some (e.g., characterization) are relevant to only certain events, this scheme should be useful in future efforts directed at forensic decision justifications. Except for the large general category, content and delivery themes were the most common type of justification. When broken down even more specifically by event, the use of various themes provides important information about the criteria upon which judges may base their ranking. Thus, the data may be useful to students and coaches seeking to improve performance.

At first glance, the descriptive statistics suggest that forensic decision justifications are not overly comparative in nature. However, we believe 21 percent may well be higher than the average for ballot comments in general. We also believe comparative remarks are a step in the right direction to the extent they give a basis for concrete comparison. Even if competitors are cross-entered in a pattern, chances are they have seen other speakers before and can make some degree of comparison.

In examining judge differences, we are drawn to the finding that in-district and hired judges are significantly more likely to justify a decision than are non-district judges. Similarly, the former two judge types use more complex reasons than do non-district critics. We believe familiarity with the reason-for-decision ballot may explain the difference between in-district and non-district judges. AFA District 9 has several tournaments that utilize a ballot containing a reason-for-decision space. The in-district judges at this tournament compete within the district regularly and are accustomed to such a ballot feature, which may explain their greater utilization of the space. Because the reason-for-decision movement has been directed largely by the efforts of Olson (1992; Olson & Wells, 1988), an influential forensic educator in this district, there is a greater level of familiarity among most in-district judges, or at least a greater familiarity than exists with non-district critics. This familiarity may also help explain in-district judges' tendency to be more comparative as well.

A different explanation seems likely for the hired judges. Although they may be familiar with the ballot format if they have judged at this tournament in past years, hired judges are more likely

to read judge instructions and follow ballot suggestions. Thus, they are more likely to comply with the request to complete the reason-for-decision section. Experienced non-district judges may not pay as much attention to judge directions and ballot features, and instead use established techniques for decision making and ballot completion.

Differences between in-district and non-district judges on justification valence do focus our attention. Familiarity could be an explanation; however, the valence differences may suggest essentially different district norms. Justification studies confined to one geographic region or district are limited in their generalizability to the larger forensic context. We recognize this sampling issue as a limitation of the research reported here.

The findings associated with rank are not surprising, but they are important. Judges do seem to make positive justifications for high (first and second) ranks and negative justifications for low ranks. This suggests that situations where competitors' receive a rank of 5 with all positive reasons on the ballot are truly the exception. Somewhat less encouraging are the slightly larger number of neutral justifications for the middle ranks (2-4). Since neutral justifications are more difficult to interpret, such comments are less useful. The middle of the panel is frequently the most difficult to prioritize, which may lead to less precise and more neutral justifications. Also, the justifications for the bottom three ranks are generally focused on the content and delivery areas as needing the most work; conversely, the top two ranks are more likely to get general (i.e., less useful) reasons for their ranks.

Although much of the literature suggests the predominance of negative comments, we did not find decision justifications to be excessively negative. Only 53 percent were coded as negative. Many judges began their justifications with a positive remark regardless of other factors. By doing so, justifications can be constructive for the competitor, without necessarily being too critical.

Several interesting patterns emerge in the specific event types. Some clear differences between event types become apparent when considering the two most frequent justification themes for each event (see Table 2). The interpretation event justifications are

predominantly composed of delivery or general reasons. The public address event reasons are based on content or general reasons. Limited-prep event justifications are delivery and content oriented. The more analytical events (e.g., extemporaneous, impromptu, communication analysis) are justified by analysis/content reasons.

General reasons are rare in limited-prep events and are most common in the interpretation events. The use of general reasons seems related to the literature suggesting fewer clearly established standards for interpretation events. When criteria are less apparent or not clearly understood, reasons may not be given or less complex reasons may be used. If criteria are clear, as they appear to be for the public address and limited-prep events, it becomes more possible to explain (i.e., justify) one's reason for a decision.

Implications

We note several implications of this research for further work in this area. The provision of space on the ballot for reasons for decision seems to encourage and facilitate judges in providing contestants with justification for the rank awarded. We support providing space for this feature on the ballot. Although some have argued that time constraints may be a problem, our results suggest that if a reason section is provided and judges are encouraged to use it then most judges will allocate time for this task.

The differences between in-district and non-district judges indicates the need to employ a wider and more diverse sample for this and other types of forensic research to help make the results useful to more than a regional forensic community and to communication scholars in general. Additionally, this research needs to build a theoretical explanation for these variations in decision making and test these explanations beyond simple descriptions of reasons and the context in which they were given. The decision justification research in forensics might benefit from outside research on ordering effects, decision consistency, number of alternatives considered, and voluntary versus involuntary justification.

Finally, research that directly measures the impact of decision justifications on the decision making process in competitive

forensics is needed. As we noted earlier, reasons for decision not only justify a rank to the competitor, but may also improve the manner in which the judge's decision is made. To the extent that both justification and improved decision making are admirable goals of the forensic community, research on decision justification has much to offer.

ENDNOTES

¹ We use complexity to describe the number of different reasons given. Although we recognize that quantity is only one aspect of complexity, we believe that the way we have unitized and coded the reasons allows quantity of coded units to be an acceptable representation of complexity.

² Although it is possible that the ballot directions may have biased the sample by encouraging decision justifications, this should not affect the questions and hypotheses comparing various subgroups within the sample. The directions may, however, reduce generalizability to situations where such instructions are not routinely provided. Nevertheless, we feel this sample was particularly well-suited to the goals of the study.

³ We used this procedure rather than an existing category scheme for two reasons. First, other classifications are based on ballot comments in general, making them potentially unsuited for categorizing justifications. Secondly, allowing the themes to emerge from the justifications themselves helps provide a scheme that fits better with the justifications as written by critics.

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TABLES

Table 1: *Justification Complexity*

Complexity (No. of Reasons)	No. of Ballots
0	351
1	79
2	150
3	159
4	124
5	74
6	28
7	14
8	7
9	0
10	2
11	1
TOTAL	989

Table 2: Frequency of Justification Themes by Event
Justification Theme

	Del.	Org.	Cont.	Rule	Topic	Char.	Gen.
Ext %	76	28	124	21	4	0	53
	25	9	41	7	1	0	17
Imp %	70	46	165	9	11	0	51
	20	13	47	3	3	0	14
Inf %	35	6	50	3	30	0	58
	19	3	27	2	16	0	32
Per %	41	6	58	4	34	0	44
	22	3	31	2	18	0	24
CA %	18	5	38	2	13	0	25
	18	5	38	2	13	0	25
ADS %	26	9	44	2	11	0	35
	20	7	35	2	9	0	28
POI %	27	1	3	11	3	14	28
	31	1	3	13	3	16	32
Pro %	68	2	10	7	18	58	72
	30	1	4	3	8	25	31
Poe %	60	6	12	8	27	30	84
	26	3	5	4	12	13	37
Dra %	53	3	6	7	11	24	51
	34	2	4	5	7	15	33
Duo %	26	6	3	1	9	19	24
	30	7	3	1	10	22	27
TOTAL	502	118	521	79	172	147	536
%	24	6	25	4	8	7	26

Table 3: Frequency of Justification Themes by Rank and Judge

	Justification Theme						
	Del.	Org.	Cont.	Rule	Topic	Char.	Gen.
Rank 1	86	27	102	6	31	17	115
%	22	7	27	2	8	4	30
Rank 2	93	14	89	9	27	26	124
%	24	4	23	2	7	7	32
Rank 3	105	26	106	13	38	29	99
%	25	6	25	3	9	7	24
Rank 4	96	18	105	19	40	34	105
%	23	4	25	5	10	8	25
Rank 5	120	32	117	32	36	41	93
%	25	7	25	7	8	9	20
Judge 1	154	37	264	26	81	40	221
%	19	4	32	3	10	5	27
Judge 2	159	35	135	21	42	46	119
%	29	6	24	4	8	8	21
Judge 3	185	46	122	32	48	61	196
%	27	7	18	5	7	9	28
TOTAL %	502	118	521	79	172	147	536
	24	6	25	4	8	7	26

Note . Judge 1 = In District 9. Judge 2=Outside District 9. Judge 3=Hired.

Table 4: *Frequency of Ballots, Reasons, Valence and Comparativeness by Event*

	No. of Ballots	---Valence---			-Comparison-		
		Just.	Pos.	Neg.	Neut.	Yes	No
Ext %	108	306	127	170	9	64	242
	11	15	42	56	3	21	79
Imp %	168	352	130	206	16	91	261
	18	17	37	59	5	26	74
Inf %	78	182	75	96	11	37	145
	8	9	41	53	6	20	80
Per %	100	187	79	95	13	40	147
	10	9	42	51	7	21	49
CA %	54	101	41	52	8	13	88
	6	5	41	51	8	13	87
ADS %	39	127	70	48	9	25	102
	4	6	55	38	7	20	80
POI %	62	87	46	38	3	9	78
	6	4	53	44	3	10	90
Pro %	110	235	102	124	9	37	198
	11	11	43	53	4	16	84
Poe %	115	227	74	122	31	44	183
	12	11	33	54	14	19	81
Dra %	78	155	65	73	17	30	125
	8	7	42	47	11	19	81
Duo %	47	88	23	56	9	33	55
	5	4	26	67	10	37	63
TOTAL	989	2075	845	1094	136	428	1647
%	100	100	41	53	7	21	79

Table 5: *Frequency of Ballots, Reasons, Valence and Comparativeness by Rank and Judge*

		-----Valence-----				-Comparison-	
	No. of Ballots	Just	Pos.	Neg.	Neut.	Yes	No
Rank 1	186	384	313	60	11	75	309
%	19	19	82	16	3	20	80
Rank 2	188	382	197	150	35	119	263
%	19	18	52	39	9	31	69
Rank 3	183	416	131	244	41	93	323
%	19	20	31	59	10	22	78
Rank 4	182	417	116	275	26	66	351
%	18	20	28	66	6	16	84
Rank 5	249	471	86	362	23	75	396
%	25	23	18	77	5	16	84
Judge 1	388	823	334	437	52	262	561
%	39	40	41	53	6	32	68
Judge 2	321	557	188	336	33	79	478
%	33	27	34	60	6	14	86
Judge 3	277	690	322	317	51	85	605
%	28	33	47	46	7	12	88
TOTAL %	989	2075	845	1094	136	428	1647
	100	100	41	53	7	21	79

Note. Judge 1=In District 9. Judge 2=Outside District 9. Judge 3=Hired.

