

An Analysis of Interstate Speeches: Are They Structurally Different?

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine Interstate Oratorical speeches and determine if these speeches demonstrate common characteristics that can be traced from the earliest championship speech given in 1875 to the championship speech in 2000. Twenty-seven IOA speeches were analyzed using a coding system based around the categories of topic, organizational pattern/structure, evidence usage, stylistic features and documentation. Although significant differences were found in the areas of organizational patterns, logical evidence usage and documentation, commonalities were found in the areas of topic choice, use of evocative evidence and stylistic features. The authors conclude that the use of highly stylized language in IOA speeches is the most notable consistent characteristic throughout the history of the competition.

The Interstate Oratorical Association is the oldest and arguably most well known intercollegiate oratorical competition in the country. The association's roots stretch back over one hundred twenty-eight years, beginning with representatives from Adelphi Society of Knox College sending and receiving correspondence from colleges in Illinois, Iowa and Wisconsin. The official association was formed after the first contest was held in Galesburg, Illinois on February 27, 1884. This oratorical contest was presumably the first held by an intercollegiate association in the United States (Interstate, 2000; Anderson, 1930).

Persons representing the public at large have historically adjudicated the contest. The first adjudicators were chosen by the Governors of the participating states and represented a president of one university, a professor of another, and a legal judge. The first contestants from the three states were evaluated on, "excellence of thought, style of composition, and delivery, marking each on a scale of ten." (Prather, 1908). Accordingly, the contestants currently representing roughly every state are judged on similar qualities as the first orators. Today, the association is alive and thriving and will continue to prosper as long as young orators have a hunger for truth and believe in the competitive spirit.

Over the past twenty years, much scholarly attention has been given to the study of competitive persuasive speaking. Some forensic scholars have tried to trace the development of the event as competitive norms have changed performance expectations (Smith, 1996; Sellnow & Ziegelmueeller, 1988; Reynolds, 1983), others have looked at the role coaches and judges have played in shaping the nature of the event (Dean, 1992; Friedley, 1992; Benson & Friedley, 1982) and some have made recommendations about how to enhance the educational aspects of the event (Klumpp, 1992; Reynolds, 1992; Sellnow, 1992; Ballinger

& Brand, 1987). Few, however, have focused their attention solely on Interstate Oratorical speeches. Although many scholars have used Interstate Oratorical speeches as texts for analysis, the decision to do so seems more based on the convenience of locating these speeches in Winning Orations, than any directed desire to better understand this particular grouping of speeches. Our study differs from this previous research in two distinct ways. Initially, our goal is to understand better the Interstate Oratorical Association by closely examining the speeches prepared for its annual competition. We analyze Interstate Oratorical speeches with no intent to generalize our findings to other persuasive speaking contests or situations. Second, unlike previous studies that have analyzed Interstate Oratorical speeches, we have chosen to examine a sampling of speeches that represent the entire 125-year history of the organization. Most other studies limit their focus to a review of speeches that span only a few decades.

The purpose of our study is to look at Interstate Oratorical speeches and determine if these speeches demonstrate any common characteristics that can be traced from the earliest championship speech given in 1875 to the championship speech in 2000. Although the forensic community has gone through significant changes over the past 125 years, the Interstate Oratorical Association Tournament has remained one of the most respected competitions offered each year. No other national tournament can boast the rich heritage, longevity, and community influence that the Interstate Oratorical Association National Tournament displays. This study seeks to locate an essence to the "Interstate Speech" that has been sustained throughout its rich history.

Method

Sample

In order to examine the full 125-year history of Interstate Oratorical Speeches, we needed to narrow our sample group of speeches into a manageable size. We decided to only look at championship speeches, and narrowed this group of speeches even more by selecting one speech for each five-year interval of time. We started with 1875 and then chose the championship speech every five years from that point forward. If the speech for a selected year was unavailable, we used a championship speech as close to the identified year as possible.¹ During the years when there was a separate competition for men and women, we varied our selection every other year in order to gather an equal number of speeches by men and women.

Coding

Using previous forensic research about persuasive speaking, we identified several elements and characteristics typically found in persuasive speeches. This review of literature allowed us to develop a coding system based around 5 major

¹1913 was substituted for 1915 and 1941 was substituted for 1940

categories; topic, organizational pattern/structure; evidence usage, stylistic features, and documentation.

Topic

In his study of several Interstate Oratorical Speeches to determine changing trends over time, Smith (1996) identified the different topics selected by categorizing them as being fact, value or policy based. He found that whereas speeches in 1957 and 1972 tended to use value oriented topics, by 1978 speeches made a marked shift toward policy orientation. Friedley's (1992) study looked at selected speech topics in a similar manner by identifying speeches as reinforcing beliefs, changing beliefs, or moving an audience to action. Friedley also notes a similar shift toward speeches to actuate during the 1970s. In his discussion of the educational value of persuasive speaking, Sellnow (1992) also explores the nature of topics used for persuasive speeches. Although his concern is with the standardization of organizational patterns used, he also argues that persuasive speeches have tended to favor policy topics over other purposes such as speeches to convince or to inspire. Because so many previous researchers have approached the issue of topic by referring to traditional persuasive purposes we chose to code our sample of speeches in a similar manner. In order to identify the nature of the topic selected for each speech, we focused on the three major persuasive purposes of fact, value and policy.

Organizational Pattern/Structure

The second area in which we focused our attention was the organizational pattern used in each speech. Once again, much previous research on persuasive speaking has explored this aspect of speech construction. Sellnow (1992) claims "contest persuasive speeches are dominated by the problem-solution format" (p. 15). He argues that such standardization harms the overall educational benefits of persuasive speaking. Friedley (1992), Ballinger and Brand (1987), and Reynolds (1983) confirm Sellnow's observation when they also observe a similar adherence to the problem-solution organizational pattern in the speeches they analyze.

When coding the speeches for this study, we also looked for the standard organizational patterns often associated with contest persuasive speaking. Problem-solution, problem-cause-solution, cause-effect-solution, and a basic topical pattern were all considered. In addition to coding for the organizational pattern used, we also coded the speeches for their use of connectives. We looked for preview statements, internal transitions, internal previews and internal summaries. Friedley (1992) also made observations about what she terms "the three-part forecasting statement" which she claims emerged in the 1980s.

Evidence Usage

Sellnow and Ziegelmüller (1988) offer the most useful approach to coding speeches for evidence usage. They divide evidence into two major categories, evocative appeals and logical supporting material. According to Sellnow and Ziegelmüller (1992), evocative appeals are evidence strategies that are

"designed to illicit an emotional reaction from the audience" (p. 77). When coding the speeches for this study we considered narratives, examples, vivid illustrations and descriptions to be evocative appeals. According to Reynolds (1983) examples and illustrations are some of the most common types of evidence used in the Interstate Oratorical speeches she analyzed in her study. We coded statistical evidence and expert testimony as logical supporting materials. Benson and Friedley (1982) argue that one of the key evaluation criteria judges look for in persuasive speeches is a balance between emotional and logical evidence. Thus, using Sellnow and Ziegelmueller's (1988) approach to identifying evidence usage is an appropriate way to code our selected Interstate Oratorical speeches.

Stylistic Features

Although somewhat related to evidence usage, we decided to code stylistic features of the speeches as a separate category. Several previous studies have identified common stylistic devices found in persuasive speeches. Initially, Dean (1992), Sellnow and Ziegelmueller (1988), and Reynolds (1983) all identify the establishment of personal involvement with the topic as a key stylistic device available to persuasive speakers. Sellnow and Ziegelmueller (1988) define personal involvement as "a speaker revealing a unique personal identification with the content of the speech (p. 77). Dean (1992) claims that one key way for a speaker to construct a strong level of ethos is to create an "audience awareness of emotional involvement between the speaker and the subject selected for discussion" (p. 39). Reynolds (1983) adds that often when students use the stylistic feature of highlighting personal involvement it is an effective way for them to further establish the existence of the problem they are addressing.

Another area of stylistic devices that we looked for when coding our selected speeches is the nature of the appeals used. Specifically we looked for appeals based on guilt and altruism. Such appeals often include the use of "we" statements as a means to create a more identifiable connection between an audience and the topic. These appeals are consistent with the type of appeals Reynolds (1983) found in her analysis of the "dreaded disease" Interstate Oratorical speeches. Although the reviewed literature did not discuss additional stylistic devices, we chose to also look for cases of language strategies such as metaphor, simile, alliteration, personification, repetition, and allusions to literature, religious texts and mythology. These language strategies are frequently discussed in general public speaking textbooks as useful stylistic devices.

Additionally, we chose to code instances of humor as a stylistic feature, as well as cases of regionally specific references. We define regionally specific references, as anything a speaker does in the speech to tie the topic or content of the speech to the specific region, or location in which the speech is being delivered. For example, if the contest were taking place in Topeka, KS, and a speaker cited a phone interview with a Topeka city official, we would code such a tactic as a stylistic feature. Even though the interview would also be considered a piece of logical evidence, the speaker made the effort to seek regionally specific evidence for stylistic goals.

Documentation

The final coding category we addressed was documentation. When coding for documentation we simply counted the number of times the speakers referred to outside sources. Friedley (1992) explains, "complete source citations usually include a name and/or title, the publication title, and the year of publication" (p. 26). This type of source citation, however, did not become common until the late 1970s. Smith (1996) notes that his analysis of Interstate Oratorical speeches from 1978 revealed, "whereas this level of detail [complete source citations] has been haphazard in the past, it now appears to be standard form" (p. 5). His review of speeches from 1957 and 1972 shows that sources during these time periods "tend to emerge as historical documents, historical facts, and the credentials of testimony sources" (Smith, 1996, p. 2). For this reason, we coded not only complete citations, but also instances of historical references, quotations by key historical figures, and excerpts from literary works as forms of documentation.

Results

Our analysis of the 27 Interstate Oratorical speeches produced observations quite consistent with previous studies that have examined contest persuasive speeches representing several different decades. Interstate Oratorical speeches do reflect changes and developments in competitive norms. Our goal in this study, however, is to determine if Interstate Oratorical speeches have maintained some common features over their 125-year history. In order to determine this, we summarized the coding results of each speech within a large grid where we could easily compare the results of our five coding categories for all 27 speeches. Although significant variation in organizational pattern/structure, evidence usage, and documentation were found, many similarities were identified in terms of stylistic features and topic choice.

Topic

Although policy topics dominate the past 25 years, prior to 1970 the majority of Interstate Oratorical speeches used value-oriented topics. Most of the topics prior to 1930 were grounded in rather broad value appeals. Littell (1920), Devers (1905) and, Beveridge (1885) all focused their speeches on the immoral and irresponsible aspects of industrialization. Pennington (1910) spoke about the immorality of war, Naylor (1890) advocated the advantages of the "cavalier" mentality over that of a "puritan" way of thinking, and Ross (1925) simply persuaded his audience to be heroic individuals. After 1930, although the topics remained value oriented, the issues they addressed were a bit more direct. Fuller's (1930) speech titled, "Our Racial Myopia," specifically focused on the need to value the physically superior members of our population over those who are mentally or physically disabled in some way. Steensma's 1945 address also tackled a timely issue by arguing that disabled veterans were being undervalued and under appreciated when they returned from the war. In 1965, Jamison persuaded his audience against the dangers of scapegoating.

Two of the speeches we analyzed utilized topics on questions of fact. The most recent of these was Moore's (1935) address that claimed Japan would never attack the United States. The other example of a speech with a topic focused on a question of fact was literary in nature. In 1900 Wescott argued that Macbeth and Iago are the quintessential examples of literary villains. The lack of topics based on questions of fact implies that Interstate Oratorical speakers tend to prefer topics with inherent value arguments. Even the more recent speeches that are policy oriented utilize topics that maintain some element of value-based argumentation. Creasy's 1980 address on the need for hospice care facilities is firmly grounded in arguments adhering to the value of dignity in death. Although advocating a specific change in policy, Kimmey's (1990) speech on time theft frequently makes appeals to the value of an honest work ethic. Interstate Oratorical speeches of the past 25 years have mirrored the move toward policy topics that is evident in other persuasive speaking competitions, yet they do still maintain some adherence to value based argumentation.

Organizational Pattern/Structure

When analyzing the speeches for elements of structure, we found some consistencies and some areas of variation. Initially, the vast majority of the speeches utilize some form of a problem/solution organizational pattern. Even the speakers using value-based topics often frame their speeches as addressing some key problem in society. Extremely developed solution points did not develop until the 1980s, but most of the speeches contained at least a concluding call to personal action or the changing of personal beliefs. Despite the research that indicates students in the past 15 years are using the problem/solution organizational pattern in a standardized way, we did find quite a bit of variation in how the different speeches approached this organizational pattern. Although Sweeny (2000) and Benton's (1995) speeches use the typical problem, cause, solution structure, Kimmey's (1990) speech uses a first point that defines the problem, a second point that outlines the harms related to the problem, and then concludes with a solution point. In 1985, Giles began with a point discussing the reasons the problem exists, then explains the harms associated with the problem, and finally ends with solutions. Prior to 1975, most of the speeches did not cover a cause-related point, and focused only on the problem and its solutions.

Another area related to structure where we did not notice much variation is in the use of connectives. Consistent with Friedley's (1992) research, our analysis of Interstate Oratorical speeches found that few speeches prior to 1980 used any connectives. Unlike current speeches that tend to be overly organized with previews, transitions, internal previews and internal summaries, most of the speeches we analyzed did not use connectives at all. Before 1980 even the basic introductory preview and main point transitions were rare. The lack of evidence of connectives in Interstate Oratorical speeches prior to the past 20 years suggests that this change in structure is very much tied to competitive expectations in the larger forensic community.

Evidence Usage

Of all the categories analyzed, the use of evidence is the one area that demonstrated the most variation across the history of the Interstate Oratorical competitions. Variation was found in the quantity, as well as if students used logical support or evocative evidence. As one would expect, the more recent speeches utilize the most evidence. Although speeches as early as 1930 were using at least 10 pieces of evocative evidence, the speeches given in the past 20 years were even more evidence heavy, with a much more noticeable dependence on logical supporting materials than earlier speeches. Benton's 1995 analysis of the problems related to the hiring of private police uses five distinct statistics and four pieces of expert testimony. Kimmey (1990) and Giles (1985) also use at least 5 pieces of statistical evidence each. Sweeny's (2000) speech, however, is an exception to the more recent trend toward a reliance on logical support materials. Her address offers only one statistic and 2 instances of expert testimony. Sweeny's speech is more consistent with earlier Interstate Oratorical addresses that primarily utilize evocative support materials.

Although logical support is used in several of the Interstate Oratorical addresses prior to 1980, the presence of such support is inconsistent in the early years of the competition. Beveridge (1885) and Pennington (1910) are the only speakers prior to 1930 to use either statistics or expert testimony. After 1930, the use of logical support becomes more common, with nearly every speech analyzed after that point displaying at least one piece of logical support.

The use of evocative support, however, is common characteristic across all of the speeches we analyzed. Differences existed in the varied types of evocative support used, but every speech used at least one piece of this form of evidence. Examples were without question the most common type of evocative support used. Almost every speech we analyzed uses at least one example. The earlier speeches tend to use historical examples, whereas the later speeches cite examples that help to establish the existence of the problem they are discussing. In his address, "The Solving Principle of Industry," Devers (1905) uses several historical examples to clarify his arguments. He states, "Many of the world's grandest achievements have had their inception amid the hammer-strokes of a crowded factory. James Watt saw the wraith of a steam engine through the puffing mists of an escape-pipe. Eli Whitney picked the principles of the cotton-gin from the planter's fingers, while Thomas Edison, in his wonder workshop, has chiseled the sun into a million electric satellites" (p. 314). Ross (1925) uses Galileo and Lincoln as examples of men who were not intimidated to stand up for their progressive beliefs. Such links to historical figures and events are common occurrences in earlier Interstate Oratorical speeches.

Recent speeches use examples, but rarely link them to historical events. Rather, more contemporary speeches use examples as a way to bolster the establishment of some problem that must be addressed. Kimmey (1990) lists a series of examples, such as constant socialization, too many personal phone calls, and long coffee breaks as a way to help clarify the problem of work place time theft.

In her speech advocating support for the aging, Klemme (1970) lists several examples of how the media perpetuates the problem of ageism. She argues, "The tempo and fashions of our culture further the myth. Soft drinks like Pepsi are 'for those who think young.' Hair stylists tout coiffures which conceal balding spots of sensitive customers. *Bazaar* magazine runs an ad displaying a bare midriff as the female face of the future - a face both young and beautiful" (p. 29). Examples such as these, although evocative in nature, work to support the speaker's arguments by clarifying the problems they are addressing. Although many other types of evocative support materials were used, none were used with the same consistency as examples. Narratives were a popular form of support after 1930, but were not common prior to that time. In her speech advocating support for justified "mercy killing," Harrell (1950) tells the story of Carol Paight, a woman indicted for murder after she killed her father who was suffering from cancer. Bayliff (1960) reminds the audience of Charles Van Doren's story, because as a participant in a national media scandal, his situation clarifies Bayliff's argument that people need to make more moral choices.

The narratives used in more recent speeches depend on this form of evidence as a way to personalize their speeches for the audience. These speakers often use sad or disturbing narratives. In his speech advocating the need to stop unnecessary cesarean deliveries, Giles (1985) offers the story of a woman who was so weak after her surgery that she was incapable of holding or even comforting her newborn baby. Benton (1995) uses an extended narrative in his speech as a way to shock his audience, through cynical humor, about the severity of the problem of private police. He tells the story of Michael Huston

Take for example, Michael Huston, a Vietnam veteran whose family claimed he was mentally disabled. Hired as a private police officer in 1992, Huston patrolled the Hollywood area of Los Angeles. After witnessing a burglary at Universal Studios, Huston decided his best course of action was to burn down the portion of the studios in which the burglary occurred, since he was unable to track down the suspects. After doing \$25 million dollars in damage to several movie sets, Mr. Huston then reported the incident to a superior, hoping to earn praise, (p. 31).

Both Giles and Benton use narratives as a way to sway the emotions of the audience toward a belief that the problems they are addressing are significant and personally relevant to all listeners.

The use of some form of evidence has been a consistent trait in all Interstate Oratorical speeches. Although the quantity and types of evidence have varied, there has been a commitment to the use of evocative support throughout the past 125 years of Interstate Oratorical competitions. This commitment to evocative support is one of the consistent characteristics we have been able to identify.

Stylistic Features

Of the five categories we examined, the use of stylistic features was the one area with the most coded instances. Numerous examples of stylistic features appeared in every speech. Although the nature of these features changed across

the years, the key commonality is that all the speeches used some type of stylistic feature.

Allusions to biblical and mythological stories were extremely common during the early years of the Interstate Oratorical competition. Egbert (1875) opens his speech with references to Orpheus and Eurydice. His speech continues with additional mention of Tantalus, Pluto, and Hercules. In his address arguing the brilliance of Edgar Allen Poe, Harris (1880) uses a mythological reference to support his assessment of Poe's work. He writes, "He was ever pursued across life's stage by the passions of his nature, like Orestes fleeing the Furies; and he will ever hold a place in the memory of men rather for what he might have been, than for what he was" (p. 98).

Even more common than allusions to mythology, are links to biblical events and passages. Cunningham (1913) begins his address with a vivid retelling of the crucifixion of Christ. He states, "But today in Old Jerusalem it [crime] cowers at bay, exposed, ridiculed, uncovered, by the man from Nazareth way" (103). His oratory makes numerous additional allusions to biblical symbols. Ross (1925) also makes frequent references to biblical events by threading the story of Moses throughout his speech on the "Martyrs of Progress." Such ties to mythology and religious themes become much less frequent after 1925, with only two more such references appearing in the speeches we analyzed.

Another stylistic feature that was particularly common during a specific time period was the use of instances of personal involvement. As explained, personal involvement occurs when a speaker links his/her topic to his/her own experiences. Personal involvement first appeared in our analysis in Steensma's 1945 speech about disabled veterans. He spoke of his own experience visiting a large army hospital. He states, "Here I saw a young soldier who three weeks before my visit had lost both arms on the beach heads of Normandy" (p. 46). By mentioning his own interactions with disabled veterans, Steensma is able to enhance his general ethos and perceived concern for the topic. Personal involvement appears in almost all of the speeches we analyzed representing the years from 1945-1985. Harrell's 1950 address on mercy killing makes mention of a family member who suffered extreme pain during the final weeks of her life. Klemme's (1970) speech opens with a sad description of her own grandmother's loneliness and economic dependence. Giles (1985) works the fact that he was delivered by a c-section into the opener of his speech about unnecessary caesarian deliveries. Woodruff (1975) argues that the U.S. should grant amnesty to the men who left the country to avoid being drafted for the Vietnam War. He brings his connection to the topic into the speech when he states, "Still others have said well, how can anyone support an unconditional amnesty and claim to be a loyal American. As a veteran of three years in the military, having served at a time when Viet Nam was at its height in terms of conflict I too asked myself that question" (p. 8). By including this reference to his own military experience, Woodruff enhances his credibility as one justified in advocating a fairly unpopular policy. In his speech "Mingled Blood" Zimmerman (1955) makes numerous references to his own

personal experiences as a hemophiliac. In fact, he opens his speech declaring, "I am a hemophiliac" (p. 198). When describing the physical toll hemophilia can take on a person's body, Zimmerman discloses, "My crooked left arm, the built-up heel on my right shoe, and the full length brace on my left leg offer mute but undeniable testimony to that fact" (p. 199). His references to his own involvement with the disease make this one of the more moving speeches we analyzed. Evidently, the use of personal involvement was not only a popular stylistic strategy; it was also an effective one.

A final stylistic feature that we identified in our analysis as occurring during a certain time frame is the use of regionally specific references. Both Benton (1995) and Sweeny (2000) make references in their speeches that are specifically tied to the region in which the Interstate Oratory contest was being held. Benton (1995) who won the contest held in Tempe, AZ, includes a telephone interview with a member of the Tempe Police Department as one of his pieces of expert testimony evidence. Sweeny (2000) uses the same strategy by including a phone interview conducted with a Sergeant in the Tallahassee Police Department while she was actually attending the Interstate Oratory competition in Florida. Utilizing regionally specific evidence is a stylistic strategy that enhances the recency and applicability of a speaker's supporting materials.

Although mythical and biblical allusions, personal involvement, and regionally specific references were common stylistic features that seemed to reoccur during specific time periods, some style choices were consistent throughout the history of the Interstate Oratorical competition. The use of such language strategies as alliteration, personification, metaphor, and repetition were frequently present in the analyzed speeches. Although such devices were used more often in the earlier speeches, evidence of them could still be found years later. Egbert (1875), Coultas (1875), Harris (1880), Wescott (1900), and Devers (1905) all incorporated metaphors into their early Interstate Oratorical speeches, and metaphors are still being used years later.

The use of rhetorical questions appeared in well over one half of the speeches we analyzed. In the earlier speeches, rhetorical questions were used for organizational purposes to assist the speaker when moving into a new thought or idea. Later, however, the rhetorical question was used primarily to sway emotions. When attempting to guide the audience to an understanding of the disillusioned youth of the depression era, Park (1941) asks the audience, "Did dictatorship not triumph in Russia with young workers and farmers? In Germany with youthful bands of Storm Troopers? In Italy with an army of black-shirted youngsters? Do the seeds of one-man government not flourish in the minds of the starving, idle, the hopeless?" (p. 35) This string of rhetorical questions not only engages the use of repetition, but also forces the audience to really think about the current mental state of the youth population. Nearly fifty years later, Kimmey (1990) uses rhetorical questions in a similar manner. She asks her audience, "Sound familiar?" after she lists examples of time theft (Kimmey, 1990, p. 5). Later she adds, "But what's the harm?" as she tries to get the audience to under-

stand the severity of the problem (Kimmey, 1990, p. 6). Both of her questions place the audience on the spot as they are forced to contemplate the role they play in perpetuating the problem of time theft.

