Special Issue Editor's Introduction: Communication Theory and Intercollegiate Forensics— Addressing the Research Void within Forensics

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Introduction

As an individual who owes a lot to forensics, I would like to challenge budding and established forensics scholars to recognize and address a research void in forensics. Too often over the past few years I have heard many communication scholars scoff at forensics research as lacking theoretical depth, focusing too much on pedagogical skills, lacking innovation in design, and mostly a rehash of what has been done so many times before. These derogatory comments have often aggravated and insulted me but the more I look at the status of forensics research I must agree with these naysayers. From a communication theory point of view (Gerbensky Kerber & Cronn-Mills, 2005; Klumpp, 1990; Porter, 1990; Worth, 2000), forensics research leaves much to be desired.

In this essay, I will discuss the status of forensics research (specifically individual events research) as I see it. I will explain how this research, while exemplary in describing how to effectively run a program, coach events and mentor students, is not, in general, effective in addressing broader communication issues. Then I will explain why the forensics community must recognize the need for more theoretical rigor in its research. Last, I will offer some suggestions as to how forensics researchers can incorporate the vast amount of knowledge they know about forensics with communication theory.

Currently, individual events research overwhelmingly emphasizes four areas of research: "how-to" essays for coaching or teaching methods, "how-to" run a program and team dynamics/understanding, ethics and the future of competitive individual events, and a fourth miscellaneous area that I will explain further. I gather these areas of research by analyzing the previous four years of the *National Forensics Journal.* I have chosen these journals and dates as simply a starting point for this analysis. I think a subsequent analysis, similar to Gerbensky Kerber and Cronn-Mills' (2005) analysis of *NFJ* needs to be conducted of all relevant forensics journals and of the major communication conferences published proceedings.

Areas of Research

One area of research is "how-to" essays or studies on coaching or teaching methods for various individual events, the more pedagogical side of forensics. These articles emphasize how forensics coaches and competitors can improve the performance and coaching of various individual events. This research emphasis makes perfect sense, since competitive forensics is an educational activity, which does incorporate a competitive aspect as well. Since the Spring 2003 issue of *NFJ,* I isolated nine articles that focus on pedagogical issues, or "how-to" coach or teach individual events. Some of these nine articles include: Billings' (2003) analysis of humor in After Dinner Speaking, White and Messer's (2003) analysis of Interstate Oratory Speeches, Kelly's (2005) examination of oral interpretation training and Paine's (2005) evaluation of unwritten rules in forensics. Overall, much of this research (not all of it) is highly anecdotal, relying on researchers to tell others what has worked for them, or to use results from extremely limited interview or ethnographic data. Klumpp (1990) observed this same weakness.

The second area of research focuses on "how-to" run a program and team dynamics or team understanding. This type of research includes everything from how to properly budget for a program's travel schedule, to how understand forensics slang, to what constitutes "out of control van talk" (Rowe & Cronn-Mills, 2005). An overwhelming majority of the articles, 24, published in *NFJ* since 2003 fit into this category. In fact, in 2004, *NFJ* ran a special issue on wellness in forensics, which included various articles (8 articles) on health in forensics, and how to make forensics a more healthy activity. These articles clearly fit into the "how-to" run a forensics program category. Schnoor and Kozinski's (2005) article on building a team, Kirch's (2005) piece on budgeting, Hinck's piece on raising funds through endowments (2005), and Frank's (2005) work on forensics coaches and the law are all further examples of pieces that showcase "how-to" run programs. Similar to the "how-to" coach pieces, this area of research relies heavily on anecdotal evidence, a practice discouraged in persuasion and informative speaking but acceptable in research on individual events.

The third area of research over the past four years has been on ethics and the future of individual events, with seven articles. The bulk of these articles examine and respond to ethics violations in AFA-NIET out-rounds (Cronn-Mills & Schnoor, 2003; Del Casale, et. al, 2003; Perry, 2003,2003a). These articles point to an ethnical tension in the forensics community over source citations. Multiple panels at the National Communication Association since 2003 have discussed this issue of source citations and ethics in forensics. Moreover, Burnett, Brand and Meister's (2003) critique of forensics as an educational endeavor, in which Hinck (2003) responded to, reveals another growing debate within the forensics community. This debate revolves around a basic argument, is forensics more about competition or education? Multiple panels have also debated this issue at NCA and I am sure coaches

and competitors as well have grappled with this issue. While some of this work is very methodical, much of it due to the nature of the debates is philosophical.

The fourth main area of research currently being addressed is a miscellaneous field of research that should be expanded upon. This miscellaneous field of study is a hodgepodge of studies that is the social scientific application of forensics. Studies comprising this group are Carmack and Holm's (2005) analysis of socialization and identification, Miller's (2005) study of regional difference in forensics using intercultural communication, and Croucher, Thornton and Eckstein's (2006) analysis of forensics of forensics through the use of organizational identity, culture and student motivation. These articles, each methodologically strong in their own right, do something that the other three areas of forensics research do not, they add to communication theory. Instead of discussing among ourselves what we should do to make our students better at POI, or impromptu, or how to better budget for next year, or how to improve competition conditions, these kinds of pieces address communication theory.

Why Address Theory?

There are multiple reasons why individual events research needs to better address communication theory. First, an enhanced focus on communication theory in individual events research at NCA and in journals will improve the overall image of forensics research and researchers in the larger communication discipline (Porter, 1990). It's no secret that major communication journals, aside from *Argumentation and Advocacy,* do not publish research on competitive forensics, especially research on individual events. Even *Argumentation and Advocacy,* the flagship journal of the American Forensics Association, rarely publishes pieces on individual events. This is probably due to the lack of quality, theoretical submissions. If forensics educators want to be taken more seriously for the work they do by the larger communication discipline, the link between forensics and communication theory must be clearly stated and examined.

Second, further research focusing on communication theory and individual events could lead to more innovative coaching and event ideas in individual events. There is a plethora of social scientific, humanistic and critical theories out there that can help forensics coaches better assist their students be better speakers, and human beings. Unfortunately, these intriguing concepts are not reaching students because too much pedagogical research in forensics teaches the status quo (Aden, 1990).

A third reason communication theory should be incorporated into individual events research is because individual events research has many practical applications. Forensics is an "educational laboratory" that offers opportunities for scholars to study organizational decision-making, speaking skills in the real world, and tournament design (Harris, Kropp & Rosenthal,

1986). Forensics directors and students should take more advantage of this laboratory with their research.