A Critique of Source Citations in Forensic Speeches

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Every competitive activity probably develops some peculiar practices that are so common they become conventions that are virtually mandatory to succeed in the activity. Intercollegiate forensics is no exception. Some conventions are a result of the application of communication theory and research to competitive forensics and have sound justification for their use. Some conventions, however, become established as competitors model themselves upon successful performances or attempt to adjust to judges' preferences. Regardless of their origins, practices that become an expected part of forensics should be examined periodically to determine if they promote sound rhetorical practices that should be continued, or are unnecessary trappings of the competitive environment that should be discouraged. A current practice, seen at the highest levels of prepared public speaking events, is the use of detailed dating the first time any source is cited. Detailed dating is saying the entire month, date, and year for sources, such as newspapers, popular magazines, scholarly periodicals, televised news magazines, and television talk shows. Detailed dating is often presented as, "*Newsweek*, October 9, 1995, reports" or "Richard Shapiro, executive director of the Congressional Management Foundation, was quoted in *National Journal*, September twenty-third, 1995." The practice of using detailed dates in source citations has arisen in competition with little apparent consideration of its rhetorical or educational value, so it is time to consider if such detailed dating is a practice that forensic educators should promote.

As a conventional practice required for competitive success, detailed dating is both unjustified by rhetorical principles and creates problems in the educational mission of forensics. Certainly general dates should continue to be included in source citations, but the conventional practice in forensic speeches should be to cite the general time when the material was published. General dating would take the form of "two years ago the Center for Disease Control stated," "last December President Clinton vowed," or "according to *Time* magazine in April 1994." In addition, when particular circumstances call for detailed dates, the speaker should make the reason for the detail clear to the audience.

LACK OF RHETORICAL JUSTIFICATION

The subject of source citations has been given little attention in communication scholarship. "Citations," "source citations," and "introducing evidence" are not even listed as key words in *Index to Journals in Communication Studies Through 1985* (Matlon). "Citations" was added as a key word in the 1990 edition, but none of the indexed articles concerned source citations in public speaking. J. Michael Sproule summarizes research concerning the rhetorical value of source citations:

Research bears out what public speakers know by intuition: listeners are quite sensitive to how specific a source citation is. In one experiment, speakers used either vague or detailed citations. When using vague source documentation, the speakers would describe their remarks as being based upon material obtained from "a study" or "in the newspaper." When citing evidence more precisely, the speakers mentioned exact names and affiliations. Results showed that listeners rated speakers and speech content significantly more favorably when source documentation was concrete. (189-190)

Although Sproule's summary explains the desirability of specificity in source citations, it is important to note the "detailed citations" of the research he mentions include the source's "exact names and affiliations," not the entire date of publication.

Sixteen standard public speaking texts were examined to ascertain what is commonly suggested for documenting sources. Citing sources is usually not listed in the index or table of contents of public speaking texts. Although suggestions for introducing evidence by citing sources is found in several texts (Barrett 156; Beebe & Beebe 127; Gamble & Gamble 143; Ehninger, Gronbeck & Monroe 104; Lucas 330-332; Nelson & Pearson 114-116; Samovar & Mills 109 and 112; Sproule 189-191; Wilson, Arnold & Wertheimer 173-174; Wolvin, Berko & Wolvin 134; Verderber 103; Zeuschner 230) many give no apparent suggestions for citing sources (Osborn & Osborn; Peterson, Stephan & White; Ross; Taylor, Meyer, Rosegrant, & Samples).

Public speaking texts that do give advice on how to cite sources usually recommend something similar to Gamble and Gamble's suggestions: "If you are citing a speech or article, you might say: 'In his January speech on economic indicators, President Bill Clinton told a Washington audience . . . ' or, 'According to the *World Almanac* last year . . .'" (143). Only one of the texts examined suggests providing detailed dates (Samovar & Mills, 109, 112). Most texts do have examples of evidence in sample speeches. When evidence is introduced in those examples, it very rarely is accompanied by anything more than a general indication of its recency, and it often does not even include that much information, unless the example is a forensic speech. Clearly, the discipline of speech communication does not believe detailed dating is a necessary part of source citations.

Although one may with good reasons include source citations when presenting evidence in any speech, whether in forensic competition or not, one's detailing the exact publication or broadcast dates of evidence used in a speech is not justified by the usual reasons given for citing sources. One reason to cite sources is to

avoid plagiarism, which is the act of presenting another's words or ideas as one's own. Plagiarism can be avoided by attributing the information to the original source with a source citation. Such an attribution is not aided with a detailed date of publication because the attribution is to an author, a group of authors, or a publication, not to a date. Once the name of the source is presented one might want to provide more information, such as the date, in the citation, but none of the additional information is needed to avoid plagiarism charges. Avoiding plagiarism is a good reason to cite sources, but it is not a justification for presenting detailed dates in those citations.

A second reason to include source citations in any speech is to enhance the speaker's credibility. John C. Reinard writes:

It may be part of the Western cultural tradition for people to prove their worthiness to speak by backing up what they say. Showing that we have done our homework by having clear evidence is almost expected by receivers. We prefer listening to advocates who are in command of the facts. In fact, one unwritten rule of communication may be that people want arguers to know what they are talking about. (104)

Specific names of characteristics associated with speaker credibility vary, but research indicates three general components to credibility: expertise, trustworthiness, and dynamism (Bettinghaus and Cody 125, Simons 130). Citing sources adds to the expertise component, which includes perceived knowledge of the subject, by showing the speaker is familiar with the subject. As Rudolph Verderber says, "efforts to include sources not only help the audience evaluate the content but also add to your credibility. In addition, citing sources will give concrete evidence of the depth of your research" (103). However, no evidence warrants the claim that speakers are perceived as more knowledgeable because specific dates are presented in source citations.

Citing sources potentially adds to the image of trustworthiness by providing details that allow listeners to verify

information in a speech. Listeners might consider speakers who include detailed dates more honest because the listeners recognize that they could, if they wanted, go to the exact sources and check what was said. The benefit is mitigated because few listeners are likely to make that connection and even fewer—in or out of forensics—are able to remember the full citations they hear in a well documented speech. Moreover, as Robert L. Frank's research indicates, detailed dates are not needed to check the original sources; usually all that is needed is "the title of a book and the name of an author or simply the name of a journal and the year it was published" (104).

A third reason to cite sources in speeches is to provide backing for the evidence by indicating the expertise of the source of that evidence. John C. Reinard's discussion of the role of evidence in advocacy, which summarizes the research findings of several studies, explains how the use of high quality evidence, with source citations that emphasize the source's qualifications, is more persuasive than evidence without the source's qualifications or without citations at all (103-117). The credentials of the source, however, have nothing to do with the exact date the information was published or when the interview was broadcast. The general date may affect those credentials, because it does usually make a difference if the words were said in 1990 or 1993, but in most cases it does not make any difference if they were published in April, May, or June and probably even less difference if they were published on a given day of a month.

A fourth reason to include source citations is to provide information that will help critical thinkers in the audience to determine the quality of the evidence and its suitability for the arguments the speakers make. Typical tests of evidence are known by many names, and include recency, context, reliability, expertise, objectivity, internal and external consistency, and relevance, among others (Freeley, 127-134; Warnick and Inch, 79-82; Ziegelmüller, Kay, and Dause 96-99). Giving detailed dates in source citations provides very little help for critical thinkers to evaluate the worth of

evidence. The only test relevant to the use of dates in source citations is the test of recency, and that test is rarely applicable to the kind of detailed dating done in forensic speeches. The year something was said is often relevant to testing the worth of the evidence. The month it was said is sometimes relevant, but it often does not really matter, especially if the evidence uses information that does not change rapidly. Although an exact date of the month is occasionally relevant, those instances are rare, and are the only times when speakers should use detailed dating.

A fifth reason for citing sources is to meet the constraints of the particular rhetorical situation by presenting information the audience expects. In other words, competitors cite detailed dates because their judges expect them to cite detailed dates and those judges make their expectations known on ballots. Those expectations do not transfer outside the contest situation, though, because other audiences do not expect to hear detailed dates throughout speeches. Without a theoretical basis for teaching students to provide the month, date, and year with each initial source citation, forensic judges should not expect detailed dates in source citations, for such a practice is not justified. Rather than teaching students to include detailed dating in their citations, we should teach judges such a practice is an unnecessary convention that, in most cases, should not result in higher rankings or ratings.

EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS WITH DETAILED DATING

The practice of detailed dating is educationally unsound because it teaches students to act in a way that not only has no real benefit, but has the potential to weaken their speeches if practiced outside the tournament context. Forensic educators try to teach students to develop rhetorical habits and skills they can use in places other than in front of a judge and a few people in college classrooms on weekends. Any convention that subverts that purpose ought to be changed.