The use of "we" language is also a stylistic feature that appears in almost all of the analyzed speeches. We consider "we" language to be a form of vivid language that attempts to incorporate the audience into the text of the speech. Often the "we" language was used as a way to enhance appeals based on guilt or altruism. Littell (1920) opens his speech stating, "Two years ago half the world stood united in a common effort. We were fighting to spare our children the tragedy of war, confident that the idealism which sustained us in the struggle would find permanent solution for the international problem" (p. 355). By opening his speech with the use of "we" language Littell (1920) is attempting to pull the audience together. After using Charles Van Doren as her opening example, Bayliff (1960) moves on to process the meaning of this example through the use of language that addresses the audience as a unified group. She asks her audience why Van Doren participated in the media scandal. She answers stating, "I venture to say that he did so because he is much like us. He is one of us in that he had a choice to make...He is like us because he finally chose the wrong alternative, just as we often do" (p. 11). Sweeny (2000) also frequently uses the stylistic feature of trying to incorporate the audience through the use of inclusive pronouns. Her use of this strategy, however, is primarily grounded in appeals guided by guilt and altruism. She challenges her audience to confront racial profiling claiming, "As members of society, we all shoulder some of the responsibility" (p. 3). Later Sweeny adds, "The main solution is simple, it relies on us" (p. 3). By clearly explaining to the audience that they are a part of the problem and also the solution, Sweeny succeeds in pulling the audience into the speech on a more personal level.

Many other stylistic features were coded in the speeches. This overview simply summarizes some of the more common examples. In general, however, the use of carefully crafted language is a characteristic displayed by every speech analyzed. The sophistication of language used varies, but all of the speeches depend on vivid language strategies at some point in their construction. Without a doubt, Interstate Oratorical speeches are highly concerned with elements of style.

Documentation

The result of our analysis of the documentation used in Interstate Oratorical speeches is similar to the results of previous studies. Only two speeches prior to 1955 use print sources as documentation. Fuller's 1930 speech makes a vague reference to the Tribuna, an Italian newspaper, and Moore's 1935 address generally summarizes a front-page story from the Indianapolis Star. In 1955, Zimmerman cites a statistic from The Science Digest, and in 1960 Bayliff refers to two books and a newspaper article. Between 1960 and 1985 print source citations remain fairly consistent at no more than two or three in each speech.

Kimme (1990), Benton (1995), and Sweeny (2000), however, each cite over 10 print sources. The majority of these print sources are current newspapers or magazines. Clearly, the Interstate Oratorical speeches of the past 15 years reflect the trend in forensics that expects public address speakers to provide a significant number of print source citations.

Although most speeches prior to 1955 did not utilize clearly cited print sources as forms of documentation, many speakers did include quotations from historical figures or noted philosophers. These quotations, however, were not accompanied by a citation for where the speaker read them. Hauerbach (1895) includes quotations from Burke, Wendell Phillips and several others that are not attributed to any specific speakers. Moore (1935) quotes Senator Nye and a Sir Basil. Several other speakers included excerpts from literary works, but these were more used for stylistic reasons than for documentation purposes. Our analysis indicates that the documentation of sources was not a prominent characteristic of Interstate Oratorical speeches until the late 1980s. In fact, there were at least 6 speeches, where no documentation of sources of any kind could be identified.

Discussion

The goal of our study is to identify common characteristics in the basic construction of speeches presented at the annual Interstate Oratorical Association contest. Our analysis reveals that while Interstate Speeches have in many ways changed and adapted according to competitive expectations over the past 125 years, some commonalities may be identified.

Before discussing these commonalities, however, we will initially highlight the areas where we observed significant differences. First, although the vast majority of Interstate speeches use problem/solution organizational patterns, there was considerable change in terms of how clearly structural elements were communicated to the audience. Whereas speech components like the introduction preview, main point transitions, and previews of sub-points seem second nature to us now, these organizational elements did not emerge until the last several decades. Earlier Interstate speeches depend on a much more fluid approach to organization. The presence of more connectives in current Interstate speeches seems consistent with competitive expectations of our time.

Another significant area of difference between the analyzed speeches is the more recent dependence on logical support material and documentation from print sources. The inclusion of evidence in the form of logical support materials is inconsistent in Interstate speeches. Although some earlier speakers do make logical appeals, this type of evidence does not become popular until the later speeches. The expectation for documentation in the speeches has also significantly changed over time. Source citations were quite rare during the first 100 years of the history of the Interstate Oratorical competition, but in the past 15 years the expectation for citations has exploded. A general coaching rule expressed currently is that no public address speech should use less than 8-10

sources. Assuredly, the inclusion of a significant number of source citations in Interstate speeches is prompted by competitive expectations in the general forensic community.

Despite these differences, we were able to identify three key commonalities across all the speeches we analyzed. Most of the speeches are in some way linked to value influenced topics, the use of evocative evidence is quite high, and all of the speeches seem to depend on a significant amount of stylistic features. Although differences are apparent in how the speakers enacted these strategies, the commonality between the speeches is found in that the speeches generally seek to meet these goals in form and content.

Initially, although the topics have shifted to more policy oriented issues in the past 30 years, the focus on values within these topics is consistent with the highly value oriented topics of the first 75 years of the contest. One coach consulted for this project argued "value topics will have a better shot at going/qualifying for Interstate...Policy topics are Interstate topics only if the human issue is stressed". Another coach noted that Interstate speech topics "are mixed with policy and values in a single topic". Members of the forensic coaching community do seem to recognize this unique aspect of Interstate speech topics. Perhaps the historical use of highly value-oriented topics in the early years of the Interstate Oratorical contest has maintained an influence over how students currently handle the far more popular policy focused topics. Currently, to be successful throughout the season the norm dictates that most speakers will need to have a policy topic. That successful speeches at Interstate also tend to have clear value components to them seems an interesting deviation from speeches that more strongly adhere to the current competitive norms.

The second major area where we noticed commonalities across all of the speeches is the use of evocative evidence. Although the trend over the past several decades has been to incorporate more instances of logical support, Interstate speeches have never stopped using significant amounts of evocative support. Thus, even though the desired balance between logical support and evocative evidence is not evident until more recent speeches, the presence of evocative evidence is a commonality across the history of the organization.

Evocative evidence is especially useful in enhancing the emotional appeal of a speech. Another coach we questioned concerning this project states, "I ask my speakers to work with more pathos than they normally do; passion is a big part of IOA". This recognition of the role of pathos in an Interstate speech is echoed by a coach who when responding to a question about using specific coaching strategies for Interstate speeches, simply answers, "Honesty and sincerity. A logical appeal does not work as much as an emotional appeal". Unlike other speaking situations where an over-reliance on pathos will spark negative reactions from judges and the audience, Interstate speakers are encouraged to look for as many opportunities to evoke emotional responses as possible. The use of evocative support materials is a part of this strategy. Once again, the acceptance of emotional appeals in Interstate speeches at a level that might be awkward

in other competitive settings could easily be attributed to the rich history of the use of evocative support materials throughout the duration of the Interstate Oratorical Association contest.

The final area in which we noticed significant commonalities is the dependence of speakers on the use of stylistic features. Although the nature of the features used has shifted across the years, the fact that Interstate speeches have remained highly stylized in their language usage is evident. The earliest speeches we examined seemed almost entirely dependent on elements of style. Often while attempting to code these speeches, we would become frustrated with our inability to identify concrete logical evidence, source citations, or even main points. The one thing, however, we were always able to locate in each speech we analyzed was elements of style. The presence of allusions, personification, repetition, rhetorical questions and numerous other language elements were so numerous that we often had trouble coding them, as one stylistic feature would blend into another. Many of the coaches we consulted for this project discussed the importance of delivery in Interstate speeches. Although it was impossible for us to examine the delivery elements of these Interstate Speeches representing a 125-year history, we were able to carefully explore the language used. Style and delivery are often tightly connected. Speeches rich in language strategies lend themselves to engaging deliveries. That coaches focus much of their Interstate practice sessions on delivery work, is evidence of an appreciation for how specific language elements must be delivered in a speech in order for them to maximize their overall influence.

Currently, students do not receive the same level of study in elements of written style. Unlike a century ago, when style was at the forefront of our rhetorical studies, students now barely know the definitions of personification and metaphor, much less how to effectively incorporate them into a speech. Participation in the Interstate Oratorical competition is one of few chances students have to truly explore elements of style. The preservation of this quality in Interstate speeches is, in our opinion, one of the richest contributions the history of this competition has given to past and present student participants.

Conclusion

This study only begins to explore the unique nature of the Interstate Oratorical speech. Although we were able to identify several commonalities in the speeches we analyzed, to really answer the question, "Are these speeches unique?" one would need to compare them to other persuasive speeches given at different national competitions. The next stage we wish to take with this research is to determine if the championship speeches we analyzed from the past 25 years were also successful at the AFA and/or NFA national championship tournaments. If we determine that the speeches were also entered in these tournaments, but did not succeed to the same degree that they did at Interstate, this will provide further evidence that Interstate speeches are a special type of persuasive address.

The Interstate Oratorical Association has a rich history. Not only is it the

oldest national tournament, but it is also one of the most respected. So often in forensics we focus too much on what is cutting edge, and not enough on the traditions upon which our activity is grounded. An appreciation for the historical traditions of the Interstate Oratorical contest allows us the opportunity to reflect on our roots.

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Revisiting Male/Female Participation and Success in Forensics: Has Time Changed the Playing Field?

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Abstract

Educators have long recognized the value of developing strong oral communication skills; intercollegiate competition in both debate and individual events is a primary vehicle for developing and strengthening these skills. Since data collected and analyzed by Friedley and Manchester (1985) suggested that there is not parity in male/female participation and success in intercollegiate forensics, the authors chose to re-visit the findings of prior research and compare those findings to data gathered from three recent national tournaments in intercollegiate debate and individual events. Data analysis in this study suggests that females have made limited strides in specific individual events; however, simple ratio comparisons, as well as one sample chi-square tests, generally indicate that parity in male/female participation and success in intercollegiate forensics still does not exist.

Educators have long recognized the value of developing strong oral communication skills; intercollegiate competition in both debate and individual events continues to be a primary vehicle for developing and strengthening these skills. As such, almost three decades ago The 1974 National Developmental Conference on Forensics jointly sponsored by the American Forensic Association and the Speech Communication Association called for research to determine specifically why women and minority group members are not proportionately represented in some aspects of these educational activities (McBath, 1975). A decade later at the 1984 Developmental Conference at Northwestern University, participants once again attempted to become more pro-active concerning this issue and endorsed a resolution "to increase and strengthen forensic participation by identifying ethnic, racial, gender, and handicap barriers that may currently inhibit student participation as well as disseminate findings concerning such barriers throughout the forensic community" (Parson, 1985, p. 43). From this directive, forensics scholars have continued to explore the impact of gender on both the participation and success of students in this co-curricular activity.

Review of Gender-Based Forensics Literature

Regardless of the discussion prompted during the 1970s and 1980s in the forensics community, follow-up research to address the issue of male/female participation and success in intercollegiate debate and individual events only served

to confirm that gender parity simply does not exist. For example, a survey conducted within the forensic community sought to explore the perceptions of male/female participation in forensics (Friedley and Nadler, 1983). Results of this study indicate that males are perceived to be more disproportionately represented in debate and that debate is perceived as a "masculine" activity; in individual events, the study reports that male/female participation overall is perceived as more "balanced." However, subsequent analysis of male/female participation and success at three national tournaments in both debate and individual events reflected both participation and success levels that generally favored males (Friedley and Manchester, 1985).

To explain these findings, researchers began to explore why male predominance in the forensic activity persists. For example, in a limited study of why males and females choose to participate in extra-curricular activities, Nadler (1985) noted that males in forensics are more interested in selecting an extra-curricular activity that relates to career choice than females; as such, males may be more driven to participate and succeed in the activity than females. In a follow-up study to explore the nature of male/female judging decisions in ten regional individual events tournaments, Friedley and Manchester (1987) reported that decisions of male judges were more likely to reinforce traditional sex-role expectations for the three event groupings. Specifically, male judges were more likely to rank males slightly higher in the original speaking events, females considerably higher in the interpretive events, and males considerably higher in the limited preparation events.

In an analysis of the persuasive speaking event as it evolved from the 1960s to the 1980s, Sellnow and Ziegelmüller (1988) noted a growing trend that reinforced a clear preference for traditional "masculine" styles of rhetoric - topics with less unique personal involvement, evidence grounded in far more use of logical appeals with far less use of evocative (emotional) appeals, and solutions that were increasingly policy-oriented. As the authors noted, "it would be unfortunate if too much of the emotional quality of 'old fashioned oratory' were lost" (p. 85). As a follow-up to this discussion, Murphy (1989) then explored the issue of "masculine" and "feminine" style differences reflected in the public address events. Given that the standard of success in these events rests primarily with the "masculine" style, Murphy suggested that women often face a double-bind in these events — either conform to a "masculine" style that may be uncomfortable for them or employ a "feminine" style that is devalued in these events. Of these various public address events, however, Murphy noted women had experienced significant success in persuasive speaking where a combination of both the "masculine" and "feminine" styles of speaking might be most appropriate.

With a focus specifically on extemporaneous speaking and persuasive speaking, White (1997) analyzed the participation and success levels of participants entered in these events at two national tournaments — the American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament and the National Forensic Association's Individual Events Nationals. Her findings indicated that

sex is a predictor of competitive success in extemporaneous speaking (i.e., males were significantly more successful in this event than females) while sex is not a predictor of competitive success in persuasive speaking (i.e., while more females participated in the event, the success level between males and females was relatively equal). It seemed that even when more females participated in the event, their success level did not match that level of participation. Finally, Billings (1999) reported that male judges rank male competitors higher than female competitors in both extemporaneous and impromptu speaking; once again, male judges were more likely to reinforce sex-role expectations in the limited preparation events.

An examination of male/female participation in intercollegiate debate over the past two decades also indicates a lack of parity in both participation and success. In 1986, Logue reported less than 30% participation by females in the Cross Examination Debate Association (CEDA). In the study of a five-year period from 1991 to 1995, Stepp (1997) reported that approximately 55% of the competitors at the CEDA national tournaments were male while approximately 45% of the competitors were female. In a follow-up study of the 2000 CEDA National Tournament, Stepp and Gardner (2001) noted that 64% of the competitors were male and only 36% of the competitors were female compared with the male/female participation ratio of 71% male competitors and 29% female competitors found at the 1990 CEDA National Tournament. While female participation had increased, the authors concluded that "at only 36% participation by females, the debate community is still not representative of the collegiate body in which women comprise 55.8% of students" (p. 74). Furthermore, analysis of male/female participation in elimination rounds did not reflect male/female parity in success. While women comprised approximately 36% of the participants, only 26% of the participants in elimination rounds were women; perhaps even more surprising is the finding that "as the percent of women participating increases, there has not been an increase in the percent of speaker awards given to women" (p. 75).

Finally, while little research has focused specifically on results from the National Debate Tournament, Brusckhe and Johnson (1994) did explore the differences in male/female individual speaker success in several large NDT-style tournaments between 1989 and 1992. Their research reported three interesting findings: 1) overall, female debaters received fewer speaker points than male debaters in these tournaments; 2) the fewest points awarded to female debaters came from female judges when assessing female debaters arguing the negative; and 3) male judges awarded higher speaker points to same-sex teams rather than cross-sex teams. Though these researchers did not explore success in terms of wins and losses, their assessment of individual speaker point differences clearly suggest that males are likely to experience more success in this activity than females.

As the forensics community embarks upon the 21st century, the authors believe that it is appropriate once again to visit the issue of gender equity in this

activity. Since data collected and analyzed by Friedley and Manchester (1985) indicated that there is an imbalance in male/female participation and success in intercollegiate forensics, and no research since that time has indicated a significant shift in these findings, the authors decided it was appropriate to re-visit the findings of prior research and compare those findings to data gathered from recent national tournaments in intercollegiate forensics. Therefore, the purpose of this study is three-fold: 1) to describe the male/female participation and success in both debate and individual events at recent national tournaments; 2) to compare these data to previous data collected at national debate and individual events tournaments; and 3) to identify areas of gender-based inequity that may still exist today.

To accomplish the purpose of this study, the authors generated the following four hypotheses:

H1: There is no difference in the levels of participation or success between male students and female students at a 2001 national tournament in debate.

H2: There is no difference in the levels of participation or success between male students and female students at a 1984 national tournament in debate compared to a 2001 national tournament in debate.

H3: There is no difference in the levels of participation or success between male students and female students at a 2001 national tournament in individual events.

H4: There is no difference in the levels of participation or success between male students and female students at a 1984 national tournament in individual events compared to a 2001 national tournament in individual events.

Method

To provide data for this research, three national forensic tournaments that require a qualifying procedure for participation were selected: (a) the 2001 National Debate Tournament, (b) the 2001 American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament, and (c) the 2001 National Forensic Association's Individual Events Nationals. As with the 1984 study, national tournaments with a qualifying procedure were selected to assure participants who had already been judged to represent a level of "success" that warranted participation at a national tournament. For the National Debate Tournament, tournament results were taken from the *2001 National Debate Tournament Results Book* that provided complete names of all tournament participants. For both the 2001 American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament and the 2001 National Forensic Association's Individual Events Tournament, tabulation sheets that included the participant's complete name were consulted.

Using this data, the participant's sex was determined by noting obviously sex-typed first names. When a participant's first name was not gender-specific, identification was determined through consultation with various directors of forensics. Participant names from these three national tournaments were then analyzed to determine male/female distribution ratios for both preliminary rounds and elimination rounds of competition. Using these ratios, male/female participant and team comparisons were made in debate while male/female participant comparisons by event and event groupings were made in individual events. In addition, one-sample chi-square tests were performed to determine whether differences in levels of participation and success between male and female students were statistically significant. The research findings are reported individually by national tournament.

Research Findings

National Debate Tournament

H1: There is no difference in the levels of participation or success between male and female students at a 2001 national tournament in debate.

Of the 154 participants who competed at the National Debate Tournament in 2001, 75% were male while 25% were female. A male/female distribution of the seventy-seven teams competing included the following: 56% male/male debate teams, 38% male / female debate teams, and only 6% were female/female debate teams ($X^2 = 29.08, p < .01$). Of the twenty-seven teams advancing to double octa-final rounds of competition at this tournament, participants included 78% males / 22% females. A male/female distribution of the teams advancing to the first level of elimination rounds included the following: 63% male/male debate teams, 30% male/female debate teams, and 7% (only 2) female/female debate teams. The 16 teams advancing to octa-final rounds of competition at this tournament included 84% males / 16% females. A male/female distribution of the teams advancing to this second level of elimination rounds included the following: 69% male/male debate teams, 31% male/female debate teams, and no female/female debate teams advanced to octa-final rounds of competition ($X^2 = 6.65, p < .05$). Of the 8 teams advancing to quarter-final rounds of competition, participants included 87% males / 13% females; 67% were male/male debate teams and 33% were male/female debate teams. Semi-final and final rounds of competition at the National Debate Tournament included only males; again, no female/female debate teams advanced beyond double octa-final rounds of competition and no females advanced beyond the quarter-final rounds of competition (see Appendix A).

Based on these findings, H1 is rejected for both level of participation and level of success at the 2001 National Debate Tournament.

H2: There is no difference in the levels of participation or success between male students and female students at a 1984 national tournament in debate when compared to a 2001 national tournament in debate.

Compared to data gathered seventeen years ago at the 1984 National Debate Tournament, the male/female participation ratios reflect a slight increase in female participation (Friedley & Manchester, 1985). Of the 124 participants that year, 85% were male while only 15% were female; by 2001, female participation at this national tournament increased by 10%. A male/female distribution of the sixty-two teams competing included the following: 73% male/male debate teams, 24% male/female debate teams, and only 3% female/female debate teams ($X^2= 47.55$, $p<.01$). In comparing the "success ratio" of female debaters in 2001 to those in 1984, the ratio decreased. In 1984, one female/female debate team advanced to octa-finals; in 2001, no female/female teams advanced to octa-finals. In 1984, the final round of competition at the National Debate Tournament included three males (75%) and one female (25%); however, the male/male team won the 1984 National Debate Tournament. Because no female debaters even advanced beyond the quarter-final rounds of competition in 2001, a male/female team also won the 2001 National Debate Tournament.

Based on these findings, H2 is rejected. There is no discernable difference between the 1984 and 2001 National Debate Tournament results in both levels of participation or success for female debaters.

American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament

H3: There is no difference in the levels of participation or success between male students and female students at a 2001 national individual events tournament.

Of the 1441 participants at the 2001 American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament, 52% were male and 48% were female. Combining all eleven events in the competition, participants advancing to quarter-final rounds were 58% male and 42% female, while participants advancing to the semi-final rounds were 65% male / 35% female ($X^2=10.15$, $p<.01$). Participants advancing to the final rounds of competition in the combined eleven events were 65% male / 35% female; thus, the gender gap widened as the tournament progressed with female participation dropping from 48% in preliminary rounds to 42% in quarter-final rounds, 35% in semi-final rounds, and holding to 35% in final rounds of competition ($X^2 = 5.12$, $p>.05$; see Appendix B).

Of the 471 participants in the original speaking events including persuasive speaking, informative speaking, after dinner speaking, and communication analysis, 47% were male and 53% were female. That relative gender balance in participation was preserved for these four events in quarter-final rounds (48% male, 52% female). The greatest gender differences in ratios of participation appeared in the semi-final rounds of competition (56% male, 44% female). Advancing to the final rounds of competition in these events, however, females leveled the playing field by maintaining a 50% level of participation across the four events.

When the original speaking events were analyzed individually, females held a slight dominance in three of the four events: persuasive speaking (43%

male, 56% female), informative speaking (44% male, 56% female), and communication analysis (44% male, 56% female). The greatest disparity between male/female participation in preliminary rounds occurred in after dinner speaking (58% male, 42% female). Perhaps most interesting is the fact that there were an equal number of male and female participants in the final rounds of both informative speaking and after dinner speaking; the highest ratio of female participation was in the final round of persuasive speaking (17% male, 83% female) and the lowest ratio of female participation was in communication analysis (83% male, 17% female).

Of the 735 participants in the interpretive events of program oral interpretation, prose, poetry, drama, and dramatic duo, 52% were male and 48% were female. While there was a relative balance between males and females during preliminary rounds of competition, the male/female ratio began to change significantly at the outset of the elimination rounds. As a result, only 40% of those participants advancing to the quarter-final rounds of competition were female while 60% were male ($X^2=3.95$, $p<.05$). The gap widened considerably in semi-final rounds (71% male, 29% female; $X^2 = 10.30$, $p<.01$) and continued to widen even more in final rounds of competition (75% male, 25% female; $\chi^2 = 7.66$, $p<.01$). During preliminary rounds of competition in these events, drama reflected the greatest male/female ratio imbalance (58% male, 42% female); however, that male/female ratio was stable until the final round of competition where there were an equal number of male and female participants.

While preliminary rounds of program oral interpretation and poetry each reflect a slight female dominance (47% male, 53% female), those ratios shifted considerably during elimination rounds. The male/female ratio in program oral interpretation shifted in quarter-final rounds (67% male, 33% female); that ratio continued to hold for both semi-final and final rounds of competition in this event. The male/female ratio in poetry also shifted in quarter-final rounds (62% male, 38% female); however, that ratio shifted significantly in semi-final rounds of competition (83% male, 17% female) and in the final round of competition where no females advanced. While prose interpretation reflected relative balance in female/male participation during preliminary rounds of competition (53% male, 47% female), the male/female ratio also widened significantly during elimination rounds of competition: 54% males / 46% females advanced to quarter-final rounds, 83% males / only 17% females advanced to semi-final rounds, and once again no females advanced to the final round of competition in this event.

Finally, the male/female ratio of participation in dramatic duo during preliminary rounds reflected 54% males / 46% females. During the elimination rounds in this event, the ratios varied as follows: 60% male / 40% female participants advanced to quarter-final rounds, 62% male / 38% female participants advanced to semi-final rounds, and 58% male / 42% female participants advanced to the final round of competition in this event. While female participation in the interpretive events was almost equal to male participation (52% male, 48% female), the gap widened considerably by the final rounds of competition

in these events where females represented only 25% of the participants and were not represented at all in the final rounds of two events - prose and poetry.