How to Apply Communication Theory to Forensics

Forensics teams and tournaments are optimal locales for research. Researchers almost have a captive pool of research participants. Not only are forensics programs relatively stable environments, with a steady stream of students coming and going each year, but tournament venues and travel opportunities offer researchers a great opportunity to conduct research on diverse populations in different geographic regions. Conducting a survey at a regional tournament could garner anywhere from 50-100+ surveys in one weekend, or conducting interviews at the same tournament could lead to an adequate start to a research project. Moreover, Gerbensky Kerber and Cronn-Mills (2005) are keen to point out that forensics offers something many other contexts do not, the possibility of longitudinal studies on the same population. Thus, forensics offers an optimal environment to conduct multiple analyses of communication theory on often more than willing subjects.

The question remains, what kinds of communication theory to study? The realm of forensics is the perfect arena for studies into multiple types of currently underrepresented communication disciplines in forensics/individual events studies: interpersonal communication, organizational communication, small group communication, health communication, inter-cultural/cross-cultural communication, conflict management and resolution, non-verbal communication, and language and social interaction.

In closing, I owe a lot to my background in individual events. However, I have to agree with the naysayers out there, the status of individual events research is less than stellar. Our research lacks theoretical rigor and the overwhelming majority of studies on individual events does not link the activity to theoretical concerns in the discipline. Until members of the individual events community make a conscious effort to tie forensic practices and pedagogy to theoretical concerns, some administrators and members of the communication discipline will view the research programs of forensics with some degree of disdain. It is time for us to address the void in forensics research.

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Incorporating a Family-Oriented Systems Perspective in Forensics

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Abstract

This paper argues forensic programs should be structured to recognize the importance of communication between students and their family members. Previous research has shown students experience greater success when they have satisfying communication with their parents. The data presented in this study demonstrates that forensics activities affect interaction between students and their families. Forensic directors should incorporate mechanisms for fostering communication with students' family members in their programs. The paper concludes with a discussion of strategies for forensic directors to use in pursuing this objective.

The forensics family has long been an issue of great importance for intercollegiate competitors. For many, the forensic family is a reference to the closeness experienced between competitors and the coaching staff, teammates, and students from other schools (e.g. Wambolt & Reiss, 1989; Hobbs, Hobbs, Veuleman, & Redding, 2003). However, more recently interest in the forensics family has referred to the actual family of forensic educators (Gilstrap & Gilstrap, 2003) and family relationships (parents, siblings, grandparents) of student competitors. Jensen (2003) previously noted that the relationship students' have with their parents, while critical, is often secondary to the relationships they develop with their team and on the circuit. This article will argue the family relationships of competitors are critical to the well-being of the student and forensic programs should recognize the need to help maintain and foster those relationships. Suggestions for maintaining that focus will be offered.

Following a brief rationale for an organizational focus on the forensic family, and the suggestion of a guiding organizational framework, results will be presented from a study which sought to determine competitors' perceptions of how forensic training affected their interactions with their par-

ents. A family-oriented systems theory approach will then be offered as a means for guiding programs toward an organizational and structural focus or the forensic family.

Importance of Family in Forensics

Williams and Hughes (2003a, 2006) have investigated the relationship between forensic competition and competitor's communication with their family members. Williams and Hughes' study of intercollegiate forensics competitors suggests students' perceptions of their parents' knowledge of forensics is related to their ability to communicate satisfactorily with them. The authors even suggest satisfying communication with parents may lead to competitive success in forensics. Williams and Hughes (2006) note similar relationships have been found among student athletes. According to Gransk-og (1992) there is a correlation between athletes who report satisfying communication with their parents and those who feel a stronger sense of being integral to the team and performing better.

Williams and Hughes (2006) also reported forensic competitors tend to come from more socio-oriented families than concept-oriented families. Concept-oriented families are those that tend to be more rules-oriented, and family interactions are guided by family structure. Socio-oriented families will be more adaptable to circumstances and more likely to employ negotiation instead of strict rules orientation.

There is little room for doubt that a student's level of satisfaction and success in college can be helped or hindered according to their relationship and communication with family members. It stands to reason, therefore, that an activity that can be as time-consuming and attention-monopolizing as forensics should recognize the importance family relationships can play in that students forensic participation and overall well-being during their collegiate years. Forensics organizations and programs should strive to foster and maintain healthy communication between students and their families. Organization and program structure should reflect this concern. A family-oriented systems structure for forensics programs and organizations is advocated here.

Early theoretical explanations of organizational processes framed organizations as "containers" apart from and relatively unaffected by influences outside of the organization (Goldhaber, 1993). Furthermore, these theories typically compared organizational processes with machines with replaceable parts and scientifically predictable outcomes (Miller, 2003; Jablin, Putnam, Roberts, & Porter, 1987). However, contemporary organizational communication scholars "believe that organizations do not behave in predictable and machinelike ways," but are affected by forces both outside and inside the organization (Miller, 2003, p. 71). In other words, research suggests that organizational processes are highly dynamic and are influenced by environmental factors. This systems approach reframes organizations as

"networks of individuals pursuing multiple goals by creating and interpreting messages within complex networks of interpersonal and task relationships" (Conrad & Poole, 2002, p. 320). Systems approaches to the study of organizational behavior now dominate much of the organizational communication literature.

A growing proportion of this research examines organizational pressures on members' family processes such as time spent away from family (Pitt-Catsouphes, Kossek, & Sweet, 2006). This has been shown to influence loss of productivity and diminished employee satisfaction on the organizational side as well as low reports of marital satisfaction, marriage and family conflict management on the personal side. These analyses exclusively feature the workplace as the organization and married adults and their respective families as the relationships being influenced (i.e., children, spouses). However, little research has applied an organizational systems approach to the study of college student organizations and the influence of such participation on students' family processes (i.e., relationships with parents and siblings).

Much of the literature on college student families focuses on how family connections predict student retention, academic performance, and general reports of college satisfaction (Chermin & Goldsmith, 1986; Consolvo, 2002). Yet, little attention has been given to the influence of participation in student organizations on family relationships. One such student organization, where the members' participation has been shown to affect members' family communication and organizational performance is the collegiate forensics team (Williams & Hughes, 2003b; 2006). As Williams and Hughes (2003b) argued, "we should explore the relationship between forensic competition and the effect, if any, on competitors' interactions with their families" (p. 31).