Some judges and competitors may argue that rewarding

detailed citations with higher rankings, which encourages the practice, is justified because remembering and presenting several detailed dates is more difficult than using more general dates. Such an argument subverts the educational value of forensics by altering the purpose of rhetoric, thus changing the judging emphasis from what communicates best to what is most difficult for the performer to do. Awarding higher rankings to speakers because their source citations are difficult to remember or to present is unacceptable unless the forensic community abandons the educational goal to help "students to understand and communicate various forms of argument more effectively" (McBath 11). Surely the purpose of forensics is not to teach students to convince the audience that their speeches are harder to present than other speeches.

Another problem associated with detailed dating is the damage it does to the sentence structure of the speech. Too often speakers eliminate connecting words and insert the date as if it were a footnote, resulting in something like "According to *Newsweek*—April 10th, 1993—" instead of "According to the April 10th, 1993 edition of *Newsweek*." Many speakers have difficulty incorporating the entire date into the structure of the sentence, which leads to awkward wording that apparently is overlooked by judges. Since part of the justification for forensics is to teach students to excel in their use of language, any convention that diminishes that excellence diminishes the value of the activity. Certainly the problem with sentence structure is not inherent to the use of detailed dates and competitors could reword citations to make them better, but the problem occurs with disquieting frequency even in the final rounds of national championship tournaments.

In addition to poor sentence structure, including detailed dates in footnote form several times during a speech becomes repetitive and uninteresting, which is compounded when six speakers in a round do it round after round, tournament after tournament. Although not inherent to the use of detailed dating, since speakers could discover more original ways to include dates by varying the way they are introduced, the current practice encourages competitors

to use almost identical, awkward, and choppy language in forensic speeches.

The most significant problem associated with detailed dating is the effect the practice can be expected to have on audience members. Detailed dating is both distracting and a source of informational overload. Detailed dates are distracting because the audience has to decide quickly how to process the precise information, but is given no cues to help them. Thus, if seriously attending the speech, the audience must adjust its attention from listening for general concepts to listening for precise information, even if the speaker does not intend for the audience to retain the precise information. Then the audience has to discern why the speaker thought the exact date was important enough to remember and to include in the speech. Listeners who were paying enough attention to notice the detailed dates might infer that since the exact dates kept recurring in the speech, some connection must exist. Seldom is that connection articulated, so the audience must supply the connection while hearing the speech for the first time. The listeners may wonder if there is a chronological progression, if one authority's research updated another's, or if they were supposed to remember the exact date of other evidence cited two minutes earlier. Any listener who does try to interpret the importance of detailed dates cannot easily attend to other information and may miss more important parts of the speech.

Unlike the rest of source citations, which satisfy the audience's need to know the qualifications of the source of information, when a competitor presents the detailed date it does not help the audience interpret information and often hinders interpretation. A common suggestion in public speaking texts is to avoid verbal clutter because it interferes with understanding. The common use of detailed dates in source citations is one form of verbal clutter.

Critics may claim that detailed dates do not really interfere with the reception of information, as audiences do not pay attention to detailed dates in citations. Those critics might be right. If so,

their argument denies the value of using detailed dating in speeches in the first place.

SUGGESTIONS

As unnecessary and disruptive detailed dating in citations arose over a period of time through competition, the practice will only be eliminated over time through coaching and competition. Changing the convention of using detailed dates in forensic speeches will be difficult to accomplish since the practice is well accepted. Many coaches and judges do not read journals and may not consider changing their expectations because it does not occur to them. Many influential critics are hired judges with no other connection to communication scholarship than their experience as competitors and judges. They were told to use detailed dates as competitors, accepted the advice, and perpetuate that expectation when they judge. Even so, the forensic community can take some steps to change the convention.

The first and most important step is to coach students to avoid overloading the audience with detailed dates during source citations. Such coaching should not be too difficult with new students, since beginners usually need to be coached to do more with their citations than they would do on their own. The more experienced students may be more difficult, for they have seen successful competitors use detailed dates in their citations and may have received judges' comments calling for them to cite the exact date of a magazine from which their information came. Coaches can teach both the experienced and inexperienced students to use general methods of dating sources, and to heed Harold Barrett's advice to "be brief in citing a source. Give just enough information to satisfy essential needs" (156).

Presenting dates for sources is analogous to presenting statistics in a speech, and the same sort of advice suggested for presenting statistics applies. As Stephen Lucas says, "Unless there is an important reason to give exact numbers, you should round off

most statistics" (131). Rudolph Verderber advises that "Although statistics may be an excellent way to present a great deal of material quickly, be careful not to overuse them. A few pertinent numbers are far more effective than a battery of statistics" (96). Transferring that advice to the use of dates in source citations means the dates should be given as "last July," or "two weeks ago," or "in December 1990, *Time* magazine reported," or similar phraseology.

Undoubtedly, a speaker's citing the entire date helps to substantiate the point the speaker wants to make, and coaches should teach their students that detailed dating is a choice to save for occasions when such precision is actually necessary to interpret the information. On those occasions, the speaker should also make the significance of the exact dates clear for the audience. For example, if a public figure made a statement and retracted it two days later, it may be both necessary and effective to emphasize the exact dates, which would be done in the context of demonstrating a rapid change in the official's position. If the evidence is expert testimony regarding the meaning of terms used in the speech, however, the entire date of the article is probably not needed. The exact way the dates are included in citations should be governed by the requirements of the particular case, rather than by a tiresome formula.

In addition, coaches should teach students to integrate detailed dates smoothly into their sentence structure, and to devise a variety of ways to present the citations. Students can apply the same grammatical skill and level of imagination to introducing sources, which they employ to including puns in their previews, in order to avoid awkward or redundant wording.

The second step towards improvement is in the hands of judges. Judges should not place a competitive premium on the use of specific dates in source citations. Given that detailed dating can interrupt the interpretation of information, critics should let competitors know explicitly on their ballots when such detail is unnecessary, irrelevant, or ill-advised. Conversely, judges should use ballots to inform competitors when they appropriately are using

general dating methods. Since most critics would agree that students' behaviors are often based on the responses they get from judges, comments from judges can be powerful tools for shaping students' behaviors.

The suggestion to use more detailed dating is not a suggestion for students either to eliminate dates entirely or to avoid calling attention to their up-to-date research that is valued by many forensic critics. In forensics and other contexts, speakers could beneficially indicate recent evidence by saying "Yesterday, the New York Times reported." This kind of citation demonstrates that the speaker is keeping up on the issue, it is more concise, it easily fits the sentence structure, and it is easier to interpret than saying "The New York Times, January 13th, 1996, reported."

Finally, coaches who understand the need to make the change should communicate it to other coaches and judges. Whether the discussions are one-on-one, part of a coaching clinic, or part of a workshop to introduce new students to forensics, they should explain to other coaches that the inclusion of detailed dates does not necessarily improve speeches, that it can be confusing when used consistently, and that it will not result in higher rankings. These discussions will help reduce the impression that winning speeches require detailed dating. The use of detailed dates should be a rhetorical choice based on the requirements of the particular situation, not a practice required for every citation.

If judges need to check the dates of a competitor's sources, the forensic community could replace the practice of including detailed dates during the speech with the convention of having a written bibliography for judges who want it. Such a convention is similar to the requirement of having manuscripts available at national tournaments, but it could be extended to tournaments throughout the year. As with manuscripts, a written bibliography would not eliminate the need to include source citations as part of the speech, but it would eliminate the need to include all the details of the dates in an oral presentation. It would also have the advantages of allowing the judges more time to check the citations and to think

about them, as well as providing a better check throughout the year on the kind of evidence abuses found by Robert L. Frank.

Whether students present general or specific dates when citing sources may seem like a relatively minor concern to forensic coaches. But the practice is important when it is recognized as a part of the educational mission of forensics, for what is taught in this activity is meant to be used outside the activity. The educational value and justification for the continuance of forensics is predicated, at least in part, on the transferability of its skills to other communication situations (Dean; Preston; Williams, Carver, and Hart). Since using detailed dates in source citations is not justified by rhetorical theory or by the educational goals of the communication discipline, and since the practice diminishes the effectiveness of speeches, coaches and judges should do what they can to discourage the practice.

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Collegiate Forensic Outreach to High Schools: Supporting the Forensic Community

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The forensic community is a large, diverse, and fragmented collection of organizations, programs, and individuals. In collegiate speech and debate, for example, at least thirteen national organizations exist in addition to state forensic organizations and regional leagues.¹ Many of these groups host tournaments in order to identify participants as state, regional, or national champions.

The diversity in forensics is not the critical focus of this paper except for one inevitable outcome: The collegiate forensic community lacks effective ways to reach out to the high school speech and debate community. The 1974 National Developmental Conference on Forensics encouraged the expansion of forensics in elementary and high school settings.² Since then, developmental conferences and convention papers have reiterated the case for building links between the two communities. Despite this interest, the conditions today are much as Alfred C. Snider described them in 1994: "The reality is that there is a strict division between forensics at the high school and college level. Besides crossing paths at a convention or a coach moving from one level to the other, there is often little action, and very little interaction between students involved in high school forensics and students involved in college forensics."³

A reasonable response to this situation would be to call for national forensic organizations to establish high school outreach programs and to promote the activity on behalf of the entire forensic community. Some national organizations are pursuing this option. The Cross Examination Debate Association, for example, has begun efforts to connect with high school debate programs.⁴

Although the national organizations should encourage high school connections, individual forensic programs are the best ambassadors for collegiate forensics. If more individual forensic programs engaged in high school outreach efforts, both the high school and collegiate forensic communities would benefit and improve. The remainder of this paper will

discuss the motives for developing outreach efforts, describe some programming options to accomplishing outreach goals, and discuss implications for the practice of competitive speech and debate.

MOTIVATIONS FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMS

Forensic coaches are never idle. To add high school programming to an already busy teaching and coaching schedule requires justification. A well-run outreach program may be justified by the ways it can contribute to individual forensic programs. A commitment to high school outreach can serve collegiate programs in areas of service, recruitment, and fundraising.