Of the 235 participants in the limited preparation events of extemporaneous speaking and impromptu speaking, 63% of the participants were male while only 37% of the participants were female ($X^2=15.84$, $p<.01$). As the participants advanced to the elimination rounds, the male/female ratio of participation remained relatively stable: 69% male / 31% female participants advanced to quarter-final rounds, 67% male / 33% female participants advanced to semi-final rounds, and 67% male / 33% female participants advanced to the final rounds of competition in the limited preparation events.

In extemporaneous speaking, 63% of the participants were male while 37% of the participants were female. Through elimination rounds of competition, the ratios varied as follows: 71% male / 29% female participants advanced to quarter-final rounds, 63% male / 37% female participants advanced to semi-final rounds, and the final round of extemporaneous speaking consisted of three male and three female participants. Though female participants comprised slightly more than one-third of the initial participants, women comprised half of the finalists in this event. In impromptu speaking, 64% of the participants were male while 36% of the participants were female. Though male/female ratios held somewhat constant with preliminary round ratios through quarter-final rounds of competition (67% male, 33% female) and semi-final rounds of competition (67% male, 33% female), only 1 female (83% male, 17% female) advanced to the final round of competition in this event.

Finally, out of the twelve national champions (including duo) named in the eleven events at the 2001 American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament, only three of those national champions were females. Females were national champions in informative speaking and program oral interpretation; in addition, a third female was a national champion with her male partner in dramatic duo. The "success ratio" for national champions this tournament was 75% males and 25% females.

Based on these findings, H3 is confirmed for overall level of participation and rejected for overall success in semi-final and final rounds of competition at the 2001 American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament.

H4: There is no difference in the levels of participation or success between male students and female students at a 1984 national individual events tournament compared to a 2001 national individual events tournament.

Compared to data collected in 1984, the ratios indicate some interesting findings (Friedley & Manchester, 1985). Of the 861 participants at the 1984 American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament, 58% were male and 42% were female ($X^2= 21.80$, $p<.01$); female participation rose by 6% in 2001. The "success ratio" for the combined ten events at the 1984 tourna-

ment compared to the combined eleven events at the 2001 tournament indicated that females had made some strides in the elimination rounds. In 1984, the male/female ratio in quarter-final rounds was 65% male and 35% female ($X^2 = 5.82$, $p < .05$); in 2001, the ratio in quarter-final rounds was 58% male and 42% female - the female ratio rose 7%. In 1984, the male/female ratio in semi-finals was 71% male and 29% female ($X^2 = 9.41$, $p < .01$); in 2001, the ratio in semi-finals was 65% male and 35% female - the female ratio rose 6%. In 1984, the male/female ratio in final rounds of competition was 80% male and 20% female ($X^2 = 13.44$, $p < .01$); in 2001, the ratio in final rounds of competition was 65% male and 35% female - the female ratio rose 15%. While parity with the participation rate still has not occurred for females, the success ratio has risen slightly overall.

In examining data from both national tournaments by the three event groupings, the male/female participation ratio compared to the male/female "success ratio" indicates female strides that range from slight to significant (Friedley & Manchester, 1985). For the original speaking events, the 1984 participation ratio reflected 57% male / 43% female ($X^2 = 4.76$, $p < .05$); in 2001, the participation ratio reflected 47% male / 53% female. While the 1984 final rounds in this event grouping reflected a 71% male / 29% female ratio, the 2001 final rounds in this event grouping reflected a 50% male / 50% female ratio - the "success ratio" for females rose 21%. For the interpretive events, the 1984 participation ratio reflected 54% male / 46% female; in 2001, the participation ratio reflected 52% male / 48% female. While the 1984 final rounds in this event grouping reflected an 83% male / 17% female ratio ($X^2 = 10.39$, $p < .01$), the 2001 final rounds in this event grouping reflected a 75% male / 25% female ratio - the "success ratio" for females rose only 8% and is still not consistent with the participation level for this grouping of events. For the limited preparation events, the 1984 participation ratio reflected 69% male / 31% female ($X^2 = 23.76$, $p < .01$); in 2001, the participation ratio was similar - 63% male / 37% female. While 1984 final rounds in this event grouping reflected a 92% male and 8% female ratio, the 2001 final rounds in this event grouping reflected a 67% male / 33% female ratio; the "success ratio" for females in this event grouping rose 25%, but has not reached a level of parity.

Based on these findings, H4 is confirmed for level of participation; unlike 1984, female students were close to parity with male students in 2001 in terms of overall participation. However, H4 is rejected for overall levels of success for females in 2001 versus 1984 at the quarter-final, semi-final, and final rounds of competition at the American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament (note that the 2001 results still do not reflect parity between male and female students).

National Forensic Association's Individual Events Nationals

H3: There is no difference in the levels of participation or success between male students and female students at a 2001 national individual events tournament.

Of the 1587 participants at the 2001 National Forensic Association's Individual competition, 47% were male and 53% were female ($X^2 = 5.68$, $p < .05$). Combining all nine events in the competition, participants advancing to quarter-final rounds were 57% male and 43% ($X^2 = 4.90$, $p < .05$) female while participants advancing to semi-final rounds were 58% male and 42% female ($X^2 = 6.19$, $p < .05$). Participants advancing to the final rounds of competition in the combined nine events were 62% male and 38% female ($X^2 = 5.19$, $p < .05$); thus, females constituted 53% of the entries in preliminary rounds yet their "success ratio" dropped to only 38% in the final rounds of competition (see Appendix C).

Of the 532 participants in the original speaking events including informative speaking, persuasive speaking, after dinner speaking, and rhetorical criticism, 47% were male and 53% were female. While female participation was strongest in informative speaking (41% male, 59% female), that ratio increased in quarter-final rounds of competition (33% male, 67% female) and semi-final rounds of competition (33% male, 67% female); however, the final round of competition in this event reflected 50% male / 50% female participation. Participation in preliminary rounds of persuasive speaking competition reflected a 47% male / 53% female ratio. Quarter-final rounds of competition reflected a 32% male / 68% female ratio and semi-final rounds of competition reflected a 42% male / 58% female ratio; however, the final round of competition in persuasive speaking reflect a 50% male / 50% female ratio.

While female participation was weakest in after dinner speaking (55% male, 45% female), the ratios vary as follows throughout the elimination rounds: a 62% male / 38% female ratio in quarter-final rounds, a 50% male / 50% female ratio in semi-final rounds, and a 50% male / 50% female ratio in the final round of competition. The final event in this grouping, rhetorical criticism, reflected the greatest decline in the female "success ratio." While 57% of the participants in this event were female and only 43% of the participants in this event were male, the participant levels across elimination rounds were as follows: quarter-final rounds reflected a 54% male / 46% female ratio; semi-final rounds reflected a 50% male and 50% female ratio; the final round of rhetorical criticism reflected a 67% male / 33% female ratio.

Of the 682 participants in the interpretive events of prose, poetry, and dramatic duo, 42% were male and 58% were female ($X^2 = 17.74$, $p < .01$). While there was a slight to moderate dominance of female participation compared to male participation in the preliminary rounds of competition in these events, there were significant ratio shifts across elimination rounds in the various events. For example, preliminary round participation in prose reflected a ratio of 38% male / 62% female. During the quarter-final and semi-final rounds in this event, the ratio held stable at 50% male / 50% female; however, the final round of competition in prose reflect a female ratio even stronger than the original level of participation (33% male, 67% female). Participation in the preliminary rounds of poetry reflected a 36% male / 64% female ratio; however, the ratios varied as follows across elimination rounds: a 54% male / 46% female participation ratio in quarter-final rounds, a 67% male / 33% female participation ratio in semi-finals, and

a 67% male / 33% female participation ratio in the final round of competition. Participation in preliminary rounds of dramatic duo reflected a ratio of 42% male / 58% female. During elimination rounds in this event, the most significant change in the male/female ratio occurred at the quarter-final rounds of competition (62% male, 38% female); the semi-final rounds of competition reflected a 71% male / 29% female participation ratio while the final round of competition in dramatic duo reflected a 67% male / 33% female ratio of participation.

Of the 333 participants in the limited preparation events of extemporaneous speaking and impromptu speaking, 61% were male and 39% were female ($X^2 = 16.00$, $p < .01$) during preliminary rounds of competition. The ratio of female participants compared to male participants decreased significantly during the elimination rounds, and the ratios were identical for both events across all elimination rounds. For both extemporaneous speaking and impromptu speaking, the ratios across elimination rounds were as follows: for quarter-final rounds, the ratio was 79% male / 21% female ($X^2 = 6.63$, $p < .05$); for semi-final rounds, the ratio was 75% male / 25% female; for the final round of competition in both events, the ratio was 83% male / 17% female. Of all the events at the National Forensic Association's Individual Events Nationals, the limited preparation events reflected the lowest "success ratio" for females compared to males.

Finally, out of ten national champions (including duo) named in the nine events at the 2001 National Forensic Association's Individual Events Nationals, only one was female. The only female national champion at this tournament was in after dinner speaking; therefore, the "success ratio" for national champions at this tournament was 90% males and 10% females.

Based on these findings, H3 is confirmed for overall level of participation and is rejected for overall success in quarter-final, semi-final, and final rounds of competition at the 2001 National Forensic Association's Individual Events Nationals.

H4: There is no difference in the levels of participation or success between male students and female students at a 1984 national individual events tournament compared to a 2001 national individual events tournament.

Compared to data collected in 1984, the ratios once again provide some interesting findings (Friedley & Manchester, 1985). Of the 1096 participants at the 1984 National Forensic Association's Individual Events Nationals, 52% were male and 48% were female; female participation rose by 5% in 2001. The "success ratio" for the combined nine events at the 1984 tournament compared to the combined nine events at the 2001 tournament indicated that females had made minimal strides in the elimination rounds. In 1984, the male/female ratio in quarter-finals was 59% male / 41% female ($X^2 = 4.64$, $p < .05$); in 2001, the ratio in quarter-finals was 57% male / 43% female - the female ratio rose only 2%. In 1984, the male/female ratio in semi-finals was 57% male / 43% female; in 2001, the ratio in semi-final rounds was 58% male / 42% female - the female ratio, declined by 1%. In 1984, the male/female ratio in final rounds of competition

was 58% male / 42% female; in 2001, the ratio in final rounds of competition was 62% male / 38% female - the female ratio declined 4%. While parity with the participation rate has not yet occurred, the success ratio has also declined in the last seventeen years.

In examining data from both national tournaments by the three event groupings, the male/female participation ratio when compared to the male/female "success ratio" indicates an overall decline in the level of success for females. For the original speaking events, the 1984 participation ratio reflected 51% male / 49% female; in 2001, the participation ratio reflected 47% male / 53% female. While the 1984 final rounds of competition in this event grouping reflected a 46% male / 54% female ratio, the 2001 final rounds of competition in this event grouping reflected a 54% male / 46% female ratio - the "success ratio" for females had dropped 8%. For the interpretive events, the 1984 participation ratio reflected 49% male and 51% female; in 2001, the participation ratio reflected 58% male / 42% female. While the 1984 final rounds of competition in this event grouping reflected a 62% male / 38% female ratio, the 2001 final rounds of competition in this event grouping reflected a 58% male / 42% female ratio - the "success ratio" for females rose 4%. For the limited preparation events, the 1984 participation ratio reflected 62% male and 38% female ($X^2 = 22.34, p < .01$); in 2001, the participation ratio was similar - 61% male and 39% female. While the 1984 final rounds in this event grouping reflected a 75% male and 25% female ratio, the 2001 final rounds in this event grouping reflected a significant decline in the "success ratio" for females in this event. The event grouping ratio was 83% male and only 17% female - a decline of 8% for females.

Based on these findings, H4 is confirmed for the National Forensic Association's Individual Events Nationals. Unlike 1984, the level of participation for female students exceeded that of male students in 2001; however, H4 is confirmed for overall levels of success for females in 2001 versus 1984 at the quarter-final, semi-final, and final rounds of competition.

Discussion

Though the research findings presented provide interesting insight into male /female participation and success in intercollegiate forensics, the authors would be remiss if they did not acknowledge some limitations to the study. First, the data analyzed and compared in this study reflects participation and success levels at only three national tournaments in only two years of competition - 1984 and 2001. While the authors assume these tournaments are representative of the activity over time, these tournaments may reflect only a "snapshot" of the activity that is an anomaly rather than a representative sample. An analysis of data from additional national tournaments in the activity over a span of several consecutive years may provide a more representative sample from which to draw conclusions about male/female participation and success in intercollegiate forensics.

Second, the authors note that there are several other variables, besides sex, that may account for participation and success in intercollegiate forensics. For

example, the prior forensics training a student brings to intercollegiate forensics, the length of time a student participates in the activity, and the amount of time a student dedicates to the activity may be powerful predictors of participation and success in intercollegiate forensics. If patterns of participation and success are well established in high school forensics, then these patterns may simply lay the groundwork for a repeated pattern in intercollegiate forensics. If males, more than females, are drawn to extra-curricular activities most closely related to career goals (Nadler, 1983), then males may be more driven to participate and succeed in an activity that develops strong oral communication skills related to career goals. These variables, as well as many others, may never foster parity for males and females engaged in this activity.

Finally, the authors cannot underestimate the influence of forensics coaches as teachers, mentors, and judges in the activity; all of these roles directly influence student participation and success in the activity. Coaches as teachers and mentors select the students they will nurture and challenge; they set the standards for participation and success in their own individual programs. As coaches then judge participants in the activity each week, their evaluations and assessments define various aspects of the activity and reinforce the standards for success. The sex of forensic coaches, as well as their perceptions of how sex and gender relate to participation and success in various aspects of intercollegiate forensics, will likely shape the activity (its participants and their success) over time.

As discussed in the review of literature, early gender research in forensics suggested that debate is perceived to be a male-dominated activity (Friedley & Nadler, 1983); in fact, actual examination of the male/female participation level at the 1984 and 2001 National Debate Tournament continues to support that perception. Males continue to outnumber females in intercollegiate debate at a ratio of roughly three to one; perhaps even more disconcerting is the fact that female success in this activity has declined when compared to earlier data. While one female/female debate team advanced to octa-finals in 1984, no female/female debate teams advanced to octa-finals in 2001. While a female debater advanced to the final round of competition in 1984, no female debater even advanced beyond quarter-finals in 2001.

While these findings may not be representative of all intercollegiate debate (i.e., cross examination debate or Lincoln-Douglas debate), these findings do provide powerful commentary on male/female parity within the primary outlet for policy debate - it simply does not exist. Perhaps leaders in this activity might examine some of the same factors the U.S. Department of Labor noted in 1991 as reasons for the "glass ceiling" women and minorities face in the workplace: "unfair recruitment practices, limited opportunities for advancement to decision-making positions, gender-based stereotyping and harassment, and a general lack of management commitment to established systems, policies, and practices for achieving workplace diversity and upward mobility" (Stewart, Cooper, Stewart, & Friedley, 2003, p. 181). If the National Debate Tournament believes that women ought to have parity with men in the activity, then their efforts must begin with recruiting and retaining women in the activity so that they can succeed.

Early gender research in forensics also suggested that the individual events activity is perceived to be a more gender-balanced forensic activity (Friedley & Nadler, 1983). While descriptive data from the preliminary rounds of competition at both the 1984 and 2001 American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament and National Forensic Association's Individual Events Nationals suggest a general balance in male/female participation ratios, analysis of the elimination rounds at both tournaments reflect a male/female imbalance that emerges - an imbalance that generally continues to favor male participants in this activity. Perhaps most interesting is data generated by the three event groupings.

The original speaking events reflect most male/female parity in both participation and success. The male/female ratio in the final rounds of competition in this event grouping reflects these significant female strides: a 50% female/50% male ratio in 2001 compared to a 29% female/71% male ratio in 1984 (AFA-NIET) and a 46% female/54% male ratio in 2001 compared to a 54% female/46% male ratio in 1984 (NFA-IE Nationals). While Sellnow and Ziegelmuehler (1988) noted a growing trend that reinforced the traditionally "masculine" style of rhetoric in this event grouping during the 1980s, male/female parity that has been attained in this event grouping suggests that a new paradigm for success in this event grouping has emerged. Perhaps the original speaking events have come to reflect a "blend" of the logical appeals grounded in argument and critical thinking (often labeled as "masculine") as well as the use of emotional appeals (often labeled as "feminine"). This blend of "masculine" and "feminine" styles in the original speaking events may minimize sex-role stereotyping and, as such, explain the male/female parity attained in both participation and success at the national tournaments.

The interpretive events also reflect relative parity in male/female participation with a higher ratio of female participation (58% female, 42% male) at the 2001 National Forensic Association's Individual Events Nationals than at the 2001 American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament (48% female, 52% male). Females at the NFA-IE Nationals were able to maintain a higher "success ratio" in final rounds of competition in this event grouping (42% female, 58% male) than females at the AFA-NIET (25% female, 75% male). With this group of events historically perceived as "feminine," grounded in emotional expression, the forensic community must continue to explore reasons for inequity in male/female levels of success. At both national tournaments, males experienced more success in this event grouping than females; in fact, no females even advanced to the final rounds of competition in either poetry or prose at the 2001 American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament.

Perhaps it is most interesting to note that males who cross sex-role typing into the perceived "feminine" activity of interpretive events are rewarded more than females who cross sex-role typing into the perceived "masculine" activities of debate and limited preparation events. While this phenomenon is a positive commentary on an activity that has created a rewarding environment for males

to explore the emotional aspects of excellent literature, it is also a criticism of an activity that has not created a rewarding environment for females to explore critical thinking and direct clash in developing strong argument. The ability to explore the "masculine" and "feminine" in each of us should be an equal opportunity afforded both males and females in intercollegiate forensics.

Finally, the limited preparation events continue to reflect the greatest inequity in both male/female participation and success at both national tournaments in 1984 and again in 2001. These events, most closely linked to argument, critical thinking, and the "masculine" activity of debate, continue to attract the fewest number of female participants compared to male participants. While data does indicate female parity in the final round of extemporaneous speaking at the American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament (50% male, 50% female), only one female (17%) advanced to the remaining extemporaneous speaking final round and the impromptu speaking final rounds at both national tournaments. Once again, those coaches and judges who work with students in this event grouping may benefit from suggestions made earlier to the debate community. With the lack of male/female parity found in these events, concerted efforts to attract and retain females in these events must be made if parity is to be attained.

Conclusion

As the forensics community addresses relevant issues concerning their activities in the 21st century, research indicates that the issue of gender equity is still one worthy of discussion. While data analysis in this study suggests that some limited strides have been made by females in specific individual events, a summary of the data overall when compared to previous research indicates that male/female parity in this activity still does not exist. As educators who are preparing men and women to make the transition to the workplace, we have the opportunity to facilitate parity in that environment through the training we provide in this intercollegiate activity.

For example, women have made strides among the managerial ranks in organizations. The percentage of women in managerial and executive positions has steadily increased from 18 percent in 1970, to 40 percent in 1990, and to 48 percent in 1997 (Stewart, et al., 2003, p. 180). Only if both men and women are given the opportunity to develop strong communication skills, develop self-confidence and self-esteem as they succeed, and break the boundaries of sex-role stereotyping will these strides toward parity continue. The intercollegiate forensic activity can provide an excellent training ground in public presentation skills, critical thinking skills, leadership skills, mentoring ability, and group dynamics. Intercollegiate forensics provides some of the most powerful lessons in time management as well as self-discovery and self-development; as Charles Dickens might write, intercollegiate forensics tests the human spirit "in the best of times and in the worst of times." For those of us who believe this educational training ground made a profound difference in our personal and professional lives, we

hope this educational experience is one that provides equal opportunity for both men and women to reap its many benefits.

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Revisiting Male/Female Participation and Success in Forensics: Has Time Changed the Playing Field?

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Abstract

Educators have long recognized the value of developing strong oral communication skills; intercollegiate competition in both debate and individual events is a primary vehicle for developing and strengthening these skills. Since data collected and analyzed by Friedley and Manchester (1985) suggested that there is not parity in male/female participation and success in intercollegiate forensics, the authors chose to re-visit the findings of prior research and compare those findings to data gathered from three recent national tournaments in intercollegiate debate and individual events. Data analysis in this study suggests that females have made limited strides in specific individual events; however, simple ratio comparisons, as well as one sample chi-square tests, generally indicate that parity in male/female participation and success in intercollegiate forensics still does not exist.

Educators have long recognized the value of developing strong oral communication skills; intercollegiate competition in both debate and individual events continues to be a primary vehicle for developing and strengthening these skills. As such, almost three decades ago The 1974 National Developmental Conference on Forensics jointly sponsored by the American Forensic Association and the Speech Communication Association called for research to determine specifically why women and minority group members are not proportionately represented in some aspects of these educational activities (McBath, 1975). A decade later at the 1984 Developmental Conference at Northwestern University, participants once again attempted to become more pro-active concerning this issue and endorsed a resolution "to increase and strengthen forensic participation by identifying ethnic, racial, gender, and handicap barriers that may currently inhibit student participation as well as disseminate findings concerning such barriers throughout the forensic community" (Parson, 1985, p. 43). From this directive, forensics scholars have continued to explore the impact of gender on both the participation and success of students in this co-curricular activity.

Review of Gender-Based Forensics Literature

Regardless of the discussion prompted during the 1970s and 1980s in the forensics community, follow-up research to address the issue of male/female participation and success in intercollegiate debate and individual events only served

to confirm that gender parity simply does not exist. For example, a survey conducted within the forensic community sought to explore the perceptions of male/female participation in forensics (Friedley and Nadler, 1983). Results of this study indicate that males are perceived to be more disproportionately represented in debate and that debate is perceived as a "masculine" activity; in individual events, the study reports that male/female participation overall is perceived as more "balanced." However, subsequent analysis of male/female participation and success at three national tournaments in both debate and individual events reflected both participation and success levels that generally favored males (Friedley and Manchester, 1985).

To explain these findings, researchers began to explore why male predominance in the forensic activity persists. For example, in a limited study of why males and females choose to participate in extra-curricular activities, Nadler (1985) noted that males in forensics are more interested in selecting an extra-curricular activity that relates to career choice than females; as such, males may be more driven to participate and succeed in the activity than females. In a follow-up study to explore the nature of male/female judging decisions in ten regional individual events tournaments, Friedley and Manchester (1987) reported that decisions of male judges were more likely to reinforce traditional sex-role expectations for the three event groupings. Specifically, male judges were more likely to rank males slightly higher in the original speaking events, females considerably higher in the interpretive events, and males considerably higher in the limited preparation events.

In an analysis of the persuasive speaking event as it evolved from the 1960s to the 1980s, Sellnow and Ziegelmüller (1988) noted a growing trend that reinforced a clear preference for traditional "masculine" styles of rhetoric - topics with less unique personal involvement, evidence grounded in far more use of logical appeals with far less use of evocative (emotional) appeals, and solutions that were increasingly policy-oriented. As the authors noted, "it would be unfortunate if too much of the emotional quality of 'old fashioned oratory' were lost" (p. 85). As a follow-up to this discussion, Murphy (1989) then explored the issue of "masculine" and "feminine" style differences reflected in the public address events. Given that the standard of success in these events rests primarily with the "masculine" style, Murphy suggested that women often face a double-bind in these events — either conform to a "masculine" style that may be uncomfortable for them or employ a "feminine" style that is devalued in these events. Of these various public address events, however, Murphy noted women had experienced significant success in persuasive speaking where a combination of both the "masculine" and "feminine" styles of speaking might be most appropriate.

With a focus specifically on extemporaneous speaking and persuasive speaking, White (1997) analyzed the participation and success levels of participants entered in these events at two national tournaments — the American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament and the National Forensic Association's Individual Events Nationals. Her findings indicated that

sex is a predictor of competitive success in extemporaneous speaking (i.e., males were significantly more successful in this event than females) while sex is not a predictor of competitive success in persuasive speaking (i.e., while more females participated in the event, the success level between males and females was relatively equal). It seemed that even when more females participated in the event, their success level did not match that level of participation. Finally, Billings (1999) reported that male judges rank male competitors higher than female competitors in both extemporaneous and impromptu speaking; once again, male judges were more likely to reinforce sex-role expectations in the limited preparation events.