To help explore the role of family communication in forensic organizations and test the need to implement a family-oriented systems structure to forensics programs, a survey was constructed to assess the student view of how forensic participation affected their communication with parents. Participants were 76 male and 86 female (N=162) forensic students. The following self-perceived socioeconomic levels were reported: lower (16.7%), middle (66%), and upper (18%). European Americans comprised 80.2% of the respondents with Asian/Pacific Islander (6.8%), African American (4.3%), Hispanic (1.2%), Alaskan Native (0.6%), American Indian (0.6%), and other (4.9%) comprising the rest of the respondents. Participants averaged 2.63 years in intercollegiate forensics participation at varying level of involvement.

Upon receiving human subject's approval, surveys were administered during the American Forensic Association National Individual Events Tournament and via an on-line survey. The instrument asked for input regarding demography, events participated in, level of participation, and perceptions of parents' involvement in forensics as well as questions regarding family communication behaviors and family communication satisfaction.

The results reported here are from two open-ended questions which asked "Can you think of any (up to three) specific instances, or general ways, you forensics participation has benefited your communication with one or both parents?" "Can you think of any (up to three) specific instances, or general ways, your forensics participation has hindered your communication with one or both parents?"

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Results

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Responses to each question were coded into emergent themes (e.g. Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The five themes for the "Benefit" question were: de-velop communication skills, more knowledge to talk about, persuade/change parents, maturity in argument, and no benefits.

Benefits

Ninety-five responses regarding benefits of forensic participation regarding communication with parents were recorded. In six cases, a single response was coded into two categories as the respondents' comment indicated more than one benefit. The number of responses for each emergent theme was as follows:

Develop communication skills	35
More knowledge to talk about	11
Persuade/change parents	13
Maturity in argument	33
No benefits	9

The largest category of responses indicated respondents felt forensics participation allowed them to develop their communication skills in a manner that facilitated communication with their parents. Responses in this theme ranged from the somewhat generic statements of "ability to speak fluently and communicate well" to more specific statements such as "I am able to think quicker; I can communicate stronger with less words" and "extemp has allowed me to formulate better arguments when dealing with different issues, and speech writing in general taught me the importance and significance of compact and to-the-point conversations."

Responses in this category also revealed how students perceive forensics to have improved their listening skills in communicating with their parents. Some comments were "adding listening skills on my part," "I listen better than I did before to exactly what they are saying," and "I listen better; I can better understand both sides of an argument." This category revealed a blend of references to how students can better structure and present information to their parents and how they can clarify their own opinions as well as understand the positions of their parents.

The second largest theme was maturity in responses. This theme indicated a strong recognition among respondents that forensics participation has taught them to temper their responses when needed. Comments also suggest students have been perceived as more mature by their parents because of their forensics experiences. Many of the responses placed in this theme indicate that respondents have learned to take a more mature approach to communication with their parents by employing perspective-taking or being able to see more than one side of an argument. Responses include, "ability to see their side of the issue," "debate has provided me with an opportunity to see more sides of an issue than I had ever seen before," and "forensics has opened my eyes to the vast differences of opinions that people have. This has made me more open-minded and willing to accept the idea that I might be wrong."

Other responses in this theme reveal some respondents recognize an elevated sense of maturity in their relationships with parents. For example, one respondent wrote, "I have received more respect as an adult when I articulate responses to certain norms in the household." Another student added, "My parents value my opinion more; they see me as more nature; they view me as intelligent and successful." Other comments indicate an increased level of composure among students when communicating with their parents. For example, two responses noted, "it has made it easier to talk to my mother about issues of the day; keeping myself in check emotionally, being able to make intelligent discourse occur" and " it has made me much more comfortable discussing politics with them."

Persuade/change parents was a third emergent category with thirteen items. Some of the comments indicated that students say benefit in their forensic training in being able to persuade, change, or manipulate their parents while other comments referred to the same ability through cooperation or identification. One response, which was one of the few coded in to themes (persuade/change parents and maturity in argument), noted "ability to win arguments with them; ability to see their side." Still others simply identified a rhetorical benefit they perceive to exist because of their training. For example, "I have been able to convince them of certain things. I got more freedom in high school that way, I can apologize very effectively." Another respondent offered, "I turned Bush voter Dad into an anti-Bush, pro-Kerry voter." One other noted, "I used more logic in my arguments and that appeals to my parents as a reasonable means of persuasion."

While some of the comments in this category are tempered with the suggestion that the student is able to persuade their parents with reasoned discourse, others reflect simply the desire and ability to manipulate their parents. This category had fewer than half of the responses of the previous two, but it still reflected a perception of how forensics influences the communication between participants and their parents.

More knowledge constituted another smaller, but relevant, emergent theme. Sometimes sharing knowledge about forensics fostered communica-

tion with parents. One respondent noted, "gives us something to talk about," indicating that child and parents can discuss the child's participation in the activity. At other times, the preparation for forensics tournaments (most no-tably in debate and extemp research) provides knowledge that is the basis for communication between parents and child. Another respondent noted, "give us more topics of discussion (talk about interesting cases, stories in the news I found out about because of debate)...."

The final emergent theme in responses was from those who saw no benefit from forensics in regard to communication with their parents. These responses ranged from a simple "no" to "no, I am very early in my forensics experience," to "no, we've always been close, debate has nothing to do with it" to "no they blame forensics for taking me away from church."

Hindrance

There were eighty-one responses to the "Hinder" question. Six item were coded into two themes as the response indicated more than one type of hindrance.

The four themes for the "Hinder" question were:
Hindered family relations	34
Negative view of self	27
Negative view of parents	18
No hindrance	8

Many of the responses in the "hinder family relations" theme deal with the activity itself interrupting family relations, not what the student have learned in the activity. For example, respondents wrote "being gone quite often being busy," "hectic schedules of forensics," and "I spend less time with them because I'm always gone on weekends." These comments are representative of many who indicate the time and energy involved in forensics preparation and travel do disrupt communication with parents.

Other comments in this theme suggested the students have changed because of their participation in forensics, and that change affects their com-munication with parents. One respondent wrote, "I now have a base of knowledge and participation in which my parents know nothing about. I am involved in an activity which doesn't interest my parents very much." Rep-resentative comments for other respondents included "made me more opin-ionated; assert an arrogance towards my opinion" and "more liberal than my parents now."