When a new faculty member enters a college or university, one of the first issues raised are those of faculty performance. The inevitable categories of teaching, scholarship, and service are discussed as requirements for renewal of contracts, promotion, and tenure. For any faculty member, the category of service is a murky and difficult one to define. Service means many different things depending on the goals and expectations of the academic institution. Service might refer to faculty efforts in support of the institution itself or to the community at large.

For the forensic professional, service may be easy or difficult to fulfill. Many directors of forensics and coaches fulfill their institution's expectations wholly by performance of their job. The administrative duties of the Director of Forensics are often defined as service to students and the school. Coaching and travel are sometimes described as a service to students as well. For other forensic coaches, the extensive time and effort spent working with students is evaluated only as part of job performance, not as additional service to the university.

Many colleges and universities today maintain an orientation to service beyond the institution and into the community. This interest has many motivations. The most pragmatic is gaining public support for the institution. By serving local and state communities, higher education broadens its base of support.⁵ A reading of many college and university mission statements reveals this orientation to public service.⁶

Perhaps the most important task to perform concerning expectations is to define and categorize types of forensic service. A college or university faculty manual may have categories already

established to which forensic service could be applied. Categories of forensic service might include: administrative duties, professional forensic activities, forensic service within the institutional community, and forensics in off campus, public settings.⁷ A high school outreach program can go beyond the boundaries of the institution to make contributions to the larger community. This effort can enhance the value of forensic programs to the mission of the school. Tying forensic service by your program to the mission of your institution can extend its importance beyond the range of your home department and majors. Coaches should identify as carefully as possible the types and varieties of services they contribute for later use during budget or performance reviews.

A second motivation behind establishing high school outreach programs is to contribute to recruitment of future college competitors. Many high school students have little prior knowledge and even misconceptions about collegiate forensics before they join a team. Admissions departments rarely provide much detail about speech and debate to prospective students. The best way to draw high school students into a college program is to expose them to the idea of continuing forensics by contact with your own team members. Hosting tournaments, workshops, and summer institutes are ways to bring students to your campus and to introduce them to your programs.

A final motive behind many current programs' linking up with high schools has been fundraising. Although a benefit to individual programs, this motivation should not be the primary reason behind high school outreach. Most collegiate programs are constantly faced with financial problems and hosting activities for high schools appear an easy option. If outreach programming is not carefully planned, however, the short term benefits of fundraising may be outweighed by the longer term damage to the reputation of a forensic program.

OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

Any outreach effort needs to be assessed for its contribution to the program as well as its assistance to the forensic community at large. In the planning of outreach efforts, one can consider a number of programming options. These choices will be determined by the high school community and available resources.

Before instituting outreach programming, a forensic coach's first task is to make personal contacts with members of the high school speech and debate community. One's own students might provide a first opening. Contacting high school coaches might give access to other members of the community. High school forensics in many states is managed by state organizations that coordinate speech and debate along with athletics, music, and theater programs. Membership in these organizations can provide contacts with leaders in the high school community. Once these are established, a coach can assess the needs of the high school community and how best to contribute. Typical high school outreach can include a combination of programming options: summer institutes, workshops, tournaments, and coaching.

Summer institutes have been more common for debate than individual events. Local variety in style and practice in individual events makes running larger summer programs difficult. The purpose of these camps should be to contribute to the educational value of forensics to high school competitors. This is not always easy, and debate institutes as well as speech camps have been criticized for failing to maintain high educational standards.⁸

Well-developed summer programming can be an opportunity to concentrate on the high school community at a time when one's college commitments are more limited. Speech and debate camps can be opportunities to work closely with high school students and coaches. Not all college or university programs will have the resources to offer summer programming. For those who can, summer programs can provide a way to develop high school contacts that will last throughout the school year.⁹

A second form of high school outreach that occurs during the school year is workshops for coaches and students. These may last a couple of hours or the entire day. Typical formats provide high school students with an introduction to their events, performance demonstrations, and theoretical preparation. Coaching sessions might focus on broad issues or more narrowly focused meetings on topics such as tournament administration, fundraising, or judging.

These sessions can provide high school competitors with an introduction to communication theories and practices. The special training of collegiate faculty in speech communication might go beyond the experience of high school coaches who may not have a communication

degree. The educational mission of forensics can be enhanced by well prepared and presented high school workshop programs.¹⁰

The summer institute and workshops provide an entree to later high school programming during the school year. One of the most popular venues for high school contact has been hosting high school tournaments. The most common tournament hosting option is the invitational tournament.¹¹ These are regular season tournaments offered to the high school forensic community and run by college programs. These can provide a service to the high school community by providing an attractive site for competition, for not all high schools have the rooms and facilities necessary to run a larger tournament. In addition to service, the tournament can contribute to recruitment efforts, as the coach can promote his or her campus and forensic program. Sample performances before awards can give the competitors a taste of collegiate speech and debate. Since college students are eligible to judge the tournament, the forensic team can serve as the judging pool, thus keeping costs to a minimum.

Coaches have other, more ambitious options to consider. Acting as host to a regional, state, or even national high school tournament lends expertise to the high school community. One might also offer to serve as the tournament director for off campus tournaments. Effective, neutral, and experienced tournament directors can be a valuable asset to the high school community. A final option might be simply to use one's team as a hired judge pool. Taking a van load of college competitors to a high school tournament as judges will give them exposure to high school practices and possibly provide the team with a fundraising opportunity.

A final way to connecting with the high school community may be to offer coaching assistance to local programs. In some communities, college students regularly serve as speech and debate coaches, occasionally with paid positions. Others serve as assistants to larger programs where the large number of students can overwhelm the coach. Having students volunteer as coaches is an effective way to get your program known to future competitors and to help shape the quality of high school competition. A college competitor might serve as a helpful first coach in junior high school programs where students are so new to the activity.

ASSESSING OUTREACH PROGRAMMING

The effects of an outreach program need to be assessed. Records must be kept to evaluate forensic contributions made to the high school community. These can serve as evidence of service to budget and tenure committees. Evaluative surveys and letters from high school programs can provide outside support for collegiate forensics and demonstrate connections in the local community.

Forensic students will also benefit individually from their service to other programs. The experience of service to others has been described as "a vital part of an undergraduate education."¹² Providing forensic service is an excellent way to show college students the connections between service and citizenship, for it allows them to share their skills and experiences in helping others.

Collegiate competitors' judging high school students can reinforce one's own coaching efforts. Collegians learn lessons about their own performances by observing others. Coaching high school students can also be a positive reinforcement for college students, as they may come to appreciate the coach-student relationship more fully. Coaching is similar to tutoring in other subjects, an experience that researchers have "found to increase significantly the empathy, altruism, and self-esteem of the tutor in addition to increasing his or her academic averages."¹³

CONCLUSION

Keeping alive a vibrant and active high school forensic community is an important step towards maintaining the health of collegiate speech and debate. The forensic community, whether high school or collegiate, has been successful because so many individuals have selflessly committed their time and resources to its success. Connecting these two communities together can contribute to even greater effectiveness. Better informed high school coaches can serve their students more effectively. These students, having learned the theoretical and educational purposes behind speech and debate, will be better participants in college and likely to continue to develop those skills later in life. Public awareness of the benefits of the forensic experience can strengthen and improve institutional support for forensic teams in high schools and colleges.

This article is a call for a grassroots-style approach to uniting the high school and collegiate forensic communities. National speech and debate organizations can certainly contribute to bringing these communities together, but the bulk of the effort needs to be made through face-to-face interactions between college and high school programs. These forensic communities share the same physical space across the United States, they need also to share similar educational and social spaces as well.

NOTES

¹ A list of some of these national organizations would include: the American Forensic Association, National Forensic Association, Pi Kappa Delta, Delta Sigma Rho - Tau Kappa Alpha, Phi Rho Pi, Cross Examination Debate Association, American Debate Association, National Educational Debate Association, American Parliamentary Debate Association, National Parliamentary Debate Association, Novice Individual Events Association, and the Interstate Oratory Association. Many states have their own forensic organizations and state tournaments. There are regional forensic leagues such as the Twin Cities Forensic League, Mid American Forensic League, Valley Forensic League, and the Northern California Forensic Association. My thanks to C. Thomas Preston, Jr. and Sherry T. LaBoon for their partial listing of organizations in "Unite or Die: A Metaphor for Intercollegiate Forensics in the 21st Century," *Proceedings from the Pi Kappa Delta Developmental Conference*, Scott Jensen, ed. (Lake Charles, LA: McNeese State University, 1995) 33.

² See James H. McBath, ed. *Forensics as Communication: The Argumentative Perspective* (Skokie, IL: National Textbook Company, 1975) 20,26; and C. Thomas Preston, Jr., "The High School/College Connection in Forensics," *Perspective on Individual Events: Proceedings of the First Developmental Conference on Individual Events*, Larry Schnoor and Vicki Karns, eds. (Mankato, MN: Speech Department, 15 February 1989) 111.

³ Alfred C. Snider, "Exploring the Undiscovered Country: Creating Networks between High School and College Forensic Programs," *The Forensic of Pi Kappa Delta* 79 (Winter 1994): 28.

⁴ Alfred C. Snider, "Curing Misconceptions and Creating Common Ground: CEDA Outreach to America's High Schools," *The Forensic Educator*, 9 (1994/95): 24-28.

⁵ David Ward, "Serving the State: The Wisconsin Idea Revisited," *Educational Record*, 73 (1992): 12-16.

⁶ Many church affiliated colleges promote service as part of their mission to their local communities. Most land grant universities were also founded on the expectation that they had a responsibility to provide service to their communities and state.