An examination of male/female participation in intercollegiate debate over the past two decades also indicates a lack of parity in both participation and success. In 1986, Logue reported less than 30% participation by females in the Cross Examination Debate Association (CEDA). In the study of a five-year period from 1991 to 1995, Stepp (1997) reported that approximately 55% of the competitors at the CEDA national tournaments were male while approximately 45% of the competitors were female. In a follow-up study of the 2000 CEDA National Tournament, Stepp and Gardner (2001) noted that 64% of the competitors were male and only 36% of the competitors were female compared with the male/female participation ratio of 71% male competitors and 29% female competitors found at the 1990 CEDA National Tournament. While female participation had increased, the authors concluded that "at only 36% participation by females, the debate community is still not representative of the collegiate body in which women comprise 55.8% of students" (p. 74). Furthermore, analysis of male/female participation in elimination rounds did not reflect male/female parity in success. While women comprised approximately 36% of the participants, only 26% of the participants in elimination rounds were women; perhaps even more surprising is the finding that "as the percent of women participating increases, there has not been an increase in the percent of speaker awards given to women" (p. 75).

Finally, while little research has focused specifically on results from the National Debate Tournament, Brusckie and Johnson (1994) did explore the differences in male/female individual speaker success in several large NDT-style tournaments between 1989 and 1992. Their research reported three interesting findings: 1) overall, female debaters received fewer speaker points than male debaters in these tournaments; 2) the fewest points awarded to female debaters came from female judges when assessing female debaters arguing the negative; and 3) male judges awarded higher speaker points to same-sex teams rather than cross-sex teams. Though these researchers did not explore success in terms of wins and losses, their assessment of individual speaker point differences clearly suggest that males are likely to experience more success in this activity than females.

As the forensics community embarks upon the 21st century, the authors believe that it is appropriate once again to visit the issue of gender equity in this

activity. Since data collected and analyzed by Friedley and Manchester (1985) indicated that there is an imbalance in male/female participation and success in intercollegiate forensics, and no research since that time has indicated a significant shift in these findings, the authors decided it was appropriate to re-visit the findings of prior research and compare those findings to data gathered from recent national tournaments in intercollegiate forensics. Therefore, the purpose of this study is three-fold: 1) to describe the male/female participation and success in both debate and individual events at recent national tournaments; 2) to compare these data to previous data collected at national debate and individual events tournaments; and 3) to identify areas of gender-based inequity that may still exist today.

To accomplish the purpose of this study, the authors generated the following four hypotheses:

H1: There is no difference in the levels of participation or success between male students and female students at a 2001 national tournament in debate.

H2: There is no difference in the levels of participation or success between male students and female students at a 1984 national tournament in debate compared to a 2001 national tournament in debate.

H3: There is no difference in the levels of participation or success between male students and female students at a 2001 national tournament in individual events.

H4: There is no difference in the levels of participation or success between male students and female students at a 1984 national tournament in individual events compared to a 2001 national tournament in individual events.

Method

To provide data for this research, three national forensic tournaments that require a qualifying procedure for participation were selected: (a) the 2001 National Debate Tournament, (b) the 2001 American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament, and (c) the 2001 National Forensic Association's Individual Events Nationals. As with the 1984 study, national tournaments with a qualifying procedure were selected to assure participants who had already been judged to represent a level of "success" that warranted participation at a national tournament. For the National Debate Tournament, tournament results were taken from the *2001 National Debate Tournament Results Book* that provided complete names of all tournament participants. For both the 2001 American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament and the 2001 National Forensic Association's Individual Events Tournament, tabulation sheets that included the participant's complete name were consulted.

Using this data, the participant's sex was determined by noting obviously sex-typed first names. When a participant's first name was not gender-specific, identification was determined through consultation with various directors of forensics. Participant names from these three national tournaments were then analyzed to determine male/female distribution ratios for both preliminary rounds and elimination rounds of competition. Using these ratios, male/female participant and team comparisons were made in debate while male/female participant comparisons by event and event groupings were made in individual events. In addition, one-sample chi-square tests were performed to determine whether differences in levels of participation and success between male and female students were statistically significant. The research findings are reported individually by national tournament.

Research Findings

National Debate Tournament

H1: There is no difference in the levels of participation or success between male and female students at a 2001 national tournament in debate.

Of the 154 participants who competed at the National Debate Tournament in 2001, 75% were male while 25% were female. A male/female distribution of the seventy-seven teams competing included the following: 56% male/male debate teams, 38% male / female debate teams, and only 6% were female/female debate teams ($X^2 = 29.08, p < .01$). Of the twenty-seven teams advancing to double octa-final rounds of competition at this tournament, participants included 78% males / 22% females. A male/female distribution of the teams advancing to the first level of elimination rounds included the following: 63% male/male debate teams, 30% male/female debate teams, and 7% (only 2) female/female debate teams. The 16 teams advancing to octa-final rounds of competition at this tournament included 84% males / 16% females. A male/female distribution of the teams advancing to this second level of elimination rounds included the following: 69% male/male debate teams, 31% male/female debate teams, and no female/female debate teams advanced to octa-final rounds of competition ($X^2 = 6.65, p < .05$). Of the 8 teams advancing to quarter-final rounds of competition, participants included 87% males / 13% females; 67% were male/male debate teams and 33% were male/female debate teams. Semi-final and final rounds of competition at the National Debate Tournament included only males; again, no female/female debate teams advanced beyond double octa-final rounds of competition and no females advanced beyond the quarter-final rounds of competition (see Appendix A).

Based on these findings, H1 is rejected for both level of participation and level of success at the 2001 National Debate Tournament.

H2: There is no difference in the levels of participation or success between male students and female students at a 1984 national tournament in debate when compared to a 2001 national tournament in debate.

Compared to data gathered seventeen years ago at the 1984 National Debate Tournament, the male/female participation ratios reflect a slight increase in female participation (Friedley & Manchester, 1985). Of the 124 participants that year, 85% were male while only 15% were female; by 2001, female participation at this national tournament increased by 10%. A male/female distribution of the sixty-two teams competing included the following: 73% male/male debate teams, 24% male/female debate teams, and only 3% female/female debate teams ($X^2= 47.55, p<.01$). In comparing the "success ratio" of female debaters in 2001 to those in 1984, the ratio decreased. In 1984, one female/female debate team advanced to octa-finals; in 2001, no female/female teams advanced to octa-finals. In 1984, the final round of competition at the National Debate Tournament included three males (75%) and one female (25%); however, the male/male team won the 1984 National Debate Tournament. Because no female debaters even advanced beyond the quarter-final rounds of competition in 2001, a male/female team also won the 2001 National Debate Tournament.

Based on these findings, H2 is rejected. There is no discernable difference between the 1984 and 2001 National Debate Tournament results in both levels of participation or success for female debaters.

American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament

H3: There is no difference in the levels of participation or success between male students and female students at a 2001 national individual events tournament.

Of the 1441 participants at the 2001 American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament, 52% were male and 48% were female. Combining all eleven events in the competition, participants advancing to quarter-final rounds were 58% male and 42% female, while participants advancing to the semi-final rounds were 65% male / 35% female ($X^2=10.15, p<.01$). Participants advancing to the final rounds of competition in the combined eleven events were 65% male / 35% female; thus, the gender gap widened as the tournament progressed with female participation dropping from 48% in preliminary rounds to 42% in quarter-final rounds, 35% in semi-final rounds, and holding to 35% in final rounds of competition ($X^2 = 5.12, p>.05$; see Appendix B).

Of the 471 participants in the original speaking events including persuasive speaking, informative speaking, after dinner speaking, and communication analysis, 47% were male and 53% were female. That relative gender balance in participation was preserved for these four events in quarter-final rounds (48% male, 52% female). The greatest gender differences in ratios of participation appeared in the semi-final rounds of competition (56% male, 44% female). Advancing to the final rounds of competition in these events, however, females leveled the playing field by maintaining a 50% level of participation across the four events.

When the original speaking events were analyzed individually, females held a slight dominance in three of the four events: persuasive speaking (43%

male, 56% female), informative speaking (44% male, 56% female), and communication analysis (44% male, 56% female). The greatest disparity between male/female participation in preliminary rounds occurred in after dinner speaking (58% male, 42% female). Perhaps most interesting is the fact that there were an equal number of male and female participants in the final rounds of both informative speaking and after dinner speaking; the highest ratio of female participation was in the final round of persuasive speaking (17% male, 83% female) and the lowest ratio of female participation was in communication analysis (83% male, 17% female).

Of the 735 participants in the interpretive events of program oral interpretation, prose, poetry, drama, and dramatic duo, 52% were male and 48% were female. While there was a relative balance between males and females during preliminary rounds of competition, the male/female ratio began to change significantly at the outset of the elimination rounds. As a result, only 40% of those participants advancing to the quarter-final rounds of competition were female while 60% were male ($X^2=3.95$, $p<.05$). The gap widened considerably in semi-final rounds (71% male, 29% female; $X^2 = 10.30$, $p<.01$) and continued to widen even more in final rounds of competition (75% male, 25% female; $\chi^2 = 7.66$, $p<.01$). During preliminary rounds of competition in these events, drama reflected the greatest male/female ratio imbalance (58% male, 42% female); however, that male/female ratio was stable until the final round of competition where there were an equal number of male and female participants.

While preliminary rounds of program oral interpretation and poetry each reflect a slight female dominance (47% male, 53% female), those ratios shifted considerably during elimination rounds. The male/female ratio in program oral interpretation shifted in quarter-final rounds (67% male, 33% female); that ratio continued to hold for both semi-final and final rounds of competition in this event. The male/female ratio in poetry also shifted in quarter-final rounds (62% male, 38% female); however, that ratio shifted significantly in semi-final rounds of competition (83% male, 17% female) and in the final round of competition where no females advanced. While prose interpretation reflected relative balance in female/male participation during preliminary rounds of competition (53% male, 47% female), the male/female ratio also widened significantly during elimination rounds of competition: 54% males / 46% females advanced to quarter-final rounds, 83% males / only 17% females advanced to semi-final rounds, and once again no females advanced to the final round of competition in this event.

Finally, the male/female ratio of participation in dramatic duo during preliminary rounds reflected 54% males / 46% females. During the elimination rounds in this event, the ratios varied as follows: 60% male / 40% female participants advanced to quarter-final rounds, 62% male / 38% female participants advanced to semi-final rounds, and 58% male / 42% female participants advanced to the final round of competition in this event. While female participation in the interpretive events was almost equal to male participation (52% male, 48% female), the gap widened considerably by the final rounds of competition

in these events where females represented only 25% of the participants and were not represented at all in the final rounds of two events - prose and poetry.

Of the 235 participants in the limited preparation events of extemporaneous speaking and impromptu speaking, 63% of the participants were male while only 37% of the participants were female ($X^2=15.84$, $p<.01$). As the participants advanced to the elimination rounds, the male/female ratio of participation remained relatively stable: 69% male / 31% female participants advanced to quarter-final rounds, 67% male / 33% female participants advanced to semi-final rounds, and 67% male / 33% female participants advanced to the final rounds of competition in the limited preparation events.

In extemporaneous speaking, 63% of the participants were male while 37% of the participants were female. Through elimination rounds of competition, the ratios varied as follows: 71% male / 29% female participants advanced to quarter-final rounds, 63% male / 37% female participants advanced to semi-final rounds, and the final round of extemporaneous speaking consisted of three male and three female participants. Though female participants comprised slightly more than one-third of the initial participants, women comprised half of the finalists in this event. In impromptu speaking, 64% of the participants were male while 36% of the participants were female. Though male/female ratios held somewhat constant with preliminary round ratios through quarter-final rounds of competition (67% male, 33% female) and semi-final rounds of competition (67% male, 33% female), only 1 female (83% male, 17% female) advanced to the final round of competition in this event.

Finally, out of the twelve national champions (including duo) named in the eleven events at the 2001 American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament, only three of those national champions were females. Females were national champions in informative speaking and program oral interpretation; in addition, a third female was a national champion with her male partner in dramatic duo. The "success ratio" for national champions this tournament was 75% males and 25% females.

Based on these findings, H3 is confirmed for overall level of participation and rejected for overall success in semi-final and final rounds of competition at the 2001 American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament.

H4: There is no difference in the levels of participation or success between male students and female students at a 1984 national individual events tournament compared to a 2001 national individual events tournament.

Compared to data collected in 1984, the ratios indicate some interesting findings (Friedley & Manchester, 1985). Of the 861 participants at the 1984 American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament, 58% were male and 42% were female ($X^2= 21.80$, $p<.01$); female participation rose by 6% in 2001. The "success ratio" for the combined ten events at the 1984 tourna-

ment compared to the combined eleven events at the 2001 tournament indicated that females had made some strides in the elimination rounds. In 1984, the male/female ratio in quarter-final rounds was 65% male and 35% female ($X^2 = 5.82$, $p < .05$); in 2001, the ratio in quarter-final rounds was 58% male and 42% female - the female ratio rose 7%. In 1984, the male/female ratio in semi-finals was 71% male and 29% female ($X^2 = 9.41$, $p < .01$); in 2001, the ratio in semi-finals was 65% male and 35% female - the female ratio rose 6%. In 1984, the male/female ratio in final rounds of competition was 80% male and 20% female ($X^2 = 13.44$, $p < .01$); in 2001, the ratio in final rounds of competition was 65% male and 35% female - the female ratio rose 15%. While parity with the participation rate still has not occurred for females, the success ratio has risen slightly overall.

In examining data from both national tournaments by the three event groupings, the male/female participation ratio compared to the male/female "success ratio" indicates female strides that range from slight to significant (Friedley & Manchester, 1985). For the original speaking events, the 1984 participation ratio reflected 57% male / 43% female ($X^2 = 4.76$, $p < .05$); in 2001, the participation ratio reflected 47% male / 53% female. While the 1984 final rounds in this event grouping reflected a 71% male / 29% female ratio, the 2001 final rounds in this event grouping reflected a 50% male / 50% female ratio - the "success ratio" for females rose 21%. For the interpretive events, the 1984 participation ratio reflected 54% male / 46% female; in 2001, the participation ratio reflected 52% male / 48% female. While the 1984 final rounds in this event grouping reflected an 83% male / 17% female ratio ($X^2 = 10.39$, $p < .01$), the 2001 final rounds in this event grouping reflected a 75% male / 25% female ratio - the "success ratio" for females rose only 8% and is still not consistent with the participation level for this grouping of events. For the limited preparation events, the 1984 participation ratio reflected 69% male / 31% female ($X^2 = 23.76$, $p < .01$); in 2001, the participation ratio was similar - 63% male / 37% female. While 1984 final rounds in this event grouping reflected a 92% male and 8% female ratio, the 2001 final rounds in this event grouping reflected a 67% male / 33% female ratio; the "success ratio" for females in this event grouping rose 25%, but has not reached a level of parity.

Based on these findings, H4 is confirmed for level of participation; unlike 1984, female students were close to parity with male students in 2001 in terms of overall participation. However, H4 is rejected for overall levels of success for females in 2001 versus 1984 at the quarter-final, semi-final, and final rounds of competition at the American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament (note that the 2001 results still do not reflect parity between male and female students).

National Forensic Association's Individual Events Nationals

H3: There is no difference in the levels of participation or success between male students and female students at a 2001 national individual events tournament.

Of the 1587 participants at the 2001 National Forensic Association's Individual competition, 47% were male and 53% were female ($X^2 = 5.68, p < .05$). Combining all nine events in the competition, participants advancing to quarter-final rounds were 57% male and 43% ($X^2 = 4.90, p < .05$) female while participants advancing to semi-final rounds were 58% male and 42% female ($X^2 = 6.19, p < .05$). Participants advancing to the final rounds of competition in the combined nine events were 62% male and 38% female ($X^2 = 5.19, p < .05$); thus, females constituted 53% of the entries in preliminary rounds yet their "success ratio" dropped to only 38% in the final rounds of competition (see Appendix C).

Of the 532 participants in the original speaking events including informative speaking, persuasive speaking, after dinner speaking, and rhetorical criticism, 47% were male and 53% were female. While female participation was strongest in informative speaking (41% male, 59% female), that ratio increased in quarter-final rounds of competition (33% male, 67% female) and semi-final rounds of competition (33% male, 67% female); however, the final round of competition in this event reflected 50% male / 50% female participation. Participation in preliminary rounds of persuasive speaking competition reflected a 47% male / 53% female ratio. Quarter-final rounds of competition reflected a 32% male / 68% female ratio and semi-final rounds of competition reflected a 42% male / 58% female ratio; however, the final round of competition in persuasive speaking reflect a 50% male / 50% female ratio.

While female participation was weakest in after dinner speaking (55% male, 45% female), the ratios vary as follows throughout the elimination rounds: a 62% male / 38% female ratio in quarter-final rounds, a 50% male / 50% female ratio in semi-final rounds, and a 50% male / 50% female ratio in the final round of competition. The final event in this grouping, rhetorical criticism, reflected the greatest decline in the female "success ratio." While 57% of the participants in this event were female and only 43% of the participants in this event were male, the participant levels across elimination rounds were as follows: quarter-final rounds reflected a 54% male / 46% female ratio; semi-final rounds reflected a 50% male and 50% female ratio; the final round of rhetorical criticism reflected a 67% male / 33% female ratio.

Of the 682 participants in the interpretive events of prose, poetry, and dramatic duo, 42% were male and 58% were female ($X^2 = 17.74, p < .01$). While there was a slight to moderate dominance of female participation compared to male participation in the preliminary rounds of competition in these events, there were significant ratio shifts across elimination rounds in the various events. For example, preliminary round participation in prose reflected a ratio of 38% male / 62% female. During the quarter-final and semi-final rounds in this event, the ratio held stable at 50% male / 50% female; however, the final round of competition in prose reflect a female ratio even stronger than the original level of participation (33% male, 67% female). Participation in the preliminary rounds of poetry reflected a 36% male / 64% female ratio; however, the ratios varied as follows across elimination rounds: a 54% male / 46% female participation ratio in quarter-final rounds, a 67% male / 33% female participation ratio in semi-finals, and

a 67% male / 33% female participation ratio in the final round of competition. Participation in preliminary rounds of dramatic duo reflected a ratio of 42% male / 58% female. During elimination rounds in this event, the most significant change in the male/female ratio occurred at the quarter-final rounds of competition (62% male, 38% female); the semi-final rounds of competition reflected a 71% male / 29% female participation ratio while the final round of competition in dramatic duo reflected a 67% male / 33% female ratio of participation.

Of the 333 participants in the limited preparation events of extemporaneous speaking and impromptu speaking, 61% were male and 39% were female ($X^2 = 16.00$, $p < .01$) during preliminary rounds of competition. The ratio of female participants compared to male participants decreased significantly during the elimination rounds, and the ratios were identical for both events across all elimination rounds. For both extemporaneous speaking and impromptu speaking, the ratios across elimination rounds were as follows: for quarter-final rounds, the ratio was 79% male / 21% female ($X^2 = 6.63$, $p < .05$); for semi-final rounds, the ratio was 75% male / 25% female; for the final round of competition in both events, the ratio was 83% male / 17% female. Of all the events at the National Forensic Association's Individual Events Nationals, the limited preparation events reflected the lowest "success ratio" for females compared to males.

Finally, out of ten national champions (including duo) named in the nine events at the 2001 National Forensic Association's Individual Events Nationals, only one was female. The only female national champion at this tournament was in after dinner speaking; therefore, the "success ratio" for national champions at this tournament was 90% males and 10% females.

Based on these findings, H3 is confirmed for overall level of participation and is rejected for overall success in quarter-final, semi-final, and final rounds of competition at the 2001 National Forensic Association's Individual Events Nationals.

H4: There is no difference in the levels of participation or success between male students and female students at a 1984 national individual events tournament compared to a 2001 national individual events tournament.

Compared to data collected in 1984, the ratios once again provide some interesting findings (Friedley & Manchester, 1985). Of the 1096 participants at the 1984 National Forensic Association's Individual Events Nationals, 52% were male and 48% were female; female participation rose by 5% in 2001. The "success ratio" for the combined nine events at the 1984 tournament compared to the combined nine events at the 2001 tournament indicated that females had made minimal strides in the elimination rounds. In 1984, the male/female ratio in quarter-finals was 59% male / 41% female ($X^2 = 4.64$, $p < .05$); in 2001, the ratio in quarter-finals was 57% male / 43% female - the female ratio rose only 2%. In 1984, the male/female ratio in semi-finals was 57% male / 43% female; in 2001, the ratio in semi-final rounds was 58% male / 42% female - the female ratio, declined by 1%. In 1984, the male/female ratio in final rounds of competition

was 58% male / 42% female; in 2001, the ratio in final rounds of competition was 62% male / 38% female - the female ratio declined 4%. While parity with the participation rate has not yet occurred, the success ratio has also declined in the last seventeen years.

In examining data from both national tournaments by the three event groupings, the male/female participation ratio when compared to the male/female "success ratio" indicates an overall decline in the level of success for females. For the original speaking events, the 1984 participation ratio reflected 51% male / 49% female; in 2001, the participation ratio reflected 47% male / 53% female. While the 1984 final rounds of competition in this event grouping reflected a 46% male / 54% female ratio, the 2001 final rounds of competition in this event grouping reflected a 54% male / 46% female ratio - the "success ratio" for females had dropped 8%. For the interpretive events, the 1984 participation ratio reflected 49% male and 51% female; in 2001, the participation ratio reflected 58% male / 42% female. While the 1984 final rounds of competition in this event grouping reflected a 62% male / 38% female ratio, the 2001 final rounds of competition in this event grouping reflected a 58% male / 42% female ratio - the "success ratio" for females rose 4%. For the limited preparation events, the 1984 participation ratio reflected 62% male and 38% female ($X^2 = 22.34, p < .01$); in 2001, the participation ratio was similar - 61% male and 39% female. While the 1984 final rounds in this event grouping reflected a 75% male and 25% female ratio, the 2001 final rounds in this event grouping reflected a significant decline in the "success ratio" for females in this event. The event grouping ratio was 83% male and only 17% female - a decline of 8% for females.

Based on these findings, H4 is confirmed for the National Forensic Association's Individual Events Nationals. Unlike 1984, the level of participation for female students exceeded that of male students in 2001; however, H4 is confirmed for overall levels of success for females in 2001 versus 1984 at the quarter-final, semi-final, and final rounds of competition.

Discussion

Though the research findings presented provide interesting insight into male /female participation and success in intercollegiate forensics, the authors would be remiss if they did not acknowledge some limitations to the study. First, the data analyzed and compared in this study reflects participation and success levels at only three national tournaments in only two years of competition - 1984 and 2001. While the authors assume these tournaments are representative of the activity over time, these tournaments may reflect only a "snapshot" of the activity that is an anomaly rather than a representative sample. An analysis of data from additional national tournaments in the activity over a span of several consecutive years may provide a more representative sample from which to draw conclusions about male/female participation and success in intercollegiate forensics.

Second, the authors note that there are several other variables, besides sex, that may account for participation and success in intercollegiate forensics. For

example, the prior forensics training a student brings to intercollegiate forensics, the length of time a student participates in the activity, and the amount of time a student dedicates to the activity may be powerful predictors of participation and success in intercollegiate forensics. If patterns of participation and success are well established in high school forensics, then these patterns may simply lay the groundwork for a repeated pattern in intercollegiate forensics. If males, more than females, are drawn to extra-curricular activities most closely related to career goals (Nadler, 1983), then males may be more driven to participate and succeed in an activity that develops strong oral communication skills related to career goals. These variables, as well as many others, may never foster parity for males and females engaged in this activity.

Finally, the authors cannot underestimate the influence of forensics coaches as teachers, mentors, and judges in the activity; all of these roles directly influence student participation and success in the activity. Coaches as teachers and mentors select the students they will nurture and challenge; they set the standards for participation and success in their own individual programs. As coaches then judge participants in the activity each week, their evaluations and assessments define various aspects of the activity and reinforce the standards for success. The sex of forensic coaches, as well as their perceptions of how sex and gender relate to participation and success in various aspects of intercollegiate forensics, will likely shape the activity (its participants and their success) over time.