Respondents to this question provided fairly strong evidence that they believe their participation in forensics has, to some degree, hampered their communication with their parents by creating a stumbling block in the relationship.

"Negative view of self was the second most frequently noted hin-drance with 27 comments. In this theme, respondents were more direct in

suggesting forensics participation has had a negative effect on them and that it has created a problem in their communication with parents. "Has made me more aggressive" and "I'll stubbornly debate a position until my parents give in and I'm right." Another respondent added "I talk too fast, and often use a lot of esoteric terminology; forensics topics tend to dominate conversations." Comments in this theme allude to students perceiving a change in their thoughts, behavior, or communication is attributable to forensics and disrupts communication with their parents.

A third, smaller, theme with 18 responses revealed a "negative view of parents." This theme suggests forensics participation has given the student argumentation skill or knowledge to which that their parents' responses are perceived as inferior. This disconnection between the child and parents causes difficulty in the communication between them.

A couple representative comments include "I get frustrated when they do not know, or care, about an issue as much as I do. I give up less easily; argue longer than they want; can argue devil's advocate to cause controversy" and "I know more information than them (and more that they don't agree with); I really don't give up on an argument." At times, the forensic training is very evident in the respondent's comments. One student noted "parents not providing new responses to my extended positions-I get fed up; I get slightly annoyed when I have to explain rounds to events to them..."

The final category had eight responses, which indicated the students perceived no hindrance of communication with parents from forensic participation. However, the emergent themes from this question do suggest that students perceive some disruption in family communication that stems from forensics participation. While this issue may never be completely resolved, forensics organizations and programs should recognize the importance of family communication to a student's well-being and make efforts to structurally enhance that communication.

Implementing a family-oriented systems perspective in forensics programs

Data presented here, and elsewhere, suggests students would benefit from participating in a forensics program that utilizes a structural format allowing for and encouraging satisfactory communication between competitors and their parents. Efforts to alter forensics activities to recognize the importance of family communication for students can be addressed on the program and organizational levels.

Individual program initiatives
There are common structural elements of many forensic programs which can be adapted or implemented by forensics directors. Initially, team or program goal setting should reflect the importance of the student's well-being as a part of the program's system of operations. Along with competitive

goals, students and directors should consider adopting goals that will benefit the student in areas outside of competition. Along with maintaining positive relationships with family members, these goals could also include academic success, campus and community involvement and individual health consid-erations. This broad-reaching goal setting is reflective of the family-oriented systems perspective in that it recognizes the non-forensic variables that will impact the student, and their performance on the team.

Williams and Hughes (2006) have previously suggested regular press releases sent to newspapers and university administration can also be sent to parents. Press releases are a fairly common element of forensics pub-lic relations and they can easily be sent to family members and a means to help parents keep updated on their child's forensic team. Press releases might also help parents garner an appreciation for the activity that some respon-dents indicated is currently lacking. Likewise, many forensic programs create team handbooks to instruct novice members and maintain team rules for all members. Handbooks can also include important university information and emergency contact and procedure information. These handbooks can also *be* provided for students if they care to share copies with their parents to help keep them informed of the basic operating procedures of the organization. While this may not guarantee communication between parents and child, it does give them shared information which might facilitate communication.

Program directors can help foster communication between team members and their parents by creating means for the parents to see their child's performance. The team could host a "showcase" night in which par-ents are invited in to see their students perform or directors could create a team DVD to send to parents. These efforts would help to educate some parents about the activities their students are engaged in and could serve as a source of pride for parents regarding their child's achievements.

Finally, the most direct means of facilitating communication be-tween team members and their parents would be for program directors to facilitate calls from students to their parents. Directors could provide phone cards for team members to use to call their parents upon arriving at a tournament destination and returning back to campus.

Organizational Initiatives

Forensic organizations can also play a role in adopting a family-oriented systems perspective for forensics activities. While these goals are more far-reaching, they could have a significant effect on the well-being of the students who participate in the activity.

Forensics organizations and tournament hosts could consider at-tempts to create more of a "home game" environment when running tourna-ments. A program that hosts a tournament could attempt to invite parents and family members to observe part of the activities and spend time with their child after the day's events. While the tournament schedule is usually hectic, the opportunity still exists for parents to observe their child, learn more

about the activity they are involved in, and possibly even develop a greater appreciation of forensics and their students' work in it. On a smaller scale, this could have the same effect as parents coming to campus to see a football game, or watch their child in a band or theatre performance. It could enhance the communication between parents and child by allowing the parent to observe their child in the forensics element.

Forensics organizations could also generate web sites, or add to existing web sites, information designed for parents of forensics students. These sites could give basic educational information about the events, the sponsoring organization, and other news about the activity. Parents and family members could even log in to receive updated tournament results information. Again, this could be similar to the family members watching the news to see if their child's basketball team won, but in this case the team is one that their child is involved in. Such a web site could generate additional interest on the part of the parent and create shared knowledge that would facilitate communication between family members.

Finally, national championship tournaments could be made more family-friendly by inviting parents to have some role in the activity. Again, although the tournament schedule is generally pretty condensed, national tournaments do provide an opportunity to involve parents in their students' lives. Most parents of college students would make great effort to see their child perform in a national championship football game, science competition, or cheer leading tournament. Parents of forensics students would also likely appreciate the opportunity to observe their child in the biggest tournament of the year. Whether it is observing preliminary rounds, attending final rounds, participating in a banquet, or simply being there to wish their child good luck, the national tournaments provide an opportunity to foster the family-oriented systems perspective in forensic activities.

A family-oriented systems perspective has been offered as a beacon to guide forensics program administration and even national organization procedures. Some of what has been suggested is relatively simple to implement while other recommendations would require significant effort from forensics program directors, tournament hosts, and the parents themselves. However small or grand the efforts, all are designed to strengthen the students' well-being by recognizing the importance of fostering and maintaining satisfying communication with their family members.

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Defining the Story We Tell: An Application of Benoit's Acclaiming Discourse Strategies in Shaping Community Expectations for Forensic Success

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Abstract

Benoit's (1997) work on acclaiming and disclaiming discourse argues that the audience must endorse any claim to success in order to receive the desired recognition. While there are a number of ways to define a successful forensic career or program, this paper focuses on the importance of influencing audience expectations for what constitutes forensic success. Strategies for creating audience expectations that conform to the nature of a particular program are discussed. Particular attention is given to how acclaiming stories can be related to learning outcomes, service learning, and other benefits accrued through participation in forensics.