⁷ Craig A. Dudczak and David Zarefsky describe four categories of forensic service in: "Promotions and Tenure Standards," *American Forensics in Perspective: Papers from the Second National Conference on Forensics*, Donn W. Parson, ed. (Annandale, VA: Speech Communication Association, 1984) 29.

⁸ For example, see: Snider, "Curing Misconceptions" 25; Michael D. Bartanen, *Teaching and Directing Forensics* (Scottsdale, AZ: Gorsuch Scarisbrick, 1994) 26; V. William Balthrop, "Summer Institutes," *American Forensics in Perspective* 59-64.

⁹ For a description of a large, nationally oriented summer speech institute, look at Gary C. Dreibelbis, "An Overview of the Bradley Summer Forensics Institute," *Perspective on Individual Events: Proceedings of the First Developmental Conference on Individual Events*, Larry Schnoor and Vicki Karns, eds. (Mankato, MN: Speech Department, 15 February 1989) 117-18.

¹⁰ Recommendations on operating a workshop can be found in Robert C. Chandler, "Achieving Pedagogic Objectives in Large Forensics Workshops: Pragmatic and Philosophic Concerns," *Journal of the Illinois Speech and Theatre Association*, 39 (1987): 47-55.

¹¹ Joel O. Iverson, in his survey of community service by collegiate speech teams found that hosting a high school invitational to be the most common form of contact with the high school community. See: "Forensic Programs as Citizens: An Evaluation of Community Service in Forensic Programs," paper presented at the 1994 Speech Communication Association Convention, New Orleans, LA, November, 1994.

¹² Ernest L. Boyer, *College: The Undergraduate Experience in America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987) 214.

¹³ Boyer 216.

Another Glance at the Want Ads: Forensic Positions 1990 through 1994

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Over the past several years, forensic practice has attracted significant scholarly attention. The speaking rates of participants at the National Debate Tournament have been examined (Colbert, 1981). The value attached to competitive forensics by university administrators has been assessed (Littlefield, 1991). The relationship between debate training and the enhancement of critical thinking skills has been investigated (Colbert, 1987; Hill, 1993). And, the effect of gender upon success in debate has received attention in recent years (Bruschke and Johnson, 1994; Shelton and Shelton, 1993). Despite these diverse scholarly investigations associated with competitive forensics, the pivotal role of the forensic director or coach has received little empirical examination.

Since the early 1900s, when the first debate coaches were hired by colleges and universities (Cowperthwaite and Baird, 1954), the forensic director or coach has played a central role in the activity. Forensic directors and coaches carry a heavy load, for they are often simultaneously responsible for student recruitment, budgetary decisions, tournament planning and administration, as well as all the other duties attached to any faculty position. The forensic coach has been described as a "jack-of-all-trade" teacher (Bartanen 1994) who needs to be familiar with administrative, coaching, and traditional teaching roles. Indeed, Hollihan (1990) has argued that the forensic coach possesses a unique "job description" that entails roles as coach, counselor, and teacher. Porter and Sommerness (1991) noted that the director of forensics is even legally responsible for many aspects of a forensic program.

In addition to pursuing the typical professional, scholarly, and service roles associated with other faculty positions, the forensic coach is often required to commit to many extraordinary tasks, including driving "all night through inclement weather to get home in time to teach the next morning" (Hollihan, 1990, 437). Bartanen (1994) noted the numerous duties attached to forensic positions:

The faculty person (often called the Director of Forensics or the forensics coach) is responsible for both the administration and teaching functions. The person is sometimes given release time or other compensation. Usually, the college or university expects the Director of Forensics to perform the other teaching, research, and service activities normally expected of a faculty member. This can make the forensics position a difficult responsibility and causes considerable turnover in the position (22-23). Thus, forensics positions represent unique professional qualities.

Some important literature for and about forensic coaches and directors is available. A number of significant texts have been written regarding the process of directing a forensic program (Faules, Rieke and Rhodes, 1976; Klopff and Lohman, 1973; Bartanen, 1994). Other works have provided detailed assistance for the planning and administration of forensic tournaments (Brown and Swisher, 1980; Zarefsky and Goodnight, 1980). And, a number of scholarly pieces have addressed issues related to the judging of forensic contests (Balthrop, 1983; Gass, 1988; Snider, 1992; Ulrich, 1981). These works represent a valuable contribution to preparation for and examination of positions in forensics, yet scant empirical investigation has been focused upon such positions.

One of the earliest attempts to garner information regarding the characteristics and responsibilities of forensic directors and coaches was a survey conducted by Cameron (1964). Cameron's survey generated a good deal of material regarding the common characteristics of collegiate directors of forensics. He found that the typical director was an assistant professor, or higher, within a speech department; that the typical director had little or no experience with high school forensics, but had been associated with intercollegiate forensics for six years or more; and that the typical director had completed a master's degree, and either holds or was pursuing a doctorate. Cameron also found that most directors had competed in intercollegiate forensics as undergraduates.

An effort similar to Cameron's was conducted by Klopff and Rives (1965). Klopff and Rives surveyed both intercollegiate and high school forensic directors. Klopff and Rives found that most

intercollegiate directors of forensics received some level of released time for coaching and administration; that most programs were carried out by one person; and that teaching experience varied widely among directors of forensics. They also found that many forensic directors believed that their professional advancement was in some way impaired by their responsibilities in forensics.

Despite the valuable information generated by these early studies, they provided little guidance for those interested in the contemporary responsibilities of forensic directors. Further, both surveys questioned individuals who held forensic positions; however, they did not attempt to portray the duties that an individual must consider for entry into the field or the characteristics that departments seek when searching for candidates for these positions. These surveys also failed to examine the types of activities, debate formats and individual events, associated with forensic positions, and they did not examine the specific teaching responsibilities associated with the positions.

A more recent attempt to assess the characteristics and responsibilities associated with forensic positions was conducted by Shelton (1986). Shelton examined classified ads for forensic positions posted in *Spectra*. This examination produced a number of findings. Shelton found that the typical forensic position sought a candidate who had completed the doctorate and who could be appointed at the rank of assistant professor to a tenure-track position. He also found that forensic candidates would most often teach argumentation and fundamentals of speech courses. Shelton's approach appears to be a good step in the direction of cataloging the features associated with available forensic positions.

Unfortunately, Shelton analyzed forensics positions over a decade ago and he included only positions advertised in 1982 and 1983. Thus, he offered no examination of relative interest in individual events or in various debate formats. His study also failed to distinguish between those positions designed for a director of forensics, as opposed to an assistant or associate position.

Many questions remain unanswered with regard to forensic positions. Do current characteristics associated with these positions correspond with findings from the 1960s or even the early 1980s? Is greater emphasis placed upon individual events or debate? Are

NDT, CEDA, or other debate formats more often featured? How many programs seek assistant directors or coaches? And what other features are important in the contemporary forensic environment? The present study addresses such questions.

METHOD

Data was gathered from classified ads for forensic positions appearing in *Spectra*, a publication of the Speech Communication Association (SCA). An SCA publication was selected because the vast majority of forensic programs are housed in speech communication or communication studies departments (Sorenson 1983; Stepp and Thompson, 1988). *Spectra* is published monthly, except for July, and is mailed to all SCA members. Fifty-five issues, from January 1990 through December 1994, were examined. A total of 2,356 classified ads appeared in these fifty-five issues, with an average of nearly 43 (42.84) ads each month.

Classified ads in *Spectra* may include information regarding qualifications and responsibilities associated with listed positions. Qualifications often include degree and experience requirements. Responsibilities often pertain to courses that are expected to be taught by candidates, as well as other duties associated with the positions. Information regarding rank of appointment and tenure, or term options, is also provided. Forensic listings often include information concerning forensic activities: individual events and debate formats. Information may also be provided indicating whether the candidate is to serve as director or assistant for a program. All of this information was examined.

All forensic positions were included for study, such as listings for directors of forensics, debate coaches, individual events coaches, and assistants in each area. Each position was considered only once, although a number of listings appeared in multiple issues.

Information regarding interest for involvement with individual events or debate was gathered and tabulated from the ads, as was information regarding the debate format associated with the position. Information regarding tenure, degree, rank, and experience was treated in a similar manner, as was information whether the position was for an assistant. Courses that candidates might be expected to

teach were tabulated and placed in rank order. Appropriate computations to generate percentage information were conducted.

RESULTS

A total of 185 forensic listings were examined. Nearly 60% (59.46%) of the listings indicated that the candidate would be expected to be involved with debate activities. Of this total, 15 listings (13.64%) indicated a preference for involvement with NDT debate, while 28 listings (25.45%) indicated a preference for involvement with CEDA debate. Only 4 listings (3.64%) indicated a preference for some other debate format, such as American Debate Association, National Educational Debate Association, Canadian Parliamentary, and public debate. Seventy-two of the 185 position listings (38.20%) indicated a preference for individuals to be involved with individual events. (Table I)

A total of 144 (77.84%) of the 185 listings reported information regarding term of appointment. Ninety (62.50%) of the listings indicated that the position would be eligible for tenure. Another 54 (37.50%) of the listings specified a term appointment.

A total of 164 (88.65%) of the listings reported information concerning degree requirements. Just over 60% (60.98%) or 100 of the 185 listings required the doctorate. Sixty-four (39.02%) of the listings required only a master's degree. Both degree requirements were expected in the communication discipline.

Just over 70% (70.51%) or 131 of the listings indicated a specific rank at which individuals would be appointed (Table II). Only 3 (2.29%) positions expressed a preference for an associate or assistant professor. Sixty-nine (52.67%) positions specified appointment at the rank of assistant professor. Another 19 (14.50%) indicated that appointment would be at the rank of assistant professor or instructor. Twenty-four (18.32%) listings specified appointment at the rank of instructor, while 16 (12.21%) specified appointment at the rank of lecturer. Just over 30% (30.53%) of positions were at the rank of instructor or lecturer. Over half (51.35%) of the listings expressed an interest in individuals with previous experience in forensics.