As discussed in the review of literature, early gender research in forensics suggested that debate is perceived to be a male-dominated activity (Friedley & Nadler, 1983); in fact, actual examination of the male/female participation level at the 1984 and 2001 National Debate Tournament continues to support that perception. Males continue to outnumber females in intercollegiate debate at a ratio of roughly three to one; perhaps even more disconcerting is the fact that female success in this activity has declined when compared to earlier data. While one female/female debate team advanced to octa-finals in 1984, no female/female debate teams advanced to octa-finals in 2001. While a female debater advanced to the final round of competition in 1984, no female debater even advanced beyond quarter-finals in 2001.

While these findings may not be representative of all intercollegiate debate (i.e., cross examination debate or Lincoln-Douglas debate), these findings do provide powerful commentary on male/female parity within the primary outlet for policy debate - it simply does not exist. Perhaps leaders in this activity might examine some of the same factors the U.S. Department of Labor noted in 1991 as reasons for the "glass ceiling" women and minorities face in the workplace: "unfair recruitment practices, limited opportunities for advancement to decision-making positions, gender-based stereotyping and harassment, and a general lack of management commitment to established systems, policies, and practices for achieving workplace diversity and upward mobility" (Stewart, Cooper, Stewart, & Friedley, 2003, p. 181). If the National Debate Tournament believes that women ought to have parity with men in the activity, then their efforts must begin with recruiting and retaining women in the activity so that they can succeed.

Early gender research in forensics also suggested that the individual events activity is perceived to be a more gender-balanced forensic activity (Friedley & Nadler, 1983). While descriptive data from the preliminary rounds of competition at both the 1984 and 2001 American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament and National Forensic Association's Individual Events Nationals suggest a general balance in male/female participation ratios, analysis of the elimination rounds at both tournaments reflect a male/female imbalance that emerges - an imbalance that generally continues to favor male participants in this activity. Perhaps most interesting is data generated by the three event groupings.

The original speaking events reflect most male/female parity in both participation and success. The male/female ratio in the final rounds of competition in this event grouping reflects these significant female strides: a 50% female/50% male ratio in 2001 compared to a 29% female/71% male ratio in 1984 (AFA-NIET) and a 46% female/54% male ratio in 2001 compared to a 54% female/46% male ratio in 1984 (NFA-IE Nationals). While Sellnow and Ziegelmüller (1988) noted a growing trend that reinforced the traditionally "masculine" style of rhetoric in this event grouping during the 1980s, male/female parity that has been attained in this event grouping suggests that a new paradigm for success in this event grouping has emerged. Perhaps the original speaking events have come to reflect a "blend" of the logical appeals grounded in argument and critical thinking (often labeled as "masculine") as well as the use of emotional appeals (often labeled as "feminine"). This blend of "masculine" and "feminine" styles in the original speaking events may minimize sex-role stereotyping and, as such, explain the male/female parity attained in both participation and success at the national tournaments.

The interpretive events also reflect relative parity in male/female participation with a higher ratio of female participation (58% female, 42% male) at the 2001 National Forensic Association's Individual Events Nationals than at the 2001 American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament (48% female, 52% male). Females at the NFA-IE Nationals were able to maintain a higher "success ratio" in final rounds of competition in this event grouping (42% female, 58% male) than females at the AFA-NIET (25% female, 75% male). With this group of events historically perceived as "feminine," grounded in emotional expression, the forensic community must continue to explore reasons for inequity in male/female levels of success. At both national tournaments, males experienced more success in this event grouping than females; in fact, no females even advanced to the final rounds of competition in either poetry or prose at the 2001 American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament.

Perhaps it is most interesting to note that males who cross sex-role typing into the perceived "feminine" activity of interpretive events are rewarded more than females who cross sex-role typing into the perceived "masculine" activities of debate and limited preparation events. While this phenomenon is a positive commentary on an activity that has created a rewarding environment for males

to explore the emotional aspects of excellent literature, it is also a criticism of an activity that has not created a rewarding environment for females to explore critical thinking and direct clash in developing strong argument. The ability to explore the "masculine" and "feminine" in each of us should be an equal opportunity afforded both males and females in intercollegiate forensics.

Finally, the limited preparation events continue to reflect the greatest inequity in both male/female participation and success at both national tournaments in 1984 and again in 2001. These events, most closely linked to argument, critical thinking, and the "masculine" activity of debate, continue to attract the fewest number of female participants compared to male participants. While data does indicate female parity in the final round of extemporaneous speaking at the American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament (50% male, 50% female), only one female (17%) advanced to the remaining extemporaneous speaking final round and the impromptu speaking final rounds at both national tournaments. Once again, those coaches and judges who work with students in this event grouping may benefit from suggestions made earlier to the debate community. With the lack of male/female parity found in these events, concerted efforts to attract and retain females in these events must be made if parity is to be attained.

Conclusion

As the forensics community addresses relevant issues concerning their activities in the 21st century, research indicates that the issue of gender equity is still one worthy of discussion. While data analysis in this study suggests that some limited strides have been made by females in specific individual events, a summary of the data overall when compared to previous research indicates that male/female parity in this activity still does not exist. As educators who are preparing men and women to make the transition to the workplace, we have the opportunity to facilitate parity in that environment through the training we provide in this intercollegiate activity.

For example, women have made strides among the managerial ranks in organizations. The percentage of women in managerial and executive positions has steadily increased from 18 percent in 1970, to 40 percent in 1990, and to 48 percent in 1997 (Stewart, et al., 2003, p. 180). Only if both men and women are given the opportunity to develop strong communication skills, develop self-confidence and self-esteem as they succeed, and break the boundaries of sex-role stereotyping will these strides toward parity continue. The intercollegiate forensic activity can provide an excellent training ground in public presentation skills, critical thinking skills, leadership skills, mentoring ability, and group dynamics. Intercollegiate forensics provides some of the most powerful lessons in time management as well as self-discovery and self-development; as Charles Dickens might write, intercollegiate forensics tests the human spirit "in the best of times and in the worst of times." For those of us who believe this educational training ground made a profound difference in our personal and professional lives, we

hope this educational experience is one that provides equal opportunity for both men and women to reap its many benefits.

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Editor's Note: There has been some demand for the appendices from the Manchester and Friedley piece published in the Fall, 2003 issue of *NFJ* ('Revisiting Male/Female Participation and Success in Forensics: Has Time Changed the Playing Field?'). Below are the three appendices.

APPENDIX A

National Debate Tournament Results

Male/Female Levels of Participation and Success

Data Summary

	1984		2001	
<i>Preliminary Rounds</i>	<u>62</u> Teams	M/M = 45 Teams (73%) M/F = 15 Teams (24%) F/F = 2 Teams (3%) $\chi^2 = 47.55, p < .01$	<u>77</u> Teams	M/M = 43 Teams (56%) M/F = 29 Teams (38%) F/F = 5 Teams (6%) $\chi^2 = 29.08, p < .01$
<i>Octa Finals</i>	<u>16</u> Teams	M/M = 13 Teams (81%) M/F = 2 Teams (13%) F/F = 1 Team (6%) $\chi^2 = 6.17, p < .05$	<u>16</u> Teams	M/M = 11 Teams (69%) M/F = 5 Teams (31%) F/F = 0 Teams (0%) $\chi^2 = 6.65, p < .05$

<i>Quarter Finals</i>	8 Teams	M/M = 7 Teams (88%) M/F = 1 Team (12%) F/F = 0 Teams (0%) $\chi^2 = 1.1$	<u>8</u> Teams	M/M = 5 Teams (67%) M/F = 3 Teams (33%) F/F = 0 Teams (0%) $\chi^2 = 0.56$
<i>Semi Finals</i>	4 Teams	M/M = 3 Teams (75%) M/F = 1 Team (25%) F/F = 0 Teams (0%)	<u>4</u> Teams	M/M = 4 Teams (100%) M/F = 0 Teams (0%) F/F = 0 Teams (0%)
<i>Finals</i>	2 Teams	M/M = 1 Team (50%) M/F = 1 Team (50%) F/F = 0 Teams (0%)	<u>2</u> Teams	M/M = 2 Teams (100%) M/F = 0 Teams (0%) F/F = 0 Teams (0%)

APPENDIX B

AFA – NIET Tournament Results
 Male/Female Levels of Participation and Success
 Data Summary

	1984			2001		
	N	M	F	N	M	F
Overall Participants						
Preliminary Rounds	861	499 (58%)	362 (42%)			$\chi^2=21.80, p<.01$
Quarter Finals	265	172 (65%)	93 (35%)	1441	749 (52%)	692 (48%) $\chi^2= 2.26$
Semi Finals	132	94 (71%)	38 (29%)	290	168 (58%)	122 (42%) $\chi^2= 2.69$
Finals	66	53 (80%)	13 (20%)	144	94 (65%)	50 (35%) $\chi^2=10.15, p<.01$
				72	47 (65%)	25 (35%) $\chi^2= 5.12, p<.05$
Original Events		M	F		M	F
Preliminary Rounds				471	221 (47%)	250 (53%) $\chi^2= 1.78$
Quarter Finals	257	146 (57%)	111 (43%)	96	46 (48%)	50 (52%) $\chi^2= .04$
Semi Finals	96	56 (58%)	40 (42%)	48	27 (56%)	21 (44%) $\chi^2= .85$
Finals	48	28 (58%)	20 (42%)	24	12 (50%)	12 (50%) $\chi^2= .08$
	24	17 (71%)	7 (29%)			$\chi^2= 1.85$
Interpretive Events		M	F		M	F
Preliminary Rounds	437	236 (54%)	201 (46%)	735	382 (52%)	353 (48%) $\chi^2= 1.14$
Quarter Finals	121	86 (71%)	35 (29%)	146	88 (60%)	58 (40%) $\chi^2= 3.95, p<.05$
Semi Finals	60	47 (78%)	13 (22%)	72	51 (71%)	21 (29%) $\chi^2=10.30, p<.01$
Finals	30	25 (83%)	5 (17%)	36	27 (75%)	9 (25%) $\chi^2= 7.66, p<.01$
Limited Prep Events		M	F		M	F
Preliminary Rounds	167	115 (69%)	52 (31%)	235	148 (63%)	87 (37%) $\chi^2=15.84, p<.01$
Quarters Finals	48	30 (63%)	18 (37%)	48	33 (69%)	15 (31%) $\chi^2= .70$
Semi Finals	24	19 (79%)	5 (21%)	24	16 (67%)	8 (33%) $\chi^2= .14$
Finals	12	11 (92%)	1 (8%)	12	8 (67%)	4 (33%) $\chi^2= .06$

APPENDIX C

NFA – IE Nationals Tournament Results
Male/Female Levels of Participation and Success
Data Summary

	1984				2001			
	N	M	F		N	M	F	
<i>Overall Participation</i>								
Preliminary Rounds	2096	1090 (52%)	1006 (48%)	$\chi^2= 3.36$	1587	746 (47%)	841 (53%)	$\chi^2= 5.68, p<.05$
Quarter Finals	241	142 (59%)	99 (41%)	$\chi^2= 4.64, p<.05$	241	137 (57%)	104 (43%)	$\chi^2= 4.90, p<.05$
Semi Finals	120	68 (57%)	52 (43%)	$\chi^2= 1.04$	120	70 (58%)	50 (42%)	$\chi^2= 6.19, p<.05$
Finals	60	35 (58%)	25 (42%)	$\chi^2= 1.26$	60	37 (62%)	23 (38%)	$\chi^2= 5.19, p<.05$
<i>Original Events</i>								
Preliminary Rounds	738	376 (51%)	362 (49%)	$\chi^2= .26$	582	274 (47%)	308 (53%)	$\chi^2= 1.98$
Quarter Finals	96	49 (51%)	47 (49%)	$\chi^2= 0$	97	44 (45%)	53 (55%)	$\chi^2= .11$
Semi Finals	48	25 (52%)	23 (48%)	$\chi^2= .76$	48	21 (44%)	27 (56%)	$\chi^2= .21$
Finals	24	11 (46%)	13 (54%)	$\chi^2= .26$	24	13 (54%)	11 (46%)	$\chi^2= .49$
<i>Interpretive Events</i>								
Preliminary Rounds	971	476 (49%)	495 (51%)	$\chi^2= .38$	682	286 (42%)	396 (58%)	$\chi^2=17.74, p<.01$
Quarter Finals	97	59 (61%)	38 (39%)	$\chi^2= 5.45, p<.05$	96	55 (57%)	41 (43%)	$\chi^2= 9.24, p<.01$
Semi Finals	48	27 (56%)	21 (44%)	$\chi^2= 1.02$	48	31 (65%)	17 (35%)	$\chi^2= 9.97, p<.01$
Finals	24	15 (62%)	9 (38%)	$\chi^2= 1.71$	24	14 (58%)	10 (42%)	$\chi^2= 2.60$
<i>Limited Prep Events</i>								
Preliminary Rounds	387	240 (62%)	147 (38%)	$\chi^2=22.34, p<.01$	333	203 (61%)	130 (39%)	$\chi^2=16.00, p<.01$
Quarter Finals	48	33 (69%)	15 (31%)	$\chi^2= .90$	48	38 (79%)	10 (21%)	$\chi^2= 6.63, p<.05$
Semi Finals	24	16 (67%)	8 (33%)	$\chi^2= .21$	24	18 (75%)	6 (25%)	$\chi^2= 2.06$
Finals	12	9 (75%)	3 (25%)	$\chi^2= .91$	12	10 (83%)	2 (17%)	$\chi^2= 2.55$

The Yearning for Pleasure: The Significance of Having Fun in Forensics

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Abstract

Two of the biggest challenges faced by forensics coaches are the recruitment/retention of students and the battle against personal burnout. These challenges in fact revolve around one central question: what produces a sense of commitment to the activity among students, coaches/judges, and even ex-competitors? To address this question, 106 members of the forensics community were surveyed in two venues (at a tournament and over the internet). Linear regression models were developed to reveal the elements which serve to make forensics "fun" or "not fun" for students, coaches/judges, ex-competitors, and the forensics community at large. Overall, it appears that the perception that forensics is "fun" is a significant predictor of commitment to the activity. Beyond this, it appears that committed people tend to enjoy being with other members of the forensics community, enjoy the "game" of competition, and view the activity as educationally valuable. On the other hand, some people are driven out of forensics by their perception that the activity punishes risk-taking and is overly-professionalized.

Every fall, thousands of students nationwide are invited to join their schools' forensics teams. In order to entice them to participate, their would-be coaches and teammates proffer a wide array of carrots—for example, forensics helps one to develop valuable speaking skills, forensics offers the opportunity to travel and meet new people, forensics looks good on a resume, forensics can lead to stronger self-confidence, and (ultimately) competing in forensics is fun. These recruitment efforts often lead to September team meetings attended by pleasantly large groups of people envisioning a year filled with new friendships, lots of learning, the furtherance of career goals, and plenty of happy times. Unfortunately, as the year flows on, the size of the team meetings typically tends to dwindle. Students disappear one by one, leaving the coaching staff wondering what went wrong. Overall, Preston (1992) suggests that "of all of the challenges facing those involved in directing forensics, few are at once as challenging and vexing as finding and retaining qualified students" (p. 1).

And it's not just the new recruits who disappear. Experienced students, alumni who once planned to do volunteer work as coaches and judges, and even paid coaches find that forensics is no longer a priority and depart the activity.

Of course, this is only one side of the coin. Many other people find that forensics nurtures them and they remain committed to the activity for a year, or several years, or even an entire career. This contrast in commitment choices rais-

es a question that is crucially important to all schools who wish to promote forensics on their campuses and to all coaches who wish to build vital programs at their own institutions. What factors contribute to an individual's decision to commit to competitive speech? Given that forensics is an extremely time-consuming activity that requires an enormous output of effort and heart from all who are involved in it, what must be true of any given program if it is to achieve the goal of retaining its members? While many different elements of the forensics experience play their part, recent research (Paine and Stanley, 2000) suggests that "having fun" is a primary (perhaps the primary) factor predicting commitment levels. Accordingly, this paper examines the concept of "fun" as it explains the commitment of students, coaches, and former competitors to the activity.

To date, very few researchers appear to have directly addressed the question of "fun" in forensics. In fact, almost none have directly addressed even the more general topic of participant commitment. As scholars, our research spotlight has been turned on other facets of the forensics experience. After reviewing all the articles published in *The National Forensic Journal* during the first seven years of its existence, Logue and Shea (1990) noted that the topics covered in those articles focused on: (a) judging events (ADS, RC, Impromptu, Extemporaneous Speaking, Persuasion), (b) coaching events, (c) tournament issues (administration, formats/events, dress), (d) forensic activity (funding, evaluating, employment, research, recruitment, curricular), (e) organizational concerns (history, NCDF), (f) debate (ethics, cross-examination), (g) students, and (h) ethics. Obviously, our research efforts are focused on what we do and how we do it rather than on the question of why students participate. Only 2 of the 87 articles examined by Logue and Shea (classified by them under the heading "recruitment") relate directly to the broad issue behind the current research. The first of these articles is an informative chronology of the recruitment process, but it is concerned with the process of recruitment rather than with the arguments used to appeal to students and it never mentions the topic of "fun" at all (Dean and Creasy Dean, 1985). The second article noted by Logue and Shea focused on issues of student gender (Nadler, 1985), but did note the results of an earlier study by Long, Buser and Johnson (1977) which surveyed 1500 students attending 65 randomly selected high schools scattered across the nation and found that "more than three of four students state they participate for fun and enjoyment, personal achievement, or needs and interests" (p. 3). However, the direct relevance of this research is limited by the fact that Long, Buser and Johnson studied high school (not college) students and looked at their reasons for participating in extracurricular activities in general (not just individual events). In her study, Nadler asked the students she surveyed to indicate which of the 17 (plus "other") factors she listed were important to them in choosing an extra-curricular activity or organization. While "fun/personal enjoyment" was a listed option, it did not emerge as a statistically significant factor in any of Nadler's computations. However, our ability to generalize from Nadler's study is limited by several factors, including: (a) her decision to survey students enrolled at a single university, (b) her limited sample size (17 members of a single forensics team

and 28 students enrolled in an introductory public relations class), (c) the inability of any study to "prove" the absence of a relationship, (d) the study's exclusive focus on joining (rather than staying in) activities, and (e) her mixing of all forms of debate and individual events together under the label "forensics."

Since the publication of the Logue and Shea article more than a decade ago, little additional research appears to have been done on the question of "fun" in forensics. Employing the excellent (and recently created) online database established by Dan Cronn-Mills (<http://web.filemaker.mnsu.edu/forensics/>), we found absolutely no listings for the word "fun" or such related terms as "pleasure," "enjoyment" or "excitement." Expanding our search to consider the more general issue of all factors that affect commitment, use of such terms as "recruiting," "retention," "commitment," "longevity," "retirement" and a host of other such terms yielded only a scant handful of articles (many of which are more than 30 years old and/or are generally unavailable to readers who do not have personal copies of our field's journals on their office shelves).

Even so, some extant research encourages us to study more closely the role which fun plays in commitment to forensics. The first cluster of investigations concerns student (competitor) commitment. For example, the topic of fun was mentioned (though not focused on) in an article published in the *National Forensic Journal* by McMillan and Todd-Mancillas (1991). These researchers surveyed 164 students enrolled at 26 public and private colleges and universities located throughout six Western states. When asked why they had chosen to compete in individual events at a particular tournament, 25% of the students "participated because of an enjoyment of speaking and interpretation as an extracurricular activity" and 7.6% of the students "participated because he/she enjoys competition, challenges, and desires to win awards" (p. 5). While this survey addresses the topic of "fun" somewhat indirectly, it provides some data to indicate that "fun" plays a significant role in student retention. Another article by C. Sorrensen published in *The Forensic* in 1961 has a title which indicates it might possibly consider the issue of "fun" ("Forensic Recruiting"), but this article was unavailable to us.

Student levels of commitment to forensics have also been investigated in a research thread concerned with the concept of "teamness," which argues that students who see themselves as part of a "team" (rather than primarily as individuals) demonstrate higher commitment levels. Preston (1992) notes that developing the sense of teamness is an important challenge, which Worthen (1995) suggests can be addressed through the employment of such devices as team retreats, team shirts, league or conference competitions, morale officers, summer contact efforts, the passing down of team stories, team-unique activities, team rooms/hangouts, team historians, and team mentors. Citing a student retention level of 90%, Worthen notes that "I used to have about half the students start out and then quit or get discouraged before they got to the first tournament. Now I have comments like 'I want to be a member of the team because you guys seem to have so much fun'". Meanwhile, Clark (1995) conducted a survey of 20 teams who had achieved success at the NFA national tournament and listed the tradi-

tions maintained by each program. Her catalogue of traditions bears some striking similarities to the team-building elements noted by Worthen (1995).

Unfortunately, while the research concerned with student perceptions of fun and levels of commitment is scant, printed articles studying these topics as they apply to coaches is still harder to find. Our pursuit of this question unearthed only a small number of articles (including informal retirement testimonials) that touch on this general topic. Some have suggested that factors such as excessive time commitments, excessive travel commitments, the demand to produce winning teams, heavy workloads, the lack of supportive colleagues, ethical concerns, inadequate compensation and the lack of adequate training drive people from the field (Gill, 1990; Rives and Klopff, 1965; Walsh, 1983). The impact of these factors (and others unmentioned here) is clearly powerful. According to Gill (1990), it is generally believed that "the life expectancy of a forensic coach is six years...the idea of such a limited time involvement should cause concern" (p. 179). On the other hand, those coaches who remain committed to the activity derive great joy from it. The retirement testimonials we discovered particularly point to the relationships developed with students and peers as a primary source of this pleasure. Davenport (1999) explains that "I have remained a sort of friend, mentor, and in some cases surrogate Mom to most of my students throughout their lives. More personally, I have made lifetime friendships from among the coaches I've met regularly". Similarly, Taras (1999) remembers that:

We have gone through many other coaches, but I always seemed to stay with it... [because] when that occasional student writes you or returns to the school to see you, just to say "Thanks," and you can see how successful they have become-you do realize that you have made a good choice for your life...I...have had a lot of great students, who I still consider my "kids."

Taken together, the extant literature supports the importance of studying fun as it impacts on levels of commitment to forensics. Thus, the review of this literature provides a springboard for the present research.

Research Questions and Survey Logistics

Scholarships and job descriptions aside, most people who participate in intercollegiate forensics as either competitors or coaches are involved in the activity because they choose to be. Because very few people engage in activities that they simply do not enjoy, patterns of involvement suggest that competitors and coaches alike must see forensics as a pleasurable experience. But how pleasurable? And in what ways? Furthermore, how important is this perception of pleasure to continued commitment levels? This paper examined these three basic questions by considering three general research questions:

RQ1: To what degree do coaches, students and ex-competitors view forensics as fun?

RQ2: Which elements of the activity are seen as pleasant vs. unpleasant ("fun" vs. "not fun")?

RQ3: How meaningful are perceptions of fun in predicting commitment to the activity? In order to address these research questions, a brief survey form (see Appendix) was circulated in two venues: (a) among competitors and coaches/judges at a forensics tournament hosted by Illinois Central College of East Peoria, Illinois and (b) on the Internet through the IE-L. A total of 106 completed surveys were returned and analyzed. Approximately half (or 51) of these surveys were completed by people attending the ICC tournament, which is open to students attending both 2-year and 4-year schools who are in their first two years of college competition.

The remaining 55 surveys were returned via the Internet by people spread across the United States. A total of 52 students, 42 coaches/judges, and 12 ex-competitors participated. The term "ex-competitors" refers to people who: (a) have completed their competitive careers (in either the recent or distant past), (b) may or may not be currently volunteering time to coach students and/or judge at tournaments, and (c) are not working in any official capacity as school-affiliated coaches. People classified as ex-competitors used this label to refer to themselves. Ex-competitors tend to be people now working outside of academia (freelance reporters, accountants, etc.) who occasionally maintain contact with forensics in varied and relatively informal ways.