Few activities are as eclectic as forensic and debate events. Not only does this culture allow for a number of events in which students can participate, but the events extend along a range of performance, speaking, and debate activities that is diverse in its features. The variety of programs participating in forensics mirrors the diversity of events being offered. Certainly one of the strongest attributes of forensics is its ability to attract a variety of participants, and to offer a tent large enough for all programs. At the same time this diversity creates myriad strategies for programs which must promote themselves to their immediate campus community. Some programs opt to emphasize in their self-promotion competitive success while others may highlight the academic benefits accrued through forensic participation. This diversity within our activity and among our programs makes it important to examine strategies for promoting the benefits of forensics. It is becoming more important to be able to tell stories which effectively sell forensics within campus communities that are increasingly experiencing budget cuts

and proliferation of extra and co-curricular activities that compete for limited resources, students, and recognition.

We examine the strategy of selling forensics to our campus communities. In particular, we acknowledge in order to effectively promote forensics one must highlight success. By applying Benoit's (1997) model for acclaiming and disclaiming discourse, we discuss considerations, opportunities, and implications for selling the success of forensics to our campuses. Our discussion makes note of the various brands of success within the forensic community, as well as the importance of telling the "right" story for each unique campus context.

The Success Story: An Overview

Benoit (1997) presents success as being contingent upon audience assessment. Specifically, she begins with the idea that success occurs when a goal is achieved, and then extends that definition with "the idea that a successful behavior is one that is distinctive and desirable" (p. 3). Benoit's inclusion of distinctiveness presumes that for an accomplishment to be termed a success, it must be compared with other accomplishments and "elevate(s) some individuals for their accomplishments" (p.3). Distinctive accomplishments must also meet the second criterion of desirability. Benoit suggests, for the most part, audiences look for desirable events to "(1) improve the human condition, (2) represent control over mind/body, or (3) secure valued rewards" (p. 4). Success, then, embodies *both* effective behavior/communication that meets norms of appropriateness. For example, a baseball player who set offensive records may not be judged as successful if he is suspected of using performance enhancing drugs because the control over mind/body is called into question.

The importance of success is nearly inherent within our culture. As Benoit (1997) writes, "whoever a person is or however that person acts, it is imperative to be recognized and appreciated as successful" (p. 5). This is equally the case for groups and programs. Success becomes a standard by which other things within the similar context are measured. Benoit (1997) explains it as society promoting "specific behaviors by recognizing them as achievements worthy of praise/rewards," adding success discourages other behavior (p. 5). Just as societies or contexts value success, they value the sources of that success. Societal values and the hierarchy of those values are communicated through what is acknowledged as an achievement. As Benoit (1997) observes, "an individual's claim to success must be accepted by others to receive the desired recognition" (pp. 5-6). Ultimately, this assessment process renders a degree of control over individuals and groups by setting and enforcing the standards by which success is measured. A college football team earning a post-season bowl game bid may not be successful if the community standard for success is winning a conference or appearing in the national championship game. By most other teams' standards, however the winning record and post-season bowl game would be welcomed as distinc-

tive and desirable.

This power of societies and contexts to shape expectation of what is successful is particularly important to forensic programs. Since there are myriad ways to deem forensics a successful experience for its participants, managing how to define success, and then communicating that success requires careful consideration. A success story, according to Benoit (1997), is "a narrative that interprets a behavior as a success, selects and orders events relating to that success, and includes a causal attribution for the success" (p. 23). For the forensics program, this means not only framing a particular achievement as both distinctive and desirable, but also highlighting the importance of the forensic context for realizing that achievement. This process begins with an understanding of what constitutes success within the forensic and debate context.

Defining Success: The Forensic and Debate Context

A large volume of evidence points to the benefits connected with participation in forensic and debate activities. Bartanen (1994), in his overview to directing and teaching forensics, lists four general benefits forensics provides its students: career preparation, an educational supplement, insights into public policy and civic concerns, and an increase in courage and a sense of personal growth and satisfaction. Freely and Steinberg (2005) list the values of academic debate in their text. Their list, perhaps the most comprehensive and best known among lists of benefits associated with debate, includes 20 values: (1) preparation for effective participation in a democratic society, (2) preparation for leadership, (3) training in argumentation, (4) provides for investigation and intensive analysis of significant contemporary problems, (5) develops proficiency in critical thinking, (6) an integrator of knowledge, (7) develops proficiency in purposeful inquiry, (8) emphasizes quality instruction, (9) encourages student scholarship, (10) develops the ability to make prompt, analytical responses, (11) develops critical listening, (12) develops proficiency in writing, (13) encourages mature judgment, (14) develops courage, (15) encourages effective speech composition and delivery, (16) develops social maturity, (17) develops multicultural sensitivities, (18) develops computer competencies, (19) empowers personal expression, and (20) develops essential proficiencies (p. 22-31).

Jensen and Wheeler (2004) examine benefits perceived to be unique to particular events. Results from their pilot study point toward the greater potential debate has for application outside the forensic arena than do other events. Similarly, their study reports critical thinking and problem solving skills, listening skills, proficient speaking, and in-depth research skills as the most central benefits accrued through participation in forensic activities.

With specific regards to debate, Warner and Bruschke (2001) argue competitive debate is a tool of empowerment primarily because it achieves four outcomes closely associated with empowerment: "students must learn

to engage knowledge in a critical way," (p. 5) "empowered students must be social critics," (p. 6) "students must be agents of change who are willing to take risks and believe that those actions can make a difference," (p. 7) and "students take control of their own learning" (p. 7). Allen et al. (1999) argue debate positively impacts students' learning through enhanced critical thinking skills which exceed those skills demonstrated in students without debate experience.

Other survey and self-report data suggest that forensic success is diverse in its form and genesis. Paine and Stanley (2003) report that "fun' is directly tied to the strength of one's commitment to the activity. Fun is operationalized through people and relationships, achieving certain educational benefits, specific tournament and travel experiences, competition and accomplishment, and being able to take risks and express oneself within events.

Rogers (2002), in a comparative analysis between debate participants and students without debate experience, reports a number of positive traits more likely to be seen in debate participants. These traits include a greater likelihood to (1) be an active citizen through voting and volunteerism, (2) be tolerant of and enroll in courses focusing on cultural difference, (3) show greater academic achievement vis a vis grade point averages and acceptance to graduate program, (4) be open-minded and embracing of "just society tradition" (p. 21), and (5) be less likely to experience feelings of being overwhelmed or lacking in self-confidence.