A total of 38 different courses were cited as those that forensic

candidates might be expected to teach. The 10 most frequently mentioned courses included public speaking, argumentation, fundamentals, interpersonal communication, persuasion, small group communication, rhetorical/communication theory, oral interpretation/performance studies, organizational communication, and rhetoric and public address (Table III). Other courses cited included rhetorical criticism, business and professional communication, interviewing, and a variety of mass communication subjects.

Forty-six (24.86%) of the 185 listings indicated that the candidate would be expected to assist with the forensic program. Over half (56.10%) of these listings required only a master's degree, whereas 43.90% required the doctorate. Nearly 60% (57.14%) of these positions indicated that a term appointment would be offered, while 42.86% offered a tenure-track appointment. Only 1 of these positions specified appointment at the rank of associate, while 34.48% specified appointment at the rank of assistant professor. Another 13.79% indicated that appointment would be at the rank of assistant professor or instructor. The rank of instructor was indicated by 31.03% of these positions, and lecturer was indicated by 17.24%.

DISCUSSION

The results have several implications for individuals interested in pursuing a career in forensics and for departments seeking candidates for such positions. Support for various debate formats may vary over time, but a general commitment to debate appears to be quite strong. In addition, the 72 listings that indicated a preference for individuals to work with individual events suggests that such forms of competitive speaking are also healthy. The results suggest that individuals who elect to specialize in either debate or individual events can find ready opportunities to practice that specialty.

The information regarding debate formats is also informative. Although a great diversity of debate activities exist—NDT, CEDA, ADA, NEDA, L-D, public, and parliamentary—most programs seeking candidates to work with debate do not specify a particular

format. One may account for this by noting that the format employed by a given program is often well-known in the debate community, and that such preferences could be made clear during the selection process.

The data regarding term and tenure appointments is reasonably consistent with previous research. Shelton (1986) also found that a clear majority of appointments were made to tenure-track positions. The term appointments appear to be correlated with those listings seeking individuals to assist with forensic programs, since nearly 60% of those positions involved term appointment. This suggests that the prospect of tenure is still in sight for a majority of those individuals pursuing a career in forensics; however, a significant number of assistant positions do not offer long-term job security.

The data concerning degree requirements is also reasonably consistent with previous research. Cameron (1964), Klopff and Rives (1965), and Shelton (1986) all found the doctoral degree to be preferred. This may be related in part to the fact that many of these positions are tenure-track and a terminal degree is a routine requirement to that end. This may also reflect the general trend in higher education to place an emphasis on the doctorate in a tight job market. However, nearly 40% of the positions required only the master's degree. This is correlated in part with the number of positions seeking individuals to assist with forensic programs, as over half of these positions required only the masters. The individual interested in a long term, stable career in forensics would still be well-advised to complete the doctorate. However, those individuals who have completed only the masters will not find themselves excluded from the forensic job market. Bartanen (1994) has argued that turnover is high among those holding forensic positions and part of that may be caused by the increasing number of term appointments in the field.

The data concerning rank of appointment is generally in line with that regarding degree requirements and term of appointment. Over half of the positions specified appointment at the rank of assistant professor, typically a tenure-track appointment for those holding the doctorate. The fact that only three positions indicated the possibility of appointment at the rank of associate suggests that few departments seek individuals with established credentials, for

they prefer candidates at the entry level. Just over 30% of the listings indicated appointment at the rank of instructor or lecturer. Such appointment preferences are true for nearly half of those who are sought as candidates to assist with forensic programs. Taken as a whole, this data suggests that individuals pursuing careers in forensics should be prepared to be appointed at the rank of assistant professor or lower.

The data concerning courses that individuals seeking forensic positions are expected to teach suggests that preparation as a communication generalist might be the wisest course of action for individuals interested in pursuing careers in forensics. The 38 different courses cited ranged from public communication, public speaking as well as business and professional speaking, to interpersonal communication specialties, such as family communication, conflict management, and nonverbal communication, to diverse specialties, such as public relations, gender communication, composition, and broadcasting. Each of the 22 areas of concentration listed for graduate programs in communication (Brooks and Berko, 1994) were represented in the forensic listings examined. This suggests that academic preparation in almost any area of concentration within communication could be translated into a forensic career.

The data regarding the most frequently cited course offerings (Table III) is quite illuminating. Public speaking and fundamentals are two of the most frequently cited courses, which indicates that such introductory courses are often assigned to individuals involved with forensics. This may be a departmental attempt to ease the burdens placed upon those individuals engaged in forensics. It could, equally, reflect the fact that many of the forensic positions are at the entry level and that introductory courses generate the greatest demand for faculty. Klopff and Rives (1965) found that nearly half of the individuals in their survey were fairly new to teaching. This may still be the case, as indicated by the heavy emphasis on introductory courses. The second-place ranking of argumentation in this ordering confirms the traditional relationship between debate and argumentation.

The fact that over half of all of the forensic listings indicated a preference for experience in the activity suggests that individuals

who plan to seek a career in forensics are well-advised to secure competitive experience, coaching experience, or both, in order to make themselves attractive candidates. This finding also suggests that most departments recognize that forensics is a unique activity that requires specialized training. This indicates some degree of respect for the uniqueness of the field.

As noted, the data regarding listings seeking individuals to assist with forensics programs is somewhat different from the more general data. Assistants are more likely to be required only to have completed the master's degree, to be appointed at the rank of instructor or lecturer, and to hold that position for a limited term. Although empirical evidence is lacking with regard to assistants, Bartanen (1994) has suggested that assistants in forensics are not nearly as typical or regular as in sports, which suggests that the director of forensics or coach must often go it alone. The present study lends credence to that conclusion because less than one quarter of all positions sought individuals to assist with forensic programs.

The present study has some possible limitations. For instance, one might argue that this data is very time-bound and cannot accurately reflect an ongoing view of forensic positions. This may be true. All potential research methods would, however, suffer from the same limitation. Further, the inclusion of data from a five-year period helps to assure that a reasonable reflection of information regarding forensic positions is portrayed.

Another limitation might be the failure to consider alternative sources for data on forensic positions, such as *The Chronicle of Higher Education* or the *ICA Newsletter*, a publication of the International Communication Association. This probably does not pose a serious impediment to the robustness of the present study. *The Chronicle of Higher Education* very rarely contains classified ads for positions not listed in *Spectra* and the *ICA Newsletter* virtually never posts classified ads for forensic positions. A brief, random check of these other publications tends to confirm the superiority of *Spectra* as a resource. Furthermore, Shelton (1986) argued that *Spectra* is "the most universal source for those seeking positions offered by Speech Communication departments" (124).

The present study suggests a number of areas ripe with potential for future research. One obvious possibility would be to replicate

the type of survey research conducted by Cameron (1964) and Klopff and Rives (1965). This would permit researchers to confirm that the items cited in listings accurately reflect what directors and coaches in forensics actually do. Indeed, such survey research could be conducted as an extension of the present study by directing questionnaires to the same programs that posted listings.

Another type of survey research would be to investigate the perspective of departments regarding forensic positions. Such research might determine if actual candidates reflect the material contained in listings. Further, such a survey might seek information to answer some of the questions that might have been raised by the present study, such as why are particular courses so frequently cited? what are the specific responsibilities associated with forensic positions? how are the various requirements and qualifications calculated in the actual hiring process? and how have contemporary social changes influenced the selection process for individuals seeking positions in forensic activities?

Investigators might wish to evaluate the relationship between specific forensic positions and other requirements for candidates. For example, one could determine whether candidates expected to coach both debate and individual events have different degree or background requirements. Such information could help illuminate some of the differences from one forensic position to another.

Another area / that warrants future research is high school forensic positions. Klopff and Rives (1965) included an investigation of high school forensic directors in their study and Hensley (1972) structured a profile of high school forensic directors, yet little attention has been given to these positions since then. Research on the high school forensic coach or director might provide valuable information for those individuals seeking a career at that level.

In summary, the forensic coach or director has responsibilities that often entail coaching, administration, and teaching. The present study generated descriptive data that might help individuals and departments better understand the typical qualifications and responsibilities associated with forensic positions. Such data should help departments plan searches for a forensic candidate and individuals to plan a career that is "unique because it gives you an opportunity to work closely with gifted students, participate in a

worthwhile and challenging activity, and see the results of your teaching weekly throughout the season as students compete in tournaments" (Hollihan, 1990, 445-446).

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TABLESTable 1: *Forensic Activities*

Activity	Listings	Percentage
Individual Events	72	38.92
Debate	110	59.46
NDT	15	13.64
CEDA	28	25.45
Other	4	3.64

Table 2: *Appointment*

Rank	Listings	Percentage
Associate/ Assistant	3	2.29
Assistant	69	52.67
Assistant/Instructor	19	14.50
Instructor	24	18.32
Lecturer	16	12.21

Table 3: *Ten Most Cited Courses*

Rank	Course	Citations
1	Public Speaking	66
2	Argumentation	60
3	Fundamentals	36
4	Interpersonal	34
5	Persuasion	24
6	Small Group	21
	Rhetorical/Communication Theory	21
	Oral Interpretation/Performance Studies	21
9	Organizational	16
10	Rhetoric and Public Address	15

Educational Criteria in Forensics: An Argument for Lincoln-Douglas Debate

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As forensic educators set out each year to recruit new squad members, a few familiar phrases are echoed throughout colleges and universities across the country: "We can make you a more competent speaker," "we can teach you how to construct and deliver effective arguments," and "we can help you develop a new insight into literary excellence." We can rightfully boast the claim that forensics is one of the most worthwhile activities students can participate in during their college years. However, most forensic students limit their educational opportunity by participating in only individual events or debate. This essay will suggest initially that forensic students' educational benefits can be optimized by competing in both individual events and debate activities. Next, the paper will review the educational criteria of public address events and debate, and then demonstrate that Lincoln-Douglas [L-D] debate is an ideal complement to individual events programs. A final section will offer suggestions to help maintain the educational benefits that L-D presently offers debaters.