This paper does not claim to report the results of a formal study. No systematic attempt was made to ensure random sampling, so all of the data supplied herein is offered as tentative and suggestive. After identifying their role in forensics (student, judge/coach, or ex-competitor), all respondents were asked to fill out two scales indicating (on a 1-to-10 basis): (a) how much "fun" they thought forensics was, and (b) how personally committed they were to the activity. Next, the respondents were asked to answer two open-ended questions: (a) "What about forensics do you feel is the most fun?" and (b) "What about forensics do you feel is NOT fun?" As is always the case with open-ended questions of this type, the relative depth/detail provided by the various respondents ranged enormously. Some respondents answered each of these questions with only a quick phrase or two, while other respondents covered both sides of the survey form with small handwriting or typed lengthy paragraphs. Using general principles drawn from content analysis procedures, the two researchers developed a series of categories into which these comments appeared to fit. The comments were then separated into idea-specific responses (with each "response" having a single/particular focus), and these responses were independently sorted into the previously developed categories by the two researchers. In order to ensure interrater reliability, the two researchers then compared their sorting decisions. In those few cases where comments had been sorted differently, discussion took place until agreement was reached.

This process resulted in the identification of eighteen "response categories" which grouped together into six conceptual clusters. For the purposes of statistical analysis, the 18 original categories were treated as predictor variables. Because each category actually could contain two separate types of responses ("fun" and "not fun" answers), the analysis considered a final list of 36 "predictor variables." The name chosen to refer to each variable is composed of two parts. The first part of each variable label is a word (or an abbreviated form of a word) which illuminates the key concept the variable deals with. The final letter in each variable label is a "p" if the term refers to positively valenced ("forensics is fun because") comments or an "n" if the term refers to negatively valenced ("forensics is not fun because") comments. These variables were:

(1) peoplep (comments about people and social relationships listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is the most fun?")

(2) peoplen (comments about people and social relationships listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is NOT fun?")

(3) cmunityp (comments about the forensics community and the team experience listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is the most fun?")

(4) cmunityn (comments about the forensics community and the team experience listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is NOT fun?")

(5) identtyp (comments about the discovery and development of personal identity listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is the most fun?")

(6) identtyn (comments about the discovery and development of personal identity listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is NOT fun?")

(7) skillsp (comments about the development of general overall skills listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is the most fun?")

(8) skillsn (comments about the development of general overall skills listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is NOT fun?")

(9) competp (comments about "the game" of winning and losing listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is the most fun?")

(10) competn (comments about "the game" of winning and losing listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is NOT fun?")

(11) audiencp (comments about the interaction with audiences listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is the most fun?")

(12) audiencn (comments about the interaction with audiences listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is NOT fun?")

(13) aesthetp (comments about aesthetic aspects of watching and performing listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is the most fun?")

(14) aesthete (comments about aesthetic aspects of watching and performing listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is NOT fun?")

(15) emotionp (comments about emotional learning experiences listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is the most fun?")

(16) emotionn (comments about emotional learning experiences listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is NOT fun?")

(17) cognitvp (comments about intellectual or cognitive growth experiences listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is the most fun?")

(18) cognitvn (comments about intellectual or cognitive growth experiences listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is NOT fun?")

(19) accompp (comments about the accomplishment of goals listed response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is the most fun?")

(20) accompn (comments about the accomplishment of goals listed response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is NOT fun?")

(21) risksp (comments about risk-taking and self-expression listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is the most fun?")

(22) risksn (comments about risk-taking and self-expression listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is NOT fun?")

(23) processp (comments about preparing for performance through the process of research and rehearsal listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is the most fun?")

(24) processn (comments about preparing for performance through the process of research and rehearsal listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is NOT fun?")

(25) travelp (comments about traveling and being away from home listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is the most fun?")

(26) traveln (comments about traveling and being away from home listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is NOT fun?")

(27) tourney p (comments about the organization and management of tournaments listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is the most fun?")

(28) tourney n (comments about the organization and management of tournaments listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is NOT fun?")

(29) eventsp (comments about particular competitive event categories listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is the most fun?")

(30) eventsn (comments about particular competitive event categories listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is NOT fun?")

(31) timep (comments made about time demands or time management listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is the most fun?")

(32) timen (comments made about time demands or time management listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is NOT fun?")

(33) professp (comments made about the link between forensics and "real world careers" or about the issue of "professionalism in forensics" in general listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is the most fun?")

(34) professn (comments made about the link between forensics and "real world careers" or about the issue of "professionalism in forensics" in general listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is NOT fun?")

(35) otherp (comments made about miscellaneous issues listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is the most fun?")

(36) othern (comments made about miscellaneous issues listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is NOT fun?")

The following sections of this paper review the interactions which appeared among these variables, particularly noting both: (a) the patterns which emerged in the "what makes it fun" vs. "what makes it not fun" responses, and (b) the impact of the ideas raised in these responses on the overarching concepts of "fun in" and "commitment to" forensics.

Results

General Overview of the Factors Which Make Forensics "Fun" or "Not Fun"

In order to provide a context for the interpretation of this data, we began by computing a series of descriptive statistics which revealed a general profile of the people who responded to the survey. As a group, the survey respondents proved to have three prominent traits: (a) their level of personal experience in forensics was quite high, (b) they perceived forensics as a lot of fun, and (c) they were strongly committed to the activity.

First, these were people who were relatively "experienced competitors" themselves. One question on the survey asked all respondents (students, coaches, and judges) to indicate how many years (high school and college combined) of competition they themselves had actively performed in. The responses ranged from zero years (two judges) to 11 years, with the average (arithmetic mean) respondent having competed for 4.515 years. In addition to their experience as competitors, the coaches/judges who responded to this survey were also relatively experienced adjudicators. The average (arithmetic median) judge had had eight years of judging experience, with the range of judge experience levels running between one and "more than thirty" years. As a group, the respondents saw forensics as a lot of fun. Responding to a 1-10 scale (with 10 indicating the highest possible level of fun), 90.5% of the respondents ranked forensics as "fun" at the level of 7.0 or higher (with 74.3% ranking it 8.0 or higher, 47.6% ranking it 9.0 or higher, and 23.8% of all respondents giving it a perfect 10.0). Only 3 of the 106 respondents ranked forensics at or below the 4.0 level.

This group of people was also highly committed to the activity. As defined on the survey form, respondents were asked to judge their level of "commitment" by answering these questions: "how strongly does forensics hold you, how likely is it you'll stick with the activity as an active participant in it in the future?" Overall, 82.1% of the respondents scored their commitment at 7.0 or higher on a 1-10 scale (with 68.9% ranking it 8.0 or higher, 46.2% ranking it 9.0 or above, and 26.4% defining their commitment as a perfect 10.0). Only 7 of the 106 respondents ranked their level of commitment to forensics at or below the 4.0 level. Given this general background profiling the participants in our survey, we then ran a test of linear regression in order to discover what characteristics predicted whether or not these students, coaches and former competitors perceived forensics to be "fun" for them personally. No single set of characteristics surfaced as statistically significant predictors of what caused the community at large to perceive forensics as more or less "fun." However, six categories of qualities did emerge to indicate what is considered fun about forensics. These qualities include: the value of people and relationships, the value of education, tournament experiences, competition and accomplishment, speaking to others, and event guidelines and risks.

The Factors Which Make Forensics Fun

The Value of People and Relationships

This broad category combines two subcategories: relationships with others (in general) as well as relationships within the team or with other teams. Receiving 139 comments, more than any other single category, this group of responses promotes the idea that having positive relationships with others is an important part of what makes forensics fun. These 139 comments broke down into several subgroups. Twenty-five people said they enjoyed meeting new people. When it came to what makes forensics fun, no other comment surfaced more often in the survey. Fourteen responses said they like the camaraderie or being part of a family that forensics allows. Other comments included being with students in general (13 responses), having fellowship or hanging-out-together time (12 responses), maintaining lifelong friendships (9 responses), being with like-minded individuals (8 responses), having a sense of community with other schools (6 responses), and making new friends (6 responses). The idea that relationships with teammates and people from other teams are important in making forensics a "fun" activity was clearly reinforced.

The Value of Education

As educators, we constantly make claims about the value of forensics as an educational learning tool. In this research effort also, educational growth seemed to be a value upheld as part of what makes forensics fun. This category involved five subcategories: skill development vs. monotony, discovery and development of personal identity, emotional experience, intellectual/cognitive growth, and process experience. This category consisted of 99 responses. Two perspectives

emerged, one reflecting the perspective of coaches/judges and the other revealing the impressions held by students. From the coach's perspective, 17 people said they enjoyed helping students grow in general or grow in particular skills. This perspective was further reinforced by individual coach-generated comments such as "helping students grow as critical thinkers," "seeing students gain confidence," and "helping students to develop their talents." From the student's perspective, some of the educational benefits that make forensics fun included becoming a better speaker (8 responses), becoming more comfortable speaking in front of groups (4 responses), building confidence (3 responses), learning information from speeches (4 responses), talking/arguing about ideas (6 responses), putting pieces together (7 responses), rehearsing (5 responses), and researching (4 responses). Some individual responses referred to being able to express one's feelings through interpretation events, learning about human nature, and learning to consider perspectives other than his/her own.

Tournament Experiences

Three subcategories made up this third category. They included travel experience, tournament construction issues, and time. Containing 28 comments, this category addressed what is fun about going to tournaments. Receiving the most attention was the idea of traveling to tournaments. Twelve people found traveling to be the most fun of all tournament-related experiences. Also discussed in relation to travel experience were the van rides (4 comments), free food (3 comments), seeing new places (3 comments) and staying at hotels for free (1 comment). Four different responses composed the subcategory of tournament construction issues. Others made positive comments about the "fun-producing value" of tournament warm-ups, well-hosted "fun" tournaments, theme tournaments, and tournaments that encourage quality instead of winning. Tied into the tournament experience was the issue of time. One individual noted that having downtime between rounds also contributed to making tournaments more "fun."

Competition and Accomplishment

The fourth category focused on competition and the sense of accomplishment one gets through participating in forensics. Included in this category were subcategories of responses focused on competition, aesthetic experiences, and accomplishment. With 96 responses, this category emphasized what is fun about the actual experience of competition. Twenty-two people said that the sheer act of competing is fun, while 14 said winning was fun. Also mentioned was the value of losing (2 comments) and motivating people to compete and win (2 comments). Related to aesthetic experiences, performing was mentioned (11 comments), as was seeing good performances (8 comments) and the joy of interacting with literature (8 comments). Focusing on the end result of competing, 14 responses made up the subcategory of accomplishment with fun being a product of working hard (3 comments), seeing one's own hard work pay off (2 comments), seeing student's do well (2 comments), seeing the hard work of others pay off (2 comments), having an overall sense of accomplishment (2 comments) and feeling that you have done your best (2 comments).

Speaking to Others

The fifth broad category involved the idea of interacting with others. The subcategories making up this category included interacting with audiences and connection to the real world/professionalism. These two fit well together because of their focus on how a speaker's message impacts others. Some of the comments noting the sources of "fun" relative to this category included talking (3 comments), connecting with the audience (3 comments), giving audiences pleasure (3 comments), performing for large audiences (2 comments), having insights into other aspects of the real world outside of speech (2 comments), and preparing for professional life (2 comments). Comments made by single individuals concerned the pleasure of getting a message across, having a receptive audience, receiving criticism, and recognizing the applicability forensics has to the real world.

Event Guidelines and Risk-Taking

The sixth category focused on taking risks and being able to express oneself through specific events. Two subcategories involved here were risk taking/self-expression and event specific experiences. Specific event categories listed as being the most fun included limited preparation events (9 responses), public address events (5 responses), debate (4 responses), interpretation events (2 responses), and mock trial (1 response). Being able to perform these particular events, taking risks and being able to express one's creativity added to the fun of a particular event. Comments offered in this area were concerned with displaying creativity (5 responses) and seeing students challenge themselves or stretch their boundaries (3 responses). Single individuals highlighted the issues of putting oneself out on the line, trying new things/taking risks, having a platform for self-expression, and having freedom of expression.

The Factors Which Make Forensics Not Fun*Overview*

Focusing on the comments all respondents made in response to the question "what makes forensics not fun, we sought to discover response categories which might be linked to relatively lower perceptions of activity-based pleasure. Three subcategories emerged, including risk-taking/self-expression, travel experience, and connection to the real world/professionalism. That noted, the broad categories used to explain what students, coaches and former competitors found to be fun in forensics were also used to explain what these individuals find not to be so much fun.

The Value of People and Relationships

This broad category again took into account the two subcategories "people/relationships" and "team/community." But this time, the goal was to note what about this category individuals viewed as not "fun". Thirty-five responses

were made relative to this category. The first major comment reflected the difficulty of interacting with people who have negative interpersonal traits. It was noted (in 6 responses) that egomaniacs, drama queens, and people who take themselves too seriously were considered "not fun". Other people-based negative experiences included being around people who are "bitchy," unkind, petty, cold, rude, "have attitudes" or "smell on vans". Others complained about people who talk only to their teammates or people they already know (4 responses), coaches who manipulate their students (2 responses) and gossip (2 responses). Others noted the difficulty of trying to balance different goals within the team (2 responses). Individual reasons explaining why forensics is sometimes "not fun" included the presence of hard feelings, poor behavior at tournaments, power trips, scary people, not being able to be honest because of forensics being such a small community, having regional/school rivalries, teammate apathy, and the belief that some 4-year schools look down on 2-year schools.

The Value of Education

Focusing on what is not fun in forensics when it comes to education, the following subcategories appeared: skill development vs. monotony, the discovery and development of personal identity, emotional experience, intellectual/cognitive growth, and process experience. First noted was the emphasis on the AFA "leg race" (3 responses), a pattern which requires people to go to too many tournaments and can lead to "burnout" by both coaches (1 response) and students (2 responses). Also, some felt it is not fun to have the same events each year (2 people), to have to do events one does not want to do (1 person), or to see the same people perform over and over (1 person). Related to this, some had negative feelings about the amount of preparation time that is required in order to get events ready (5 responses). Individual concerns were expressed about seeing others distort research (relative to writing speeches), the fact that all interpretation events have turned into first-person prose narratives, the belief that too many After Dinner speeches are nothing but recycled old persuasion topics, and the sense that forensics sometimes fosters negative character development. Others commented on their negative reactions to stress (8 responses), not being able to teach students discipline and a strong work ethic (5 responses), and feelings of anxiety/nervousness (3 responses). Lastly, some noted the frustration of dealing with school related concerns such as the team's budget (8 responses), paperwork (8 responses), the administration (7 responses), colleagues (2 responses), staffing (1 response) and equipment (1 response).

Tournament Experiences

Comprised of the subcategories travel experience, tournament construction issues, and time, this category encompassed 110 responses reflecting what is "not fun" about forensics. Some disliked traveling to tournaments in general (4 responses). Others had concerns about vehicles (6 responses), complaining about driving or having to ride in bad vans. Also mentioned were staying at bad hotels (3 responses) and eating bad food (2 responses). Food became an issue in another way as well, with several (8 responses) wishing that tournaments would allow

more time for lunch. The way a tournament was run contributed to not having fun when those tournaments were seen as unorganized (3 responses), having drawn-out awards ceremonies (2 responses), and including three rounds (2 responses). Additional tournament issues addressed here by single individuals included tournament boredom, the use of "beauty pageant style" standing patterns at award ceremonies, swing tournaments, and the process of waiting for results. Sixty-eight responses referred to the time taken up by the tournament experience. Some noted that time was stolen from other parts of their lives (18 responses), reflecting negatively on the lack of time they have with their family and pets, missing classes, and missing a social life. Others stated that the time required for tournaments in general was excessive. Noted as other sources for the perception that forensics is "not fun" were long trips (6 responses), traveling too often (4 responses), the long season (3 responses), getting home late (2 responses), not getting enough sleep (14 responses), long days at tournaments (13 responses) and not having release time (1 response).

Competition and Accomplishment

This fourth category focused on the negative effects of competition. Making up this category were the subcategories of competition and aesthetic experiences. No comments related to accomplishment were mentioned as contributors to making forensics not fun. Thirty-seven comments were classified under this broad category. Of the 37 comments, 21 responses noted that forensics is not fun when students and coaches are too focused on competition. Also seen as problems were ethics abuse (3 responses), losing (3 responses), and having too much pressure to win (2 responses). Some individual complaints were that only six people make it to finals, that some schools schedule rounds in ways which "protect" competitors from meeting stiff competition and that some schools continuously dominate tournaments. Other single responses expressed concerns over going home unsatisfied, not winning for a long period of time, telling students "I don't know why you're not winning," and having a narrow range of acceptable literature.

Speaking to Others

Composed of the two subcategories "interaction with audiences" and "connection to the real world/professionalism," this group of responses included 46 comments. Twenty-one people noted that politics (judges favoring certain schools/competitors or bias against judges) helped make forensics "not fun". Also related to the lack of judge professionalism were complaints about having judges who are bad/unqualified (4 responses), judges who give unconstructive ballots (3 responses), judges who give mean ballots (2 responses), judge inconsistencies where one judge loves something which another judge hates (2 responses), judges who fall asleep in rounds (1 response), and judges who think they know everything because of where they competed or how much they won (1 response). Several respondents were concerned about bad audience members, including those people who have "stone faces" (5 responses) while others are

performing. Finally, several felt that forensics has overly high etiquette requirements. For example, one particular response in this category complained that students are not able to celebrate/react when they see their names on final round postings.

Event Guidelines and Risks

This last category focused on risk-taking/self-expression and event-specific experiences. Some felt that the dress code followed at tournaments is too strict (5 responses), thus contributing to making the activity relatively "not fun". Additionally, it was noted that forensics was "not fun" when individuals did not take risks (4 responses) or conversely when students did not follow the rules when judges wanted them to (2 responses). Individual concerns included not wanting to use books in interpretation events, anger over the idea that "old literature is bad," and dissatisfaction with the formality, rigidity, and repetitiveness of the activity. Lastly, some individuals commented on aspects of particular competitive events that make participating in them relatively "not fun". Specific comments here related to: public address events, including informative (3 responses), communication analysis (1 response), and persuasion (1 response); limited preparation events, including both impromptu (2 responses) and extemporaneous speaking (1 response); and doing any kind of speaking other than debate (2 responses).

Statistical Predictors of "Fun"

In order to consider more concretely the potential role of these factors in predicting the degree to which forensics is seen as "fun" by those who participate in it, a series of linear regression tests were conducted. These tests produced statistical models capable of predicting perceptions of fun among students (Table 1), coaches and judges (Table 2), and ex-competitors (Table 3).

The model created to predict the degree to which students perceived forensics as fun contained six predictor variables (Table 1). While four of these variables did not surface in the models generated relative to coaches/judges and ex-competitors, two of the six demonstrated overlap with these other groups. The variable of "professn" (responses to the question "what about forensics is NOT fun" which focused on the link between forensics and "real world careers" or about the issue of "professionalism in general") emerged in all three models, indicating the predictive power of this variable relative to the perceptions of "fun" held by all segments of the community. Here, the students complained that forensics requires people to be too "proper" and too "adult-acting," although in one case a student complained that audiences were not professional enough. Meanwhile, the general category of "risks" also emerged in all three models. However, while the models generated for coaches/judges and ex-competitors included "risksp" (comments about risk-taking and self-expression listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is the most fun?"), the model generated for students included "risksn" (comments about risk-taking and self-expression listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you

feel is NOT fun?"). Students who rated forensics as relatively not fun were more likely to complain that forensics is too standardized, too rigid, too squelching of individual choice and expression. The other predictor variables which emerged in the equation developed from the students' responses were "traveln" (complaints that tournaments are too long or unorganized or boring or don't provide time for lunch or just badly run in general), and "timen" (complaints that the activity is just too time consuming, depriving them of sleep, depriving them of school/work/family time, and forcing them to slog through long trips and long days at tournaments). Meanwhile, two other predictor variables were positively correlated with the perception of forensics as relatively fun for students: (a) "identtyp" (the feeling that forensics allows students to accomplish their personal goals, develop their interpersonal skills, gain confidence, and just generally figure out their identity and who they are), and (b) "processp" (positive feelings about the process of preparing and rehearsing).

The models created to predict the degree to which coaches/judges (Table 2) and ex-competitors (Table 3) perceive forensics to be fun were strikingly alike. All three of the variables which surfaced in the model created for ex-competitors also appeared in the model created for coaches/judges. However, the model for coaches/judges also contained the additional variable of "accomp" (comments about the accomplishment of goals listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is the most fun?").

Table 1: Variables that Predict "Fun" for Students (Model Summary)

Predictors	Adj. R-square	F	Df (regression, residual, total)	Sig.
Professn	.153	10.220	1,50,51	.002
Add: traveln	.281	10.984	2,49,51	.000
Add: risksn	.365	10.757	3,48,51	.000
Add: timen	.421	10.279	4,47,51	.000
Add: identtyp	.480	10.404	5,46,51	.000
Add: processp	.547	11.254	6,45,51	.000

**Table 2: Variables that Predict "Fun" for Coaches/Judges
(Model Summary)**

Predictors	Adj. R-square	F	Df (regression, residual, total)	Sig.
Risksp	.122	8.236	1, 51, 52	.006
Add: professn	.193	7.200	2, 50, 52	.002
Add: accompp	.253	6.882	3, 49, 52	.001
Add: eventsp	.299	6.549	4, 48, 52	.000

**Table 3: Variables that Predict "Fun" for Ex-Competitors
(Model Summary)**

Predictors	Adj. R-square	F	Df (regression, residual, total)	Sig.
Risksp	.215	11.976	1, 39, 40	.001
Add: eventsp	.297	9.465	2, 38, 40	.000
Add: professn	.390	9.534	3, 37, 40	.000

Statistical Predictors of "Commitment"

A second set of linear regression tests were conducted in order to determine whether a statistically significant relationship existed between any of the predictor variables studied and the general level of commitment to the activity avowed by one or more segments of the forensics community. These tests produced regression models capable of predicting the commitment levels not only of students (Table 4), coaches and judges (Table 5) and ex-competitors (Table 6), but also of all of these groups considered together (Table 7).

The model generated to predict the commitment level of students (Table 4) was strikingly similar to that generated to predict the commitment level of all subject groups combined (Table 7). The same four predictor variables surfaced in both models: (a) "professn" (comments made about the link between forensics and "real world careers" or about the issue of "professionalism in forensics" in general listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is NOT fun?"), (b) "traveln" (comments about traveling and being away from home listed in response to the question "hat about forensics do you feel is NOT fun"), "competp" (comments about "the game" of winning and losing listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is the most fun"), and "timen" (comments made about time demands or time management listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is NOT fun?"). The

interpretation of these models (as well as all others) is considered in the following section of this paper.

One of the variables which emerged in the student and overall community models also emerged in the model created for ex-competitors. In fact, "travelp" was the only predictor variable used to build the model predicting the commitment levels of former competitors.

Finally, the model developed for coaches/judges differed markedly from all of the preceding models. It included two predictor variables, neither of which emerged as statistically significant in the other commitment models. Specifically, the avowed commitment levels of coaches and judges could be best predicted through the use of "risksp" (comments about risk-taking and self-expression listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is the most fun?") and "skillsp" (comments about the development of general overall skills listed in response to the question "what about forensics do you feel is the most fun?").