Williams, McGee, and Worth (2001) report benefits and drawbacks of debate participation as reported by intercollegiate debaters. The most frequently cited benefits of participation were enhanced speaking and communication skills, analytical and critical skills, and a positive contribution to one's social life. Littlefield (2001) reports a similar study of high school debaters. His findings include the top three self-reported benefits as enhanced speaking and communication skills, improved knowledge and education, and a positive contribution to one's social life. Both groups listed time commitment as the greatest drawback of debate participation.

In all, a number of benefits are associated with participation in debate and forensics. Many of these benefits can be categorized with social and democratic processes. Other forms of success also exist for programs, such as competitive excellence as illustrated in awards, national rankings, or qualifications for elite national tournaments. It is safe to say forensic and debate programs have a plethora of potential success stories to tell regarding the values of their activities. Whatever the stories told, it is imperative forensic programs find ways to engage themselves with their campus community in a way that touts forensic and debate activities as distinctive and desirable.

Shaping and Selling the Success Story: Considerations

It is imperative programs tell their success stories. Holm and Miller (2004) write, "it is important to the survival of individual programs and the

health of the activity at large that we take steps to insure that administrators understand the valuable services provided by a forensics program" (p. 24). To emphasize the importance of these stories, Holm and Miller (2004) call these acclaiming stories "a basic survival skill" (p. 24).

Perhaps the most significant thing to realize when looking at shaping and selling forensic success stories is that programs and their participants have tremendous control over the content of their acclaiming discourse. As has been established, a broad range of definitions for success exists within the forensic context. Nevertheless, programs are, generally speaking, able to manage their discourse and frame what is distinctive and desirable about their program to their campus community. It is not uncommon for those outside of the forensic arena to be unfamiliar with the nature of the forensic and debate culture. Misconceptions about what constitutes forensic education and competition such as associations with forensic medicine, and all events being generalized as debating issues in face-to-face settings are commonplace. The forensic educator and his/her program must continually define and explain the activity to students, colleagues, and administrators. A necessary part of this explanation is acclaiming discourse-why is our program a strong program? To elaborate on the shaping and selling of success stories, we discuss both considerations and opportunities programs and their directors should weigh as they shape their own success stories.

The first consideration is the history of the program and its relationship with the campus community. In their suggestions for starting a forensic team, Schnoor and Kosinski (2005) suggest one must first learn whether there has ever been a forensic program on the campus. If a program has existed, they suggest learning as much about it as possible, including its degree of success, its funding, its activities, and its alumni. Needless to say, it is wise to learn about what was respected and disliked about the program as well. There is undoubtedly a reason the program no longer exists— knowing this background information is also essential. Individuals seeking to revive former programs must acknowledge the strengths and opportunities upon which to capitalize, as well as the landmines that may exist.

Regardless of whether a program is being revived, or established on a campus never before sponsoring forensic activities, the most important point to understand is that the meaning of forensic success is flexible, particularly to those for whom forensic activities are not in their frame of reference. Applying Goffman's (1974) frame analysis to the acclaiming rhetoric of a forensic program is not only appropriate, but essential. Those in charge of the forensic program must strategically guide the discourse of how forensic and debate activities are to be understood on their campus. This is quite possibly the most significant task facing those who establish and/or direct programs. Forensic programs constitute social frameworks. As Littlejohn (1999) explains, social frameworks are "seen as controllable, guided by some intelligence" (p. 165). Littlejohn underscores the importance of creating and maintaining an understanding of forensics and forensic success when he concludes his explanation of frame analysis:

> Because all participants in a situation project images, an overall definition of the situation emerges. This general definition is normally rather unified. Once the definition is set, moral pressure is created to maintain it by suppressing contradictions and doubts. A person may add to the projections but never contradict the image initially set. The very organization of society is based on this principle. (p. 167)

Once the understanding of forensic activities is established on a particular campus, the understanding and expectations accompanying it are likely to become enduring shared meanings between the campus community and the program's staff and participants.

It may be most important to build these frames with administrators. Cunningham (2005) suggests "no matter if you are establishing a new program or a new coach in an existing program, the first step is get to know our administration from the ground up" (p. 15). A shared understanding should be negotiated between the program's educators and the administration in terms of what forensics is, and what role it can and is expected to fulfill on campus. As Cunningham (2005) notes, roles can range from facilitating recruitment to contributing to a positive image of the institution. At this point, definitions of success should then begin to be established. Programs promoting success as trophies and honors won will likely create a set of expectations that the program is as successful as its trophy case suggests. At the same time, programs promoting success as levels of student involvement and academic achievement will be expected to maintain larger programs featuring students who excel in the classroom. Certainly all of the campus community will ultimately become involved in this negotiation of meaning, but the administration's acceptance of the program and expectations for the program may be the most critical step in the creating and maintaining of shared meaning.

Other factors for educators to consider include the nature of the student body and availability of resources. Largely residential campuses have very different dynamics than those with large commuting populations. Programs offering substantial scholarships are likely to have fewer students balancing off-campus employment with courses and on-campus responsibilities such as forensics. Basic logistical considerations such as scheduling group practices and team meetings can be challenging when a majority of students live off campus and must work to be able to afford school and forensic travel. While scholarships do not inherently advantage programs over others lacking scholarships, it does impact the kind of acclaiming stories each program can tell. More financial support for recruiting and retention can help a program attract talented high school and two-year school competitors whose competitive success may be more predictable. Programs generally attracting less experienced students who are not able to commit a large amount of time to travel and competing have less predictable levels of competitive success. Which program can more logically tell acclaiming stories that are grounded

in the number of trophies and nationals qualifications?