BENEFITS OF CROSSOVER PARTICIPATION

Students are generally drawn to forensics participation because of an affinity toward a specific event. Those who initially express an interest in debate can quickly get caught up in the activity to the point that participation in public address or interpretation events is unlikely. The same response can be seen by many who are initially drawn to individual events. Because of these tendencies, too many of our students miss out on the benefits of crossing over between individual events and debate.

A survey of eight recent tournaments, attended by at least twenty schools each, reveals that teams have either a very high or very low crossover rate. The majority of teams entered in these tournaments had fewer than 15 percent of their students crossing

over between individual events and debate of any form.

The most obvious benefit of crossover is the increased development of communication skills that comes from practicing for significantly different events. Clearly, the research and analytical skills developed in debate are not found at an equal level in public address events. In like manner, the delivery skills prevalent in public address are typically not found in debate. The individual events student who begins competing in L-D will benefit from the need to prepare speeches, or cases, that will be thoroughly critiqued within the competition.

What is less recognizable, but just as valuable, is the insight to be gained from performing in front of different audiences. The problems of the forensic audience have been described as having a narrow focus (i.e. Haught, 1989). The crossover student can receive insight into different audiences. Judges who walk into public address rounds have a different mind set and expectations than judges in debate rounds. Even the same judge will likely have different philosophies for individual events and debate rounds. Students who crossover will be exposed to a greater variety of mind sets.

Finally, students might be able to grow as individuals through crossover participation in forensics. An observation of any large tournament frequently reveals at least two sub-cultures: debate and individual events. The groups appear to be different and interaction between the two is limited. The crossover student will be exposed to both sub-cultures and to a diversity of opinion and behaviors, and will discover what both groups have in common.

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES OF INDIVIDUAL EVENTS AND DEBATE

Several forensic scholars have established and reaffirmed a fairly standard set of objectives as a foundation for forensic activity in general and individual events in particular.

The primary objectives for individual events competition were developed at the Second National Developmental Conference on Forensics, and six standards for public address events were outlined. For some students, participation in individual events can

develop qualities, such as leadership skills, teamwork, and ethical responsibilities. However, the core of what every individual events program should be able to teach its students is compiled in the following six standards for public address:

1. The speaker's presentation should identify a thesis or claim for which the speech is developed.
2. The speaker's presentation should provide a motivational link (relevance factor) between the topic and the audience.
3. The speaker's presentation should develop a substantive analysis of the thesis using appropriate supporting materials.
4. The speaker's presentation should be organized in a coherent manner.
5. The speaker's main presentation should use language that is appropriate for the topic and the audience.
6. The speaker's presentation should be delivered using appropriate vocal and physical presentational skills.

Although five standards for oral interpretation were also developed, the focus of this essay is on public address and debate activities; therefore, oral interpretation criteria will not be addressed. These public address criteria are specific in prescription yet represent a general consensus of what individual researchers have suggested as goals or objectives for evaluation of individual events presentations, (e.g. Bartanen, 1981; Mills, 1989; Swanson, 1992).

Research since the Second Developmental Conference on Forensics revealed one other objective that should be used to evaluate the educational function of individual events. Mills (1989) and Dunlap (1989) both posited that individual events should reflect the concerns and developments within the discipline that houses the program. This educational function is best served when forensic students are allowed to train for and compete in events that require knowledge and skills in issues closer to the cutting edge of the communication discipline.

These seven objectives provide an excellent means for assessing the educational function of individual events. As long as coaches and directors teach these skills and principles, and our tournaments reflect their adoption, the individual events activities will meet their educational purpose. The same position holds true for debate.

Debate was founded on and is grounded in basic principles (Bartanen, 1981). Rohrer (1989) explains that:

Debate should focus upon a man's [sic] ability to understand himself and society by stimulating and channeling analysis of persons and circumstances involved in the communication process, providing resources concerning alternative 'avenues of the mind' in the form of persuasive strategies, (p. 13).

Within this conceptualization, researchers surveyed the practice of competitive, intercollegiate debate in order to construct principles for guiding the educational function of the activity (e.g. Aden, 1989; Bartanen and Frank, 1991; Marks and Pearce, 1971; Norton, 1982; and Ziegelmueller, Kay, and Dause, 1990).

The following aims were selected from the above sources to feature educational objectives that should guide competitive debate:

1. The debater should employ critical thinking skills.
2. The debater should demonstrate an ability to evaluate an issue from differing perspectives.
3. The debater should be able to build a case.
4. The debater should be able to determine relationships among arguments.
5. The debater should demonstrate the ability to arrange arguments and evidence in effective constructive or refutation patterns.
6. The debater should be able to defend a contention through the use of research and analysis.
7. The debater's presentation should be delivered with comprehensible vocal and physical presentation skills.
8. The debater should employ skills in argumentation and persuasion.
9. The debater should be able to determine weaknesses in opposing positions.
10. The debater should exhibit skills in cross-examination.

Forensic education reaches its optimal level when students are taught all of the skills addressed above. However, the time commitment and work load make it difficult for most students to compete in both individual events and traditional team debate. However, students can master these educational objectives when L-

D debate is introduced into forensic programs.

Lincoln-Douglas Debate

NFA L-D is one-person policy debate that uses the traditional stock issues of harm, inherency, and solvency. The affirmative plan should sufficiently prove how to solve the problem. In NFA L-D, topicality is a voting issue and the negative is allowed to offer a counter proposal. The format and speaking times for NFL L-D are as follows:

Affirmative constructive	6
Negative cross-examination	3
Negative constructive	7
Affirmative cross-examination	3
Affirmative rebuttal	4
Negative rebuttal	6
Affirmative rebuttal	3
Preparation time	4

Harris, Aden, Glauner, Olson, Minch and Reynolds (1992) explained that in NFA L-D "speeches should be pleasant, comprehensible, and persuasive in tone especially since not all judges will have traditional debate experience" (p. 3). These authors also note that "spread delivery" is "antithetical to the purpose and intent of this event" (p. 2). Although published research on NFA L-D is scarce, the practice of pleasant, comprehensible, and persuasive speech is adhered to in varying degrees by debaters. The degree ranges from a strong attempt to comply to an outright disregard for the regulation, which appears to differ from region to region and even debater to debater.

Individual Events Objectives and NFA L-D Debate

Students who typically compete in individual events hopefully develop skills in its essential educational objectives. However, the education of these students can be enhanced, as many of these same critical skills can be taught through participation in L-D debate. When students work on these skills in public address and debate, their acquisition of the skills is likely to be enhanced.

Two of the individual events criteria that can be taught in L-D debate focus specifically on the speaker-audience connection. Although L-D debate does not necessarily attract huge crowds from the general public, it addresses the need to teach students how to develop a motivational link between audience and oration and how to employ appropriate language for the topic and audience. Lincoln-Douglas policy debate also requires the debater to view the judge as one who has the well-being of all others to consider, which is similar to a policy-maker judge. Lincoln-Douglas debate also opens the possibility for non-debaters and non-forensic people to observe, enjoy, and understand the activity, which assumes the activity continues to require a normal rate in delivery.

The L-D debater is also taught to recognize the need to adapt language to the topic. As the topic is researched, the student learns to recognize and understand not only the terminology of important issues but also how to determine which philosophical, emotional, and logical approaches are most appropriate for the given situation.

The educational concern with developing a thesis, appropriate supporting material, and an organized presentation is also addressed by L-D debate. Lincoln-Douglas debate necessitates that students learn how to analyze a resolution and then to follow through with sufficient research to construct and defend affirmative and negative positions. Successful argumentation in L-D debate also requires the student to organize clearly the presentation for opponents, audience members, and judges. Because analysis and data-gathering stages are inherent to the event, L-D debate fulfills this educational objective.

As for delivery, the speaker should strive for clarity and persuasiveness in vocal and physical presentation. Most L-D debate coaches and students support the educational need for emphasis on delivery skills. This emphasis varies greatly between regions of the country and individual programs. However, the format of L-D debate provides the opportunity for coaches to emphasize this practice.

The final educational concern with individual events deals with the issue of whether forensics reflects developments within the communication discipline. Lincoln-Douglas debate provides an

ideal laboratory for forensic coaches to teach the most recent developments in argumentation, persuasion, credibility, and analysis of nonverbal cues, as well as other advances in communication theory and practice. The L-D debate format lends itself to the testing of recent developments in the discipline. Communication scholars who study argumentation and argumentativeness, for example, might be interested in studying the activity and those who are attracted to it (e.g., Colbert, 1993). Such research would build stronger ties between forensics and the rest of the communication discipline.

Participation in L-D debate allows students to learn skills and develop understandings that meet the public address, educational standards established to guide individual events coaches and participants. A variety of current formats function to teach students the ten educational objectives previously noted for debate. However, the student who crosses over between individual events and L-D debate can acquire skills in both areas. The following section will demonstrate that NFA L-D teaches many of the ten debate educational objectives.

Debate Objectives in L-D Debate

The blend of evidence and reasoning in L-D guides students to evaluate critically the arguments in the round. As well, the philosophical and theoretical approach that L-D takes toward a resolution enables debaters to look at arguments in light of classical stock issues, which furthers the critical thought processes of the debater. Although less evidence is utilized in L-D rounds than in many team-debate rounds, L-D debaters still critically evaluate the stock issues inherent in the event. Thus, L-D debaters develop critical skills that include determining weaknesses in an opponent's arguments, refutation, extension of arguments, and skills in cross-examination.