Table 4: Variables that Predict "Commitment" for Students

(Model Summary)

Predictors	Adj. R-square	F	Df (regression, residual, total)	Sig.
Professn	.151	10.064	1,50,51	.003
Add: traveln	.223	8.328	2,49,51	.001
Add: competp	.286	7.808	3,48,51	.000
Add: timen	.345	7.720	4,47,51	.000

Table 5: Variables Predicting "Commitment" for Coaches/Judges

(Model Summary)

Predictors	Adj. R-square	F	Df (regression, residual, total)	Sig.
Risksp	.095	5.328	1,40,41	.026
Add: skillsp	.172	5.270	2,39,41	.009

**Table 6: Variables that Predict "Commitment" for Ex-Competitors
(Model Summary)**

Predictors	Adj. R-square	F	Df (regression, residual, total)	Sig.
Travelp	.440	9.643	1,10,11	.011

**Table 7: Variables that Predict "Commitment" for the Forensics
Community at Large (Model Summary)**

Predictors	Adj. R-square	F	Df (regression, residual, total)	Sig.
Professn	.151	10.064	1,50,51	.003
Add: traveln	.223	8.328	2,49,51	.001
Add: competp	.286	7.808	3,48,51	.000
Add: timen	.345	7.720	4,47,51	.000

Discussion

The Relationship Between "Fun" and "Level of Commitment"

Perhaps one of the most frustrating aspects of a coach's life is seeing students he or she has worked with for days or weeks or years "drop out" of his or her program. While the reasons students and alumni drop out of the activity vary, the bottom line is always the same: a person we used to work with just isn't there any more. Of course, students aren't the only ones who walk away. Many of us have seen colleagues and co-workers burn out, wear out, or simply change their priorities. Across the community, we have a problem with "commitment." Paine and Stanley (2000) looked at the issue of "commitment to forensics" specifically in relation to levels of student commitment. They examined a wide array of factors which some have suggested might be associated with individual levels of commitment to forensics and, in the course of that research, discovered that "above all else, it is important that students perceive forensics to be 'fun in general.'...Quite simply, students won't be committed to the activity if it isn't 'fun.'" The present survey clearly confirms this claim. We performed a linear regression analysis designed to develop an equation to predict scores on the "fun" variable and found that the single variable of "commitment" was alone sufficient to predict the "fun" scores at the $p < .000$ level of statistical significance. In other words, people who have more fun in forensics are more committed to it and people who are more committed to forensics find it to be more fun.

Factors Associated with "Fun" by Students

Three linear regression tests (Tables 1-3) were performed in order to discover which factors predict the level at which forensics is perceived to be "fun" by students, judges, and ex-competitors. While the results indicate a substantial degree of overlap between the groups, some interesting differences also emerged.

Overall, the students who responded to this survey tended to feel that forensics is a lot of fun. A computation of response frequencies revealed that 90.4% of the students rated forensics as "fun" at the level of 7.0 or higher (on a 10-point scale), with 78.8% rating it 8.0 or higher and 57.5% rating it 9.0 or higher. No student ranked forensics lower than a 3.0, and only 5 of the 52 students ranked it at 5.0 or lower.

Six predictor variables proved to have an impact ($p < .000$) on the students' assessment of the level of fun which typifies forensics (see Table 1). Interestingly, four of these factors focused on what students perceived to be wrong with the activity. In other words, these findings clearly point out which competitors enjoy forensics the least and thus point to the type of student who may be most likely to drop out of the activity. Students are least likely to enjoy forensics when they feel that: (a) it requires them to be artificially "adult and professional," (b) tournaments themselves are unpleasant, (c) forensics doesn't let them take risks and express themselves, and (d) forensics steals away time from the rest of their lives.

Meanwhile, students are most likely to enjoy forensics if: (a) it lets them accomplish their own personal goals, and (b) they enjoy the process (not just the final results). Taken together, these results argue that students will have more fun if we give them more freedom. If we let them behave naturally, take risks, make idiosyncratic choices, try doing new things in new ways, and follow their own agendas (as opposed to ours), then they are optimally likely to enjoy the experience. But the more coaches and judges try to "control" them or "fit them into pre-fabricated boxes," the more likely they are to find forensics unpleasant.

Factors Associated with "Fun" by Judges and Coaches

The coach/judge perception of what makes forensics "fun" is strikingly different from the pattern of student feelings considered above (Table 2). Here, a linear regression analysis indicated that four factors could predict the coach/judge perception of "forensics fun" at the level of $p < .000$. The factors which emerged as meaningful deserve attention.

First, "risksp" was negatively correlated with the perception that "forensics is fun." In other words, judges and coaches who value such concepts as "displaying creativity," "seeing students challenge themselves," and "seeing students try new things and take risks" are relatively less likely to find forensics highly pleasurable. This perception on the part of judges and coaches reinforces the position taken by the students: if you care about taking risks and being creative, forensics is not necessarily a venue where you will be rewarded for such behavior.

Second, the coaches and judges who most cared about the value of student accomplishment ("accmpp") were least likely to find forensics fun. Again, this

implies that these coaches and judges don't frequently enough see "hard work pay off" or witness "moments of discovery" among their students. Apparently, coaches and judges who wish for proof that "hard work is its own reward" tend to be relatively disappointed by forensics.

Third, two other variables emerged as "statistically significant," even though the true significance of these variables is not strongly supported by the present data. A very low number of coach/judge comments in these two categories suggests that these findings may be a "statistical fluke" rather than truly meaningful. However, as a starting point for future researchers, it is perhaps worth briefly noting these findings. Initially, the coaches and judges (just like the students) revealed a negative correlation between "having fun" and "professionalism." Again, if we get too "formal and professional," we stop having fun. Also, there was a negative correlation between "eventsp" and "fun," such that coaches/judges who are especially fond of events like Debate and Persuasion (due to the logical skills they prize) are less likely to find contemporary forensics "fun."

Overall, the pattern of responses emerging here tends to confirm the perception of the students: if forensics gets too rigid and formal, it's less fun. But it also appears that coaches who don't see their students "rewarded for their hard work" find the activity relatively less pleasant.

Factors Associated with "Fun" by Ex-Competitors

A linear regression (Table 3) analyzing the responses of ex-competitors found that three predictor variables could predict their assessment of "forensics fun" at the $p < .000$ level of significance. The degree to which these factors reflect the responses of judges and students is striking.

Relative to "risksp," the ex-competitors who saw forensics as particularly "fun" tended not to make comments about the value of risk-taking. In other words, ex-competitors who enjoyed forensics did not require "the ability to take risks and express themselves" in order to have fun. In an interestingly obverse way, this result confirms our previous finding that students do not find forensics to be a risk-supportive activity. Thus, the students who stick around and enjoy it (who still view it as fun even after their own competitive days are over) tend to be the students who do not value risk-taking and self-expression.

The second variable which emerged in this regression was "eventsp," which reflects the number of positive comments made by respondents about particular events. As was the case with coaches/judges, a post-hoc examination of the individual comments made by ex-competitors revealed that it was the ex-competitors who had found the Limited Prep and Persuasion events to be the "most valuable" who now ranked forensics as relatively less fun overall. While it is tempting to speculate about what this finding "means," the present research did not provide sufficient data to justify giving in to this temptation. Again, it is offered here as a "tentative lead" that future researchers might choose to take forward.

The third predictor variable to emerge as statistically significant was "professn." Again, the question of "professionalism" rose to prominence. Here, an absence of complaints about professionalism was associated with a relatively higher evaluation of forensics as "fun." Read obversely, this association suggests that the ex-competitors who were most likely to find forensics "fun" were the people who had not been bothered by the circuit's demand for highly professional standards of etiquette.

Factors Associated with "Fun" Overall

Attempting to bring together the responses of the students, coaches/judges and ex-competitors, the most striking finding of the current research relates to the topic of "professionalism" in forensics. Students who complain about the activity as too "formal" tend to enjoy the activity less. It may well be that these students are especially likely to drop out of the activity over time, since the people who stick around for the "long haul" (judges, coaches, and ex-competitors who are still interested in forensics after their competitive careers are over) tend not to complain about "professionalism" expectations.

This finding reverberates relative to the issue of risk taking. Among both students and judges, the people who most value the chance to take risks tend to be less happy with forensics - while the people who don't value risk-taking tend to find forensics much more fun. For better or worse, this correlation suggests that forensics is seen as an activity that prizes standardization and "playing it safe" while being less open to "breaking out of the box."

Factors Associated with "Commitment" by Students

Another linear regression (Table 4) was conducted in order to see which predictor variables could be used to predict scores on the "commitment" scale. The results of this analysis both reflect and build on the pattern revealed relative to the issue of "fun."

The level of student commitment to the activity appeared to be influenced by four key variables: (a) "professn" (again, the students who were most likely to complain about professionalism in forensics were least likely to feel committed to the activity), (b) "traveln" (students who complained about the rigors of traveling such as van rides, bad hotels and bad food were less likely to feel committed to forensics), (c) "timen" (students who complained about long days, long trips, and time stolen from other priorities tended to feel less committed to the activity), and (d) "competp" (students who simply enjoy competition and "playing the game" tend to feel more committed to forensics).

None of these results are logically surprising. The finding relative to "professionalism" logically meshes with the findings of the current research relative to what makes forensics "fun" or not. Students who object to the "professionalism" in forensics tend to find it less fun and feel less committed to the activity. On the other hand, students who enjoy and appreciate the "professional tone" of the activity tend to feel more committed to it. This finding confirms the previous discovery (Paine & Stanley, 2000) that "students who were more committed said

that it was important... [to have teammates who were willing to] 'behave like professionals' at tournaments" (p. 11). Thus, the people who feel most committed to forensics not only are willing to behave like "professionals" themselves, but also put pressure on their teammates to live up to "professional" standards.

However, the demand to be "professional" is not the only factor that pulls some students away from forensics. This research confirms our common-sense expectation that students are relatively more likely to drop out of our programs if they feel like they are giving up lots of time in order to participate in exhausting and physically unpleasant trips away from home.

Meanwhile, it's the students who love to compete and "play the game" who are most committed to the activity. This finding is in line with the results of earlier research by Paine and Stanley (2000), which discovered that "a love for competition" was one of five factors listed by students as "important to very important" in their own determination of their commitment levels. Other meaningful factors were "relationship with team coach or coaches," "the opportunity to use and develop my talents," "friendships with other team members," and "fun in general."

Factors Associated with "Commitment" by Coaches and Judges

Only two predictor variables entered the linear regression equation computed to predict the commitment level expressed by judges and coaches. These results are reflected in Table 5 and are statistically significant at the $p < .009$ level.

First, "risksp" was negatively correlated with commitment level. Reinforcing a theme running throughout this research, those judges and coaches who most valued risk-taking felt relatively less committed to staying involved in the activity. Meanwhile, "skillsp" was also negatively correlated to commitment level. Again (noting the constraints of a small number of responses in this area), the judges/coaches who most valued debate and persuasion felt relatively less committed to forensics. Since debate and persuasion are (at least in theory) events which attack the status quo and advocate risk-taking changes, it is tempting to speculate that people drawn to these events are particularly likely to find the constraints of forensics standardization to be the most chafing.

Factors Associated with "Commitment" by Ex-Competitors

Only one predictor variable emerged as a meaningful predictor ($p < .011$) of the commitment level expressed by former competitors (Table 6). There was a negative correlation between commitment and "travelp." Thus, ex-competitors who tended not to appreciate the value of traveling were in general less committed to the activity. Speculating on this finding, we might guess that ex-competitors who have had enough of "life on the road" feel less committed to the activity.

Factors Associated with "Commitment" Overall

A final stepwise linear regression was computed in order to see what variables appear to predict the commitment levels expressed by the members of the

forensics community at large. As illustrated by Table 7, four predictor variables contributed to the creation of a regression statistically significant at the $p < .000$ level.

This analysis takes into account the responses of students, coaches, judges and ex-competitors alike. Overall, those with relatively high levels of commitment to forensics: (a) tended to be less likely to complain about the issue of "professionalism" in forensics, (b) tended to be less likely to complain about the rigors of travel, (c) tended to be less likely to complain about the time demands associated with forensics, and (d) tended to be more likely to enjoy "the game" of competition.

Clearly, this pattern reinforces our earlier conclusions. "Fun" and "commitment" go together — and the same factors which make forensics "fun" also make people feel more or less committed to the activity.

Conclusion

People who perceive that forensics is "fun" tend to be more committed to it. Our research suggests a number of factors which shape our perceptions of both what is and what is not fun about this activity. Obviously, what makes it "fun" for one person is different from what makes it "fun" for another. However, overall, we suggest that:

(a) "People" lie at the core of our perception of fun. If we find it pleasant to spend time with our teammates and be a part of the forensics community at large, then we are relatively likely to enjoy the activity and feel committed to it.

(b) Some people appear to be "driven out of forensics" by their perception that the activity is too rigid (doesn't allow for risk-taking) and too "professional" (requiring unnecessarily high standards of formal etiquette).

(c) The people who stick around tend to enjoy "the game" of competition. They enjoy the sheer act of "performing," particularly when the quality of their work is recognized by others.

(d) The people who enjoy forensics and feel committed to it see the educational values which can be gleaned from it. They believe that it helps them to develop speaking skills, cognitive skills, emotional skills, and stronger/clearer identities.

This research helps us to understand who forensics works for. Perhaps the next question that needs to be addressed more directly and fully is "who does forensics not serve well" — and what types of learning are we not helping our students to achieve? It's time to track down and talk to the people who have left the activity, and find out why they walked away.

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Managing the Dialectical Tension Between Competition and
Education in Forensics:
A Response to Burnett, Brand, & Meister

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Abstract

This essay is a response to Ann K. Burnett, Jeffrey D. Brand, and Mark Meister's article, "Winning is Everything," published in the Spring 2001 issue of the National Forensic Journal. Burnett, Brand, and Meister's critique of competition in the forensics community is acknowledged as significant and compelling enough to warrant a consideration of the benefits of competition, conceptualized as intrinsic if they develop an understanding of communication arts and practices specifically, or general if the educational outcomes emerge from mere participation on a team of competitors. After distinguishing between intrinsic and general benefits of competition, attention is devoted to describing the problem in terms of an unmanaged dialectic involving four tensions in the forensics community: artistic response/utilization of formulas, authentic engagement/artificial engagement, public-community orientation/personal-self gratification orientation, and reflexive awareness/uncritical concern. After describing these four sources of tension, four communication strategies are offered as potential ways to manage dialectical tensions emerging from competition and enhance the educational experiences of our students.

The essay, "Winning is Everything" strikes a collective community nerve,¹ Burnett, Brand, and Meister have taken perhaps the most cherished assumption about forensics — described it as a myth, and proceeded to challenge the community's behavioral commitment to making the educational vision of forensics a reality. "Winning is Everything" cannot be ignored by forensic educators. If we accept the mythical quality of an educational vision for forensics, there is little rationale upon which to justify the time and resources devoted to forensics education. If after reading their essay, we sense that it does not reflect our programs, our colleagues' programs, or our common vision of the community, we are obligated to respond in defense of an educational vision for forensic activities. I commend the authors for their critique of community practices and for their ability to develop their argument in such a way to command the concern of the forensics community.

While I agree with their critique of practices, I take a more favorable attitude toward competition, agree with their claim that it can come to dominate our activities, but believe that as a community, we collectively aspire toward an ideal of excellence that is worth defending. To defend it, however, we must engage in critical self-reflection of our programs and practices, a process well served by the work of Burnett, Brand, and Meister. It is in this respect that I believe their con-

tribution to the forensics community is significant since it highlights the dialectical tensions of our practices.

My response to Burnett, Brand, and Meister is divided into four sections. First, I distinguish between intrinsic and common benefits to forensic competition. Second, I describe the common and intrinsic benefits of competition and argue that forensics can engender favorable outcomes of both types. Third, I reframe the problem addressed by Burnett, Brand, and Meister as an unmanaged dialectic between competition and education. Finally, I urge forensic educators to reflect on their coaching and competitive practices so that they might better manage the dialectical tension between education and competition.

Distinguishing Between Intrinsic and Common Educational Benefits of Competition

Intrinsic educational outcomes are those uniquely developed by the end served by an activity. The test of uniqueness might be applied in a very limited set of illustrations. For example, excellence as a tennis player might be considered partially in terms of one's serve. Knowing how to hit a top spin serve, a slice serve, an American twist serve, or a flat "cannonball" serve and knowing how to place those serves and when to use those serves against a particular kind of an opponent at a specific time in a game or set to win constitutes an educational outcome that makes one tennis player better at that shot than another. Or excellence as a martial artist might be considered partially in terms of one's ability to remember the moves of a kata, a prearranged sequence of actions that simulate defense and counters to an imagined attack. Beyond remembering the moves of the kata would be the refinement of the actions, precision in movement, power of techniques, grace with which a person performs the kata, balance in movement, rhythm of technique, visualization of the techniques, among other elements of performance that would determine one's success at a martial arts tournament in kata competition. Or excellence in football regarding the skills of a quarterback might be seen partially as the ability to recognize defensive formations, change a play at the line of scrimmage to take advantage of the defensive formation, and adapt the play as it unfolds in response to the actions taken by the defense in the hope of advancing the ball down the field and scoring. Or in the case of speech activities when a student's message is more clearly communicated in a thesis statement than other speeches, organized more clearly than other speeches, supported more effectively than other speeches, written more persuasively than other speeches, and performed in a way that establishes rapport with the audience, holds their attention, and moves them to action more effectively than the other speeches each of these skills contributes to excellence as a speaker.²

In each of these examples, the knowledge and abilities of one area of endeavor do not, in a specific and intrinsic sense, serve the competitive ends of the others. Being a great speaker might function to motivate team members before the next play but certainly cannot be used to read a defense and adapt a play on the football field, or enable one to win a tennis match when a strong serve

is needed, or demonstrate martial arts skills in a kata competition. Knowing how to hit different serves and when to use those abilities cannot contribute to the offense of a football game, or success in a martial arts kata competition, or how to construct an excellent speech (even though one might be giving an informative speech about tennis as a coach). Knowing how to read a defense as a quarterback is useless if the quarterback ventures onto a tennis court and needs to know how to hit a top spin serve to an opponent's backhand, or enters a martial arts tournament and needs to know how to perform a kata with correct timing, rhythm, power, balance, and technique. In each of the above examples, specific forms of knowledge and skill contribute to competitive success, to a form of excellence that is valued by audiences and judges within a specific context.

Competitive activities also develop a common set of outcomes that I regard as educational. In the above examples, competition calls for the development of a general kind of intelligence is necessary to develop, refine, and reflect on one's skill. Competition provides other educational benefits related to personal and social development. Consider the unique perspective of Duke University head basketball coach, Mike Krzyzewski whose NCAA basketball teams have won multiple national championships. On March 28, 1993, a week after losing in the second round of the NCAA national basketball tournament, Krzyzewski (1993) was left to reflect on value of competition given that there would be no third consecutive national championship for Duke. His words are instructive:

It was in our locker room after the game, amidst the crying and hugging, amidst words of consolation and support, and love, that I understood even more clearly than I had during the last two years how lucky I was to be a part of college sports. You see the enduring value of college sports lies not just in winning, but in trying to win and in the sharing and learning that are central to that effort (p. L9).

Competition requires students to try to win, to prepare for the competitive event and learn from the activities one engages in to compete. Competition motivates students to prepare in earnest, to practice with an eye toward improvement, and to set personal goals for improvement.

Competing can give a student identity as a member of a team since joining a team, becoming assimilated as a member, and preparing for a season of tournament activity can challenge students to develop social skills that are essential to success beyond the college classroom. Competition gives a sense of life to the season with its initiation, subsequent competitive events where students develop their skills over a season, and then a final set of events that represent a culmination of a student's or team's efforts. The collective effort, the ups and downs of competitive outcomes, the focused effort on the pursuit of excellence, all seem to be potentially valuable experiences for college students. A competitive season simulates life situations requiring adaptation to changing circumstances, recommitment to achieving one's goals, coming back from a disappointing experience, and hard work without guarantee of success. Preparing for competition provides instruction in important values that serve students throughout their lives. Coach

Krzyzewski framed the question in terms of what students learn from preparing for competition:

What better place to learn about trust, teamwork, integrity, friendship, commitment, collective responsibility, and so many other values than in college sports? Where better to learn to work with other people to overcome the obstacles which can prevent all of us from achieving our true potential? Where better to learn to express enthusiasm appropriately, to develop discipline and to polish communication skills? I believe college sports, as an extension of what we do and learn in the classroom, is an invaluable facet of higher education (p. L9).

Although it might be possible for some of our forensic team members to participate in college or intramural sports for the purpose of gaining the common benefits of striving toward competitive excellence, it seems unreasonable to expect all of our students to seek the common benefits of competition there. They are drawn to forensic activities because forensics is a collection of speech activities, of which they are interested in, and because they are not interested enough (or possibly talented enough) in basketball, football, field hockey, chess, tennis, bridge, or any other game to forego participating in forensics activities to pursue those other interests exclusively.

Competitive Forensics Serves Intrinsic and Common Educational Outcomes

Participating in competitive forensics can serve both intrinsic educational values and outcomes common to participating on competitive teams. Forensics competition serves as a way for students who are interested in speech activities to distinguish themselves in competition and achieve a sense of success. And this sense of success can be especially meaningful for students who grow as students of communication over a season or a career. Having struggled and aspired to reach a goal and then doing so-constitutes a valuable instructional experience that few other non-athletic collegiate activities can offer.

Competition and Intrinsic Benefits

First, competitive forensics serves intrinsic educational goals. Tournaments invite comparison and evaluation according to standards for judgment. What wins reflects community standards for excellence. Our concern should be on what standards the community applies to performance, the rationale for using those standards, and a willingness to reflect on how well these standards prepare students for communicating beyond the narrow confines of tournament participation.

Not all of our students start with well-developed skills. Ideally, forensic tournaments provide a focus for activities to prepare effective messages. Tournaments represent a point in time when the preparation process must be complete. Before the student can attend the tournament, s/he has carefully researched the speech, taken time to think about the persuasive strategies to use, weighed the choices concerning support materials, written the speech to reflect a

polished set of language choices, and revised their work with suggestions from coaches. Further, the student must have carefully considered the choices about delivery and practiced one's delivery so that the performance is capable of spontaneously creating an intellectual and emotional effect on the audience.³ Students that make better choices in constructing and delivering their speeches tend to enjoy more success than students who neglect these elements of preparation for competition. In these ways, tournament results reflect the pursuit and achievement of a kind of cultural eloquence. Hopefully, it is a form of eloquence that serves students well when they close their college careers and begin life in the "real world."

In a well-founded forensics program, students learn how to communicate complex ideas to many different types of audiences from peers, to coaches, to teachers, to judges, to teammates, to members of other departmental classes, to community members, and possibly even administrators. Through forensics competition students begin to understand how competing ideas shape political and organizational outcomes. And the ability to communicate complex ideas, honed in tournament competition, has recently been regarded as highly valuable in the business world (Ross, 2002).

Winning in forensics competition can sometimes mean following unwritten rules for competitive success and these unwritten rules might have little relevance for audiences outside the tournament forum (Cronn-Mills & Golden, 1997; VerLinden, 1997). Here an award would reflect a student's ability to perceive and engage in arcane cultural idiosyncrasies for performance. The student might be considered a "forensic virtuoso," able to respond to the culturally implicit expectations for what constitutes a competitive performance but not necessarily understanding why s/he follows the unwritten rules save that at the end of a tournament, s/he receives an award. In this instance, Swanson (1992) has noted how the unwritten rules reflect a disconnection between the audiences in our tournaments who value unwritten rules and the audiences of our students' future communities who expect personalized responses to communication transactions rather than homogeneously styled responses.

Performances catering to the unwritten rules might or might not have relevance for communicating messages to audiences outside of a forensic tournament. As a community, we should identify what these practices are and discuss their functional value in speech education. Should they fail to serve our students beyond our tournaments, we should discontinue them. When our practices lead students to engage in cultural behaviors for the exclusive sake of winning, of appealing to standards of performance that reflect a closed system of unwritten and unjustifiable expectations for performance, we have lost our way. Since we constitute the preponderance of judges at our tournaments, we determine what wins, and thus wield substantial influence as arbiters of excellence. Therefore the potential for change lies in our hands. The role of the judge complements the function we serve at professional conferences where these issues may be discussed and debated. In short, my position is that we should reward those practices that lead to eloquence and cull from our cultural practices those that reflect unjustifiable forensic idiosyncrasies.

Common Benefits to Competitive Team Experiences

Competition in forensic activities also contributes to educational outcomes that come from team experiences, personal dedication, and comparative evaluation. Well-managed competitive forensics activities can, in some cases, serve our students more effectively than standard classroom experiences.