A final consideration is the scope of activity in which the program will involve itself. Never before have forensic programs had so many options for activities. Knowing one wants a program to include debate still requires selection from at least four major debate options—National Parliamentary Debate Association (NPDA), National Forensics Association (NFA) Lincoln-Douglas, Cross Examination Debate Association (CEDA)/National Debate Tournament (NDT) team policy, and International Parliamentary Debate Association (IPDA) individual extemporaneous. Individual events, while often more standard, also face differences in their competition cultures and community focuses. There are also considerations of reader's theatre, student congress, and other experimental events offered by some national and individual tournaments. Regional forensic cultures influence these considerations by emphasizing some events over others. Resources may allow programs to travel nationally, in which case there are more options available. Less resource enriched programs are largely dependent on what tournaments in their area offer as an influence on the types of activities offered to their students. A campus' student body and forensic staff are also considerations. Many programs offer what their staff feel most comfortable teaching and coaching. Likewise, the nature of some activities may demand a level of commitment and resources making it difficult for a campus' students to participate. Our program stopped participating in CEDA/NDT debate several years ago when most of our students could no longer dedicate the necessary time to compete successfully. Another deciding factor was most of our students preferred to compete in individual events and parliamentary debate, and few tournaments allowed us to enter CEDA/NDT debate with our two or three debaters, and also enter the majority of our team in individual events and parliamentary debate. Maintaining all of these activities meant significantly expanding our travel schedule while our professional staff and budget remained unchanged. In other words—resource challenges led us to make a change in our program. This was important because a number of professors knew our program as complementing the curriculum by teaching policy analysis and critical research and argumentation skills. We were faced with explaining parliamentary debate and how it was able to continue to teach these skills. At the same time, our acclaiming stories began to include more of an emphasis on competitive success because we were devoting more time and travel to events that had become the strongholds of our program.

Shaping and Selling the Success Story: Opportunities

There are a number of examples of success available for any program's acclaiming stories. The best suggestion is to sell a number of examples of how forensics is both distinctive and desirable. The more a program is seen as broadly successful, the better the acclaiming story can be. The breadth also helps programs finding themselves dealing with years in which certain successes are less availing than others.

Perhaps the obvious opportunity lies in competitive success. While the educational value of forensics cannot be overstated, there is an inherently competitive dimension to forensic activities. Although the value placed on awards and honors varies with individuals and programs, there is no escaping that the competitive context is the source for feedback which contributes to skill development and the laboratory in which performance, argumentation, and advocacy is practiced and perfected. Programs can promote competitive success in a number of ways, including reporting trophies won, team honors earned, ranks earned, and schools beaten in sweepstakes competitions. For many campuses the easiest way to understand when success is achieved within a competitive framework is to know whether the team "won or lost." It is important for forensic program administrators to find a frame in which to explain the multiple ways individuals and teams can be competitively successful without emphasizing just winning and losing.

A second opportunity for shaping the forensic success story is to connect forensics with academic initiatives and accomplishment. Sellnow (1994) notes that forensics can easily be sold as an excellent example of experiential education by highlighting how the activity illustrates" (1) connecting theoretical knowledge to real-life experiences; (2) valuing and fostering different 'ways of knowing' and (3) encouraging life-long learning" (p. 2). Hinck and Hinck (1998) along with Hatfield (1998) argue forensic activities are ideal vehicles for service-learning. Hinck and Hinck (1998) suggest a year-end report highlighting both competitive success and service-learning experiences can promote success of a forensic program in three ways: "as a showcase for a university's talented students, as an educationally sound program maximizing learning opportunities for those involved, and as a vehicle for connecting the university with the community for desirable social change" (p. 11). Bellon (2000) goes so far as to advocate debate as a tool to be applied across the curriculum. He concludes, "properly formulated, DAC (debate across curriculum) programs incorporate the best aspects of communication across the curriculum and critical thinking across the curriculum" (p. 174). He adds existing research in educational psychology gives us every reason to expect that these benefits will only increase as debate pedagogy is implemented across the curriculum" (p. 174). Bellon's assumptions are validated in the example outlined by Keller, Whittaker, and Burke (2001) of student debates in social work and social policy courses. Taken broadly, forensic and debate activities are very consistent with the academic mission of any institution, and as such, can be promoted as vital partners in the learning process. Aden
(2002) reminds us by promoting forensics as central to a liberal arts education, "the forensics community can more accurately represent to students and administrators what its means and ends are, resulting in more appropriate expectations from both groups" (p. 9). Similarly, Aloi, Gardener, and Lusher (2003) offer a framework for assessing general education outcomes across majors. In their review of literature and independent analysis, they enumerate the "broad area of non-technical knowledge, skills, and abilities [that] should

be attained by undergraduates" (p. 241). Each of those seven areas are immediately impacted through and by forensic involvement: "higher-order applied problem-solving skills; enthusiasm for learning on a continuous basis; interpersonal skills, including teamwork and collaboration; oral and written communication skills; sense of responsibility for action, both personal and collective; ability to bridge cultural and linguistic barriers; and sense of professionalism" (p. 241). Millsap (1998) reports across campus' academic programs a number of oral communication and argumentation skills are found to be part of the curriculum in several courses. She concludes "if forensics is to be seen as useful across campus and within its own department, forensics coaches/instructors need to make their expertise available to the faculty" (p. 24). Continuing, Millsap calls for forensic programs and educators to fulfill a responsibility to improve the educational opportunities within their campus community: "the forensic community has a responsibility to reach out to the campus as a whole, not just for its own survival but for the educational benefits to all students" (p. 25). These educationally-grounded elements of the typical forensic program serve as excellent opportunities for telling acclaiming stories within the campus community.

A third opportunity for shaping success stories for forensic programs lies in the role of forensic educators. Unlike the typical classroom wherein there may or may not be strong, nurturing relationships between teachers and students, strong mentoring relationships are more of a natural part of the forensic educator/student relationship. With out-of-class practicing and travel being inherent in the forensic experience, there are logically many more opportunities for student/educator interaction. White (2005) explains that as we devote time to students in non-classroom settings, opportunities arise for coaching to evolve into discussions about post-graduate plans, class schedules, social challenges, or any one of a number of other topics. As she writes, "out of these discussions evolve forensic coaches as fundamental mentors." (p. 89). In her discussion of effective mentoring, White concludes, "mentoring is an important aspect of a forensic coach's job. Although it is not what we are 'officially' hired to do, it is fundamental to the success of our programs" (p. 92). A strength for the campus community is that, as mentoring relationships are nurtured between students and educators, a shared learning experience evolves. As the mentoring relationship improves, so too does the perception of genuine interest in a student's learning. When good teaching is connected to a forensic program's outcomes, the value of the program as an important piece of the academic culture is elevated. Consequently, part of the forensic acclaiming story should be the dedication shown by alums to the program, the satisfaction expressed by students in the program, and the other mentoring relationships that might be present in any given program (such as co-authoring papers, assisting with graduate school acceptances, or helping students to develop records of scholarship through presenting or publishing their own papers).

A final opportunity for shaping success stories lies in the area of prestige brought to campus by the forensic program. Like athletic teams,

forensic programs travel to other colleges. The context in which forensic students apply their skills is one shared by other students and educators from! campuses across the region and nation. Being able to claim success within these contexts necessarily means claiming to be "better than" other forensic programs and, at the same time, better than other institutions. The acclaiming story is particularly compelling for campuses that have less successful athletic programs, and/or who emphasize academic distinctiveness. A further reality to incorporate into success stories is the lack of divisions that characterize athletic competition. Smaller schools in particular can reap benefits from having been "successful" against much larger schools. The president at one institution at which we administered the forensic program held our state's championship tournament in high regard because he was able to "brag" to his state colleagues about our success. Another means of winning prestige for a campus is to host events and tournaments. Being able to promote that 20 or 30 institutions attend a tournament on campus, or that the British National Debate Team is making a stop on one's campus are excellent ways for a program to legitimately claim the forensic program holds a position of importance within the forensic academic community. The myriad ways programs can claim success, as well as the many competitive options available to programs on a given weekend make the opportunities to promote prestige all the more attractive to forensic administrators looking for ways to shape the success stories for their programs.

Shaping and Selling the Success Story: Implications

While there are several opportunities for shaping and selling foren- sic success stories, those who are responsible for telling those stories must consider important implications when determining what acclaiming strategies are best for their particular institution. First, and perhaps most importantly, it is hard to re-shape a story that has already been told. Program administrators must be confident in their story as reflective of the nature of their program, and of their own teaching/coaching philosophy. Mixed messages are problematic for a campus community that may have a hard time understanding the nature of forensic activities. Forensic program administrators can tell various success stories, but each must be a constant story that, ideally, complements the other claims of success being made. Certainly students can be competitively successful and promote the prestige of the campus at the same time. Educators can be good teachers and, at the same time, be good coaches. This implication is also important for individuals who take over programs. Standards that campus communities apply when assessing the success of their forensic programs will not change simply because a new director takes over a program. He or she must understand how the campus community frames forensic success and work to be able to tell that same story—or work to justify a change in how the community will view forensic success in the future.

Forensic programs must also understand once they have grounded

their acclaiming stories with particular characteristics of distinctiveness and desirability, those characteristics become enduring expectations. Once a program frames its success as competitive excellence and trophies, those likely become the standards by which the forensic program is measured. It does not matter that a new forensic director takes over the program, or that a group of less talented or motivated students replaces an outstanding senior class. The campus community will still ask about trophies won as a way of knowing if the program is still successful. The very notion of tradition within programs is an important dimension of team building (Derryberry, 2005). Capitalizing on enduring traditions and memories can strengthen the identity of programs both within their own context, as well as within the campus context. Like anything, the more a story is told, the more reinforced it becomes. It may be that programs become more strategic in how they report competitive success in years when fewer trophies are won.

A third implication to consider is the impact of competition-based success stories on the activity itself. Any culture evolves into its own rituals and norms that, over time, become as enduring as the success stories forensic programs tell. The evolution of cultures is so powerful that its codification often supersedes any existing rules or frameworks that may be more formally established. Forensics is no exception. The "unwritten rules" of forensic and debate activities create expectations for performers, speakers, and debaters. The rules of oral interpretation do not indicate a "required manuscript" must be housed in an 81/2 by 51/2 inch black binder. Further, the rules do not indicate affirmatives must disclose plan texts and negatives must disclose off-case strategies in team policy debate rounds. Still, these are norms and violating them results in penalties via criticism from critics, losses, or lower speaker ratings/points and ranks. This becomes problematic when competitive results become the paramount consideration for success. Not only do dogmatic expectations judges bring to forensic activities limit creativity (Gaer, 2002; Ribarsky, 2005) but they also appear incongruent with one of the tenets of forensics—the celebration and empowerment of individual voice and advocacy. It becomes a profound challenge for educators to nurture and facilitate the empowerment of their students when such goals are inconsistent with the norms of the activity. Students are ultimately able to advocate in the manner they choose for themselves (within the limits of their program), but if competitive excellence is the standard by which their program is measured, such freedoms of expression may come at the risk of program success.

We had a student several years ago, a literature major specializing in poetry, who felt passionate about rhyming patters in poetic literature. He refused to perform poetry that did not rhyme and insisted on emphasizing the rhyming pattern of his performance. While we were somewhat limited in our celebration of his exercising his voice, we wholeheartedly supported his freedom to express himself in a way that was consistent with his own pref-erences. He won no tangible awards that year, but felt welcomed, empow-ered, and had fun—an often under sold value of what we offer our students

(Paine & Stanley, 2003). A program with a strong emphasis on competition may not have traveled this same student because his goals would not have been compatible with their measure of program success. Derryberry (2001), in discussing the challenges facing comprehensive programs, writes, "the competitive outcomes must function as one of many goals for the healthy multidimensional program" (p. 65). Some scholars echo the concerns surrounding an emphasis on competition and its potential impacts on programs and the forensic community. Burnett, Brand, and Meister (2003) argued that "...when a competition model of forensics attempts to justify the activity by advocating a 'balance' of education through the realities of competition, it masks the competition model under an educational guise" (p. 12). They conclude, "...although forensics can be viewed as both an educational and a competitive activity, the practice of competition co-opts education" (p. 12). Hinck (2003), in a response to Burnett et al, argues that, on balance, forensics remains a desirable and distinctive activity despite the emphasis on excellence through competition. At the same time, he notes the complacency with which a conditioned emphasis on competition creates: "...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" (p. 75).

A final implication of the success story is its bearing on the forensic staff, particularly regarding tenure and promotion. There are fewer positions among college and university educators that are less understood than director of forensics. We have articulated the many ways in which forensic success can be measured. Beyond the immediate considerations of how successful the forensic program may be, the director of forensics has his/her other responsibilities of advising, teaching, committee work, and developing professionally. Williams and Gantt (2005) found for directors of forensics the bulk of their time given to on-campus responsibilities are directly related to forensics—46 percent dedicated to program administration, 22 percent dedicated to team management, and 22 percent dedicated to coaching. Brand (2000) cautions the forensic community to not lose sight of its place within the communication discipline. He reminds forensic