Organization is important in L-D debate because of the oratorical nature prescribed by the activity and because of the stock issues in policy debate. Lincoln-Douglas debate places a heavy emphasis on delivery skills, thereby forcing debaters to select the most appropriate arguments and to present them in an effective

manner. This concern places an emphasis on arrangement for maximum persuasive effect. L-D debaters likewise learn how to develop contentions and to perceive relationships between arguments. The nature of the event rewards students who excel in these areas. The comparative de-emphasis on research in L-D, as compared to team debate, does not imply that L-D debaters do not employ evidence to warrant their claims. In fact, skills in research are still necessary, for analysis and evidence is essential in L-D debate.

Lincoln-Douglas debate clearly addresses the concern for comprehensible vocal and physical presentational skills because judging in the event is based on overall persuasiveness that cannot occur without adequate skills in delivery. The concern with a rapid rate of speaking in other forms of debate is found much less frequently in L-D debate. Such a delivery is against the philosophy of the event, for it is not conducive to an effective presentation. Delivery is evaluated in a manner similar to extemporaneous and impromptu speaking events.

Coinciding with the importance of delivery is the emphasis on argumentative and persuasive skills in L-D debate. The event allows students to develop fewer arguments than are typically found in team debate, but these arguments are usually debated beyond initial claims. The L-D format allows enough affirmative and negative speeches in which arguments can be developed, challenged, and extended. The event also allows coaches to teach their students useful skills in argumentative structure and the use of effective persuasive appeals.

SUGGESTIONS

Many of the educational benefits that L-D can offer directors of forensics and their students are based upon the idea that the event focuses on developing argumentation skills that are directly transferable to professional occupations. The key to maintaining this focus is to adopt procedures that will prevent the event from developing in a manner inconsistent with its original purpose.

One step the entire forensics community can take is to view

L-D as a combination of individual events and debate. For programs with both IE and debate coaches, both coaches should provide instruction to L-D debaters. For single-coach programs, the coach should try to utilize the goals and purposes of both activities when coaching L-D participants.

Tournament directors can do more to help maintain the status of L-D. Some of the following suggestions have been implemented on a limited basis, and additional directors may wish to include these recommendations in their tournaments if they have not already done so. When selecting judges for the event, tournament directors could rely predominantly on individual events coaches. This will help ensure that most of those who judge the event will expect that the rounds should function in a manner that emphasizes clear argumentation, which is presented in an understandable manner. Those judges who are most qualified to judge extemporaneous and persuasive speaking would likely make excellent L-D judges. Tournament directors could even include a brief description of the event in an envelope with ballots that are given to L-D judges. Debate coaches would also make excellent judges, but former team debaters who are serving as hired judges might need to be reminded of the purpose of L-D.

People outside of the forensic community could also be asked to judge L-D rounds. Ideally, tournament directors could locate individuals at the university or in the local community who have an expertise in the L-D topic. University administrators could also be given the opportunity to judge L-D rounds. The use of non-forensic judges would help convey to students the importance of developing comprehensible arguments and of utilizing persuasive strategies.

Epstein (1992) has argued that parliamentary debate tournaments should include non-forensics experts to determine whether debaters are developing superior arguments and are using the best sources for the given topic. The same reasoning applies to judging L-D debate with the use of non-forensic, expert critics.

The additional benefits of using non-forensic people as judges are that members of the host school's administration and community will learn more about and appreciate the forensic program. Most educators in forensics would welcome the

opportunity for more positive recognition by the university and local community. Lincoln-Douglas debate is an ideal event to publicize forensics to others.

The use of lay judges raises a concern for the quality of evaluation and decision. This concern can be alleviated. Dean (1988) has recognized the need for judge's training to prevent typical problems that are encountered when non-forensic individuals judge at tournaments. Dean described how a judging workshop, taught for an hour before or on the day of the tournament, helped eliminate many difficulties and increased the quality of the tournament for both critics and contestants.

The benefit of L-D debate might be particularly appealing to smaller programs that have few debaters. Lincoln-Douglas debate allows individuals and an odd number of debaters to compete, as juxtaposed to team debating. L-D is also an affordable way to compete in debate as the entry fees are lower and the cost of research is significantly less.

The advent of parliamentary debate as a forensic activity has a strong potential for meeting the educational objectives outlined in this paper. The philosophy and guidelines of the event, as detailed by the National Parliamentary Debate Association and the American Parliamentary Debate Association, create a competitive environment that can appeal to students with a background in either public address or debate. Because parliamentary debate is relatively new, it was not included in this analysis. However, a future study might advantageously examine parliamentary debate with regard to the educational objectives of NFA forensic events.

This essay has argued that L-D debate could be an educationally beneficial supplement to many forensic programs. Lincoln-Douglas debate provides training and practice in adversarial speaking that cannot be gained in traditional individual events. As a welcome addition to forensic speaking, L-D debate can certainly strengthen programs and help forensic directors to fulfill their educational missions to their students.

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Professional Resources

Winebrenner, T.C. Ed. *Intercollegiate Forensics*. Dubuque, IA.: Kendall/Hunt, 1994, pp. 247.

Much information is available to the forensics contestant. Beyond the wealth of information provided by coaches, an enormous amount of material is available in print. The *National Forensic Journal*, *The Forensic of Pi Kappa Delta*, and the *CEDA Yearbook* are but a few of the journals available to student competitors. Michael Bartanen's (1994) *Teaching and Directing Forensics* provides an excellent overview of forensics targeted to coaches, but it is full of information for competitors as well. Tom Hollihan and Kevin Baaske's (1994) *Arguments and Arguing—The Products and Process of Human Decision Making* is an excellent argumentation and debate text, and Teri Gamble and Michael Gamble's (1994) *Literature Alive—The Art of Oral Interpretation* is a valuable textbook for the oral interpretation contestant. Much of this material is, however, advanced and often too complex for the beginning contestant. Where should the novice turn? One excellent place is *Intercollegiate Forensics* edited by Terry Winebrenner.

Intercollegiate Forensics is a product of work conducted by the Northern California Forensic Association (NCFA). The NCFA reached an unusual level of consensus regarding expectations and guidelines for student competitors and generated a handbook containing that information. This book is a collection of pieces based upon that earlier work. Despite the fact that this book started as a NCFA-specific project, it offers much to the forensics community as a whole.

The individual components of the book address a host of issues central to the forensics experience. The articles are grouped into four major sections: the fundamentals of participation in forensics, platform speaking, interpretation, and debate. The first few chapters on participation in forensics provide useful information on the benefits of forensics and specific behaviors expected at

tournaments. The section on platform events covers communication analysis, impromptu speaking, and five other popular events. Dramatic interpretation, duo, poetry, prose, program-oral-interpretation and reader's theater are addressed in the interpretation section. The final section of the book covers NDT, CEDA, and Lincoln-Douglas debating. The text closes with three appendices that discuss eligibility, ethical standards, and guidelines of the American Forensic Association, the National Forensic Association, the Cross-Examination Debate Association, Phi Rho Pi, and the NCFE.

The novice forensics contestant will find this book to be a true handbook. The book is designed so that pages may be separated and torn out so that student contestants can carry information on particular subjects of interest or concern into their tournament experience. Further, the book provides helpful information that the novice is unlikely to encounter in other sources. For example, Winebrenner gives detailed information about "how to" do things for and at tournaments: Where to find resources, how to prepare for the tournament experience, and even how to enter the contest room.

The chapters on platform events are particularly valuable. The novice competitor can get an excellent overview of what is involved in each event. Advice on the actual development of speeches is detailed for student competitors. This type of practical advice is something that novices often have difficulty gleaning from more theoretical texts and journal articles. The chapters also include examples of well written, competitively successful speeches, which gives both the novice and the advanced competitor a better idea of what many judges are expecting as they critique the various platform events discussed in this section.

Despite these advantages *Intercollegiate Forensics* does have some limitations. The section on interpretation does not, for example, compare favorably with the material on platform events, for interpretation material is more disjointed and less robust. Some chapters in this section are short on detail and lacking in practical examples.

Although the sections on individual speaking events are more detailed and extended than those on debate, the preliminary discussion about the value of forensics relies heavily upon data regarding debate competition. The novice individual events contestant may be left questioning the value of his or her decision to compete. These contestants may also find it more difficult to inform parents and others of the value of the particular extracurricular activity in which they have invested their time and effort. This is unfortunate, for good reasons and values of competition in individual events should be a central component of any introduction to forensics practice.

The subject of Lincoln-Douglas debate, which is so noticeably missing from many debate texts, is prominently discussed in *Intercollegiate Forensics*. The pivotal role of the National Forensic Association is well developed in this section. In addition, the academic objectives of L-D debate are clearly and effectively illuminated.

The discussion of L-D debate is a valuable contribution, but the book falls short with regard to other debating formats other than CEDA and NDT. Audience debate, parliamentary debate, and other alternative forms are missing, as is a discussion of the more rule-governed debate that is sanctioned by the National Education Debate Association (NEDA) or the American Debate Association (ADA). The student competitor must look elsewhere for this information.

Despite some shortcomings, *Intercollegiate Forensics* contains a host of valuable information. The values that competitors can garner from reading and using *Intercollegiate Forensics* clearly outweigh drawbacks that can be found in the book. Although most intercollegiate forensics or debate practicum courses do not have required texts, this book might well be worth considering for that purpose. *Intercollegiate Forensics* provides a clear introduction to forensics, practical advice and illustrations, and guidelines for participation. Such information would serve as a valuable supplement to what is provided by each individual coach. The

contributions of *Intercollegiate Forensics* warrant the attention of teachers, coaches, and especially student competitors.

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