The relationship between a forensics student and coach constitutes an inherently valuable teaching context. Forensics activities can provide an interesting enough challenge to keep students in school, keep them on track to graduate, or contribute to personal development. The relationship between a coach and his/her students is one that often, cannot be readily found in other departments across a college campus. Competitive forensics can provide opportunities for mentoring students who might otherwise have chosen to forego further coursework, might be going through difficult personal circumstances, or simply trying to stay interested in school. The close interaction between teacher and student in the course of preparing for tournament competition can often create the relationship that makes mentoring and its positive outcomes possible.

The intensity of the competitive experience can contribute to enhanced educational outcomes. Tournaments feature multiple rounds of competition over the course of a season and require students to function as a team providing support, encouragement, peer coaching, and cooperation in preparing for competition by contributing to extemp files, debate research, and practice speeches. The desire to succeed as a competitor can develop student discipline, time management skills, organizational skills, an ability to establish personal priorities, and create a sense of satisfaction in accomplishing these goals. Regardless of competitive outcomes, the activities that make competition possible engender positive values for life beyond college.

Competition can teach students how to win with grace and how to lose with grace; competition can inform students about why they fell short in their performances and can reveal what is evaluated in competition (Ross, 2002)⁴. Competition can reveal the different ways in which language, and linguistic performances have meaning for audiences. Here, I think the search for success in one's performance and the necessity of evaluation on the part of a judge changes the way one views the outcome of performance. While not all judges provide rationales for ranking, when such rationales are provided a student can see how his/her performance was evaluated in relation to other performances.

Competition provides a measure of excellence in communication activities and serves, according to Huizinga (1950), as an incentive to strive for perfection.

From the life of childhood right up to the highest achievements of civilization one of the strongest incentives to perfection, both individual and social, is the desire to be praised and honoured for one's excellence. In praising another each praises himself [sic]. We want to be honoured for our virtues. We want the satisfaction of having done something well. Doing something well means doing it better than others. In order to excel one must prove one's excellence; in order to merit recognition,

merit must be made manifest. Competition serves to give proof of superiority (p. 63).

Competition in forensics prepares students for competitive evaluation in life. We are always being evaluated on the basis of our ideas and personhood expressed in verbal and nonverbal messages. Forensics competition prepares students for life in that it teaches them how language works on audiences.

In my experience as a director of a program that engages in competitive activities, I have seen many of these effects served by participation in competitive speech activities. However, competitive and noncompetitive practices can coexist in a program should a director desire to pursue them. The goal is to manage the dialectical tensions that are described in the next section.

Dialectical Tension in Forensics

The issue that confronts the forensics community might be conceptualized as an unmanaged dialectic between opposing elements of competition and education. A dialectical perspective acknowledges the paradoxical elements of opposing tensions in the hope that they might be managed more effectively with critical awareness. Although a substantial number of studies have relied on concepts of dialectic to discuss ways to negotiate conflicting forces, three areas of work in dialectic provide a basis for understanding dialectical tensions in forensics.

The Nature of Dialectical Tension

The first problem is to recognize the existence of paradoxes so that they can be managed. J. Kevin Barge (1993) has argued that four broad categories of paradox face individuals who are engaged in leadership practices in organizations: belonging, engaging, speaking, and risk-taking. Building on the work of Smith and Berg, Barge has argued that, "all groups and organizations face paradoxes, but only successful groups recognize the existence of paradoxes and manage them effectively (p. 211)."

The second problem is learning how to become comfortable with contradictory forces in our lives. Leslie Baxter (1990) and her colleague Barbara Montgomery (1996) have identified three relational dialectics inherent in personal relationships: the conflict between wanting autonomy and connection, novelty and predictability, and openness and privacy. Each of these elements contributes something positive to relationship development. However, each also threatens to generate conflict when the parties to a relationship are unable to appreciate each other's need to move back and forth between these interests.

The third problem arises out of a dilemma faced by those who are conflicted over moral and ethical issues. W. Barnett Pearce and Stephen Littlejohn (1997) have argued that when important differences exist between human beings they must choose between leaving those differences unexpressed, a condition they define as suppression, and engaging others in some kind of confrontation, debate or other forms of discourse in which the differences are expressed. A sub-

stantial source of the difficulties faced by forensic educators lies in the different ways we enact our vision of forensics.

Four Tensions in Forensics

Inherent in a laboratory model of liberal arts practice is a tension arising out of four opposing elements: artistic response/utilization of formulas, authentic engagement/artificial engagement, public-community orientation/personal-self gratification orientation, and reflexive awareness/uncritical concern. These tensions exist because we are required to take dual roles as educators and audience members. We consume, in an intellectual and social pragmatic sense, what we teach. Our instructional choices as teachers, coaches, and judges-consciously or not-reflect our values. Therefore, we should strive to become aware of our assumptions about the nature of our practices and critically evaluate them to ensure our competitive activities serve educational ends.

We need to consider the ways that our activities are grounded in the contradictory forces described below. In doing so, we can become more aware of the tensions, understand what each contributes to our capacity to function as competent educators, and reflect more productively on how to talk to each other and our students about the problems they pose for us.

Artistic response/Utilization of formulas

Related to the liberal arts is the tension between teaching students how to craft an artistic response to a specifically perceived need for communication and the struggle to teach a general set of public speaking principles that can be adapted to a range of circumstances. As teachers, we value the models taught in our textbooks because they give coherence to the principles of communication practice making it possible to convey them to our students as a body of concepts that reflect the art of rhetoric, or more loosely construed, performance studies. Much like teaching students about any art, the models and principles of the liberal arts serve as a set of resources for responding to situations calling for symbolic expression. But they are templates constituting only a basic understanding of the discipline and in no way are intended to reflect a closed set of strategies. None of the templates necessarily covers all the possibilities of language use; that is why good teachers strive to activate sensitivity on the part of their students to seek out what is unique about the interaction of situation, audience, and message so that students can craft an authentic and engaging response to that rhetorical moment. So I perceive an ongoing tension between the desire to rely on models and formulas that have not only worked in the past, but work generally in a wide range of situations, and the need to create and adapt language practices to the unique and singular moment of any given rhetorical transaction between student and audience members, whether the audience is composed of one judge or an auditorium filled with members of a community.

Authentic engagement/Artificial engagement

An assumption of the preceding section is the idea that tournaments constitute possibilities for an authentic rhetorical exchange between student speaker and audience. Not every performance will feature what I have described as authentic rhetorical exchange, one where the student aims to affect the audience with his/her message, and the audience is affected, assuming an intentional model of communication here, in the way the student might have hoped. Bringing this framework into the tournament is a choice on the part of the student at the very least, and possibly the judge. Students need to see the tournament as an ideal place where human beings have gathered to listen carefully to the message they convey—first as critics—then as audience members. Judges need to see the tournament as a place where human beings have gathered to share a message that is important to them, and possibly, to an imagined audience of the future, or some future audience from the student's community. The role of the judge is to help the student see how to improve his/her capacity for conveying a message to some future audience by noting what was excellent and what was in need of improvement in the performance just given. Choosing this orientation to tournaments requires discipline and imagination and is satisfying when the ballots written by judges fulfill our expectations for instructive comments; where the comments demystify the rankings and ratings, and provide students and coaches with suggestions for improving students' performances.

However, some judges and some students might not be able to frame a round of competition as speeches where they might be affected by the performance—either as receivers or senders of messages since, at the conclusion of hearing the speeches, a ranking and rating must be recorded and submitted for tabulation. Students might have as their only goal, winning. Coaches might have not have engaged in conversations about the philosophical underpinnings of a forensics program. Coaches might not have any collection of principles that reflect a coaching philosophy. (Or worse, one's philosophy is oriented solely around holding the greatest number of trophies at the end of the tournament.) Focusing on the competitive outcomes assumes that the audiences at tournaments are not real in the sense that a television audience is real, or live audiences are real for political debates, campaign speeches, or state of the union addresses. In fact, one could argue that tournament audiences are artificial, and of no consequence for students of communication to consider save for their power to advance a student or hold them back from obtaining an award. While it is the case that students prepare for competition with some expectations about what kind of performance will succeed, viewing tournaments only as opportunities for status is an extreme position on this dialectical axis. Both positions are, to some extent, operant in a tournament context.

It is a misplaced assumption to think that the performances our students give at tournaments necessarily have no genuine audience members. When I sit in the back of the room as a judge, I am called upon to respond to the language choices of the students, and to comment on where they were aesthetically appealing, just, appropriate, truthful, sensitive, informing, moving, etc. I might have

heard the student's topic addressed in a prior tournament or season, seen the student's interpretive material performed by another student in a previous round, heard some of the same facts in a previous round of extemporaneous speaking, or had the same rhetorical artifact addressed from different critical perspectives, etc. However, when a student treats me, and the moment of his/her presentation, as an opportunity to affect me as an audience member by striving to make me feel the uniquely embodied existential plight of a character in an interpretive performance, see current issues come alive in a well developed extemporaneous speech, or comprehend a rhetorical artifact in an exemplary way, cause me to become concerned enough about a social issue to explore ways I might contribute to its amelioration, etc., that student has adopted a fundamentally important objective for the study of communication. If that student can communicate in a way to create authentic engagement, s/he will have discovered an important skill for future transactions, a skill that is grounded in the intrinsic nature of human communication.

One can take a cynical view of tournaments as devoid of these opportunities or idealistic view of tournaments as full of these opportunities. However, I think the solution is to hold these two attitudes in dynamic tension. We go to tournaments with the intention of competing but the goal of competition is to see if we can bring a genuine desire to convey our messages to our audiences. The more we can remain sensitive and ready to respond to these possibilities of authentic engagement, despite the ever present tournament context of an artificial transaction, the more meaningful the activity is for our selves and our students. Any single transaction, potentially, can change the world of the speaker or the audience. We should be mindful of the power of language, and acknowledge that discovering that moment or engendering that skill across time and various situations is an extremely valuable one for students of communication.

Public orientation/Personal orientation.

There is tension between the public, community-oriented goal of our communication practices and the personal, or ego oriented objective of competing for awards. Many forensic events come from course assignments in a public speaking or interpretation of literature class; and those assignments were derived from the need to communicate skillfully in public. In many colleges and universities, these introductory courses in communication are designed to provide basic competencies in the communication arts. Whether our students come to our programs with developed skills or arrive with a desire to be challenged with competitive forensic activities, our programs provide opportunities to develop and refine communication skills beyond the traditional classroom experience.

However, when students represent their school only to gain personal prestige, a director might want to consider challenging the students to think about the larger implications of their message. Much of what communication departments strive to impart to their students is a sense of citizenship, that communication practices are studied, engaged in, and critiqued with having some hope of developing the skill to influence others in a positive way. Forensic tournaments do not

exist in closed social systems unless we allow them to be closed off from the larger social context in which university educations occur. To be unconcerned with the effect of one's message, to be overly concerned with getting judges "who like you" or will "vote for you" is to run the risk of failing to comprehend how language choices affect audiences in different ways. Little is learned in such a transaction.

But neither should our students pander to untrained audiences or rely on patently visceral emotional appeals to influence audiences. We have an obligation to teach responsible rhetorical practices for the important reason that our students join us as citizens in our communities after graduating from our colleges and universities. The personal challenge to our students—that they should strive to be the best they can be—and the fact that doing so might lead to a form of personal power that, exercised in the wrong way or for less than the most noble ends, might have unfavorable consequences for a communities, needs to be managed. Both elements must be held in dialectical tension since one without the other leads to educational failure—either we shape students who rely on the worst practices to move audiences or we create students who have little concern for the effect of their message on the well-being of the community as long as they continue to collect trophies at the end of our tournaments. Our choices should avoid the dangerous and empty extremes, respectively, of the demagogue and forensic virtuoso.

Reflexive awareness/Uncritical concern.

Finally, there is the tension between being reflexively aware of how one's practices affect one's ethics, skill, and commitment to a notion of the public and an unawareness of those implications. Unmanaged reflexive awareness can paralyze students and coaches with an ongoing, overwhelming concern about how the event being prepared for a tournament will—turn out. There is simply no way a student or coach can ever be absolutely certain the performance will achieve all of the noble values our community holds in high esteem and avoid all of the less noble ones. There is no way to avoid the desire to improve, to strive to be excellent, nor would we want to direct programs where an organizing principle of our activities is to strive for mediocrity. The drive for excellence in the arts, especially the communicative arts should be nurtured at every turn. There is no way of knowing if and how much a student is increasing his or her education about language arts and human audiences as that student proceeds to record a competitively successful season. (We might be able to measure what a student gains over an entire season or a career, but I tend to think that what is gained becomes measurable only after a period of time over which a student can accumulate and assemble smaller, incremental advances in understanding, and even then, understanding arises only after some period of reflecting on the set of experiences that constitute a student's career.) The list of concerns can go on and such a list can paralyze us as coaches or prevent students from considering what might be gained from participating in forensics.

Nor should we ignore these concerns so that we can concentrate only on winning. To view tournaments as competitive ends in themselves disconnects our teaching from any real world relevance to the future of our students' actions as members of communities or employees in organizations. The "forensic virtuoso" deprecated in previous sections can hardly parlay the forensic walk, the three point problem-cause-solution "info-suasive," the gratuitous humor of a narrowly treated subject for an after dinner speech, the "cookie-cutter" application of a rhetorical model to an artifact, and all of the other devices that we might have relied on to get our ideas and performances to fit into a sixty-minute round of competition, into a viable career outside of the tournament context. Admittedly, these may have been starting points for skill development but our teaching should take into consideration the vastly more complex possibilities in the encounter between competitor and judge than the limited conventions mentioned above. Our students will graduate, leave our programs, get jobs, and pursue careers beyond competitive forensics. Therefore, what we teach and reward should have transfer value beyond tournaments. Tournament directors and the judges that determine tournament outcomes should strive to create experiences that address the need for relevance beyond tournament formats. If we are tied to status quo tournament formats, as Burnett, Meister, and Brand argue, we should be certain they teach the skills we desire, or we should alter our tournament and judging practices. Otherwise, forensics education will be relegated to mythic status.

We are at our best when we hold these opposing values in some kind of dynamic tension. In doing so, we avoid the negative effects of privileging one side of the dialectic over the other. Competition is not inherently evil. Like most other activities in life, how we approach an issue—in this case—competition, determines the quality of our teaching and the outcomes of our programs.

How Should We Respond to Burnett, Brand, and Meister?

Removing competition from speech activities entirely would deprive students of the benefits of competition. Speech performances would be limited to public speaking classrooms, debates limited to argumentation classes, and interpretive performances limited to the introduction to interpretation classroom. Students might not have the motivation to focus on the details of performance that competitive activities naturally call forth. The research and preparation process, expanded considerably to ensure the most rigorous effort to obtain a thorough understanding of a subject selected for a speech, might be limited considerably to fit within the semester classroom timeline. While students could still deliver their performances to available audiences in classrooms or communities, the discipline and effort necessary to develop a moving performance might be lacking for those students whose talents already exceed expectations for our courses. Certainly, the competitive season extracts a more substantial investment of time in preparation than a performance organized around a class taken in a single semester. This can be seen in exhibition speeches and debates for departmental classes at my university where students generally regard the speech

performances from team members as slightly less than astonishing for their ability to command so much information and ideas in such compact ways. Thus, in these ways, competition can complement classroom experiences, serve to refine the skills of highly motivated students, and provide a challenge to students whose talents are activated by a semester's worth of study, or whose talents already exceed the expectations for competencies at the outset of a semester's study of communication.

I agree that the problem for some students and some coaches is that the status markers, the titles of state champion, or national champion, or team champion, creates pressure for us to behave in ways that contorts what many of us take as common ethical starting points for an educational activity. Too often, competition does come to dominate our thinking about forensic activities as Burnett, Brand, and Meister have argued. Many of us have enacted, for example, the heroic myth of the forensic director at some points in our careers as coaches/directors—staying up late with our students working long hours to prepare speeches, calling for work sessions on weekends to prepare for upcoming tournaments, driving long hours home from tournaments and discussing ballots and changes to make in speeches to improve the chances of winning at the next tournament. These activities portray us as striving in a kind of academic anonymity; few other faculty members see our activities, understand what we teach, and only see students gathering to depart for a tournament and possibly returning home, victorious or resolved to improve before the next tournament. Burnett, Brand, and Meister have observed how often members of the forensic community, including myself, get so caught up in the drama of competition, that we lose, misplace, underutilize, or simply fail to practice our reflective thinking skills to assess how well our practices contribute to educational outcomes. In these ways, competition can dominate our thinking; our practices fail to reflect educational objectives, and at that point, education becomes mythical.

The corrective for this problem lies in applying communication strategies designed to manage the dialectical tensions of competition and education. Barge (1993) has described four such strategies: explaining, refraining, escalating, and redirecting. Each has been described in a limited way to some extent in this paper. First, "leaders can help group members become aware of the paradox they are facing by defining the problem in terms of the paradox (Barge, 1993, p. 229)." The papers addressing the shortcomings of forensic activities, hopefully, have initiated a conversation about the issues facing the forensic community. In reflecting on those tensions, the challenges of balancing education and competition begin to come into focus.

Second, it is possible to reframe contradictions "searching for a common denominator between the two conflicting elements and then viewing those elements not in terms of 'either/or' but 'both/and' (Barge, 1993, p. 229)." Instead of claiming, for example, that forensics activities are always artificial or always genuine opportunities for communication, we can recognize that both elements (among the other three dialectics identified in this paper) might be inherent in our practices as educators.

Third, it might be necessary to engage in a strategy of escalating to highlight the problems in forensics (Barge, 1993). Taking the unwritten rules and casting them as required rules for a tournament, for example, escalates the symptom of the problem and underscores the need to evaluate how well those rules serve the educational objectives of our programs. Finally, it might be possible to engage in redirection (Barge, 1993). Here the problematic behaviors can be acknowledged but limited to specific times or place. VerLinden (1997) adopts this approach in his paper on the unwritten rules of public address suggesting that forensics coaches can discuss with their students the limited utility of the unwritten rules outside of the competitive context of tournaments.

The forensics community has engaged in efforts to balance these tensions. First, there is a great deal of excellent instruction occurring in the forensics community that goes unacknowledged simply because the commitment to good practice is taken for granted. Specifically, in the past when problems have developed, the forensics community has moved to address them: sanctions regarding unethical practices were imposed, unwritten rules were articulated for the community to evaluate and consider, and new experimental events at the NFA National tournament have been tried.⁵ The fact that experimental events are still welcome should attest to the fact that NFA leadership is committed to pushing the limits of performance. Simply because the forensics community is not engaging in all of the activities that Burnett, Brand, and Meister desire, and in some limited cases, engaging in activities they disparage, does not necessarily mean that forensics cannot provide valuable educational experiences. For every undesirable practice they identify, it is possible to point to desirable practices in the community, to efforts at reflection and reform, and to programs that serve students in admirable ways. In this respect, a more encompassing survey of forensic activities would yield a more balanced judgment of how we are doing as a community. Second, an awareness of the need to extend the challenge of forensics beyond competitive success can be found in two examples of scholarship advocating a vision of forensics that seems more consistent with the hopes of Burnett, Brand and Meister. The first example can be found in Gordon Mitchell's essay, "Pedagogical Possibilities for Argumentative Agency in Academic Debate," published in the Fall 1998 issue of *Argumentation and Advocacy*, where he described the promise of debate activities in terms of argumentative agency. He found debate serving larger social purposes in a process of four stages: primary research, public debate, public advocacy, and debate outreach. More than holding substantial promise for directors, students, programs, and communities, Mitchell described a number of examples of current practices reaching for the full potential of the vision that I believe Burnett, Brand, and Meister might have in mind.

A second reference concerns my own experience of bringing forensics students into regional prisons in the state of Michigan as part of a service-learning program. Since 1996 students from Central Michigan University have periodically engaged in service-learning activities designed to provide public speaking

skills, and sometimes argumentation skills, to inmates in the Deerfield Correctional Facility, the Riverside Correctional Facility, the Huron Valley Men's Facility, and the Saginaw Regional Correctional Facility. In two of the programs we offered, we had the opportunity to include and review videotaped speeches of men from the El Dorado Correctional Facility of El Dorado, Kansas. The case for service-learning (Hinck & Hinck, 1998), the description of the program we offered at the Deerfield Correctional Facility (Warriner, 1998), and a reflection on the educational experience of one of the students who participated (Hatfield, 1998) are detailed in the Fall/Spring 1998 issue of the *National Forensic Journal*.

These articles reflect a commitment to noncompetitive activities existing in the debate and forensics communities. While they do not displace competitive activities entirely, I see no reason why they must. Both types of activities seem to inform each other in important ways. Each demonstrates the limit of competitive activities and the value of noncompetitive activities. Neither demands total command of our practices and each invites commingling with the other.

Conclusion

When competition dominates our thinking and activities, we need to get out the issue of the *National Forensic Journal* that contains their essay and reread Burnett, Brand, and Meister. Reflecting on actual practices and then measuring how close they come to the ideal we strive for should always keep us honest and committed to providing the best educational experience for our students. We can do this through an examination of the dialectical tensions inherent in competitive forensics activities, through an application of communication strategies designed to manage those tensions, through continued dialogue at professional conferences, through discussions with the graduate students we train for professional positions as directors of programs, through a reasoned analysis of what we reward at tournaments, through a continued professional and personal commitment to ethical practices in competition, through an honest dialogue with our students regarding what they learn from their tournament experiences, and through a sustained commitment to noncompetitive activities.

Where directors find noncompetitive activities educationally sound for their programs, they can be pursued in a variety of ways. Service-learning activities, debate watches during major campaigns, civic engagement projects, speaker bureaus, exhibition speeches and debates, communication workshops for high schools and community citizen groups, public forums on major social issues, and integrating interpretive performances and debates during campus conferences are all ways to maximize the return on our educational investment in forensics. Articles reporting the description and evaluation of these activities should be encouraged for our journals. Panels that address imaginative ways to actualize the promise of an educational vision for forensics should be presented at our conferences. In these ways, we can generate additional models of programs and activities to serve as resources for directors in the future.

Winning is not everything for me, and in my experience, is not everything or the only thing for the many directors whose students compete against mine. Striving for excellence, however, should be our focus. Competitive speech activities can serve that value as long as we remain mindful of our roles as educators. The desire to excel and the practices that lead to positive self-development have many benefits. Hopefully, my response to Burnett, Brand, and Meister demonstrate that the benefits far outweigh the incidental undesirable practices arising from the pursuit of competitive success. However, what I appreciate about Burnett, Brand, and Meister's work is their capacity to jar me out of a professional complacency, to force me to reflect on my vision of forensics, and finding it desirable to pursue, challenge me to scrutinize my own practices so that they might be aligned more firmly with that vision. I encourage the forensics community to read their work and hope it continues to generate conversation about how to ensure that our students receive the finest education we can offer in our programs.

Endnotes

¹See Burnett, A. K., Brand, J. D., & Meister, M. (2002). Winning is everything. *National Forensic Journal*, 20.

²This list of communication skills is admittedly incomplete. Essentially, the various principles and skills associated with the communicative arts of public speaking, argumentation, and interpretive activities drawn from contemporary textbooks could be listed and defended here for each of the events as the forensics community envisions them.

³See Perelman, C, & Olbrechts-Tyteca, L. (1969). *The new rhetoric*. Notre Dame: IN, pp. 14 and 116 for a discussion of the importance of *intellectual contact* between speaker and audience, and for the role of argumentative *presence* when a speaker makes choices about how to construct arguments for maximum effect on audiences.

⁴Ross, S. (2002, June 10). Speak Up! Debaters make their point in business. *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. "Debating, he [David Zarefsky] said, requires the ability to 'strip complex issues down to their central questions and to realize there is not absolute right or wrong, and that decisions are made in the context of specific situations and cases. That trains people to deal with victory and defeat without taking either one too personally,' Zarefsky said (p. B4)."

⁵One intriguing example proposed to the NFA community at the 2002 national tournament was "Forensics Criticism." For a description of the event, see Beth Ribarsky, "Forensics Criticism: An Experimental Event," Paper presented at the 2002 NFA National Championship Tournament Students' Meeting, April 2002.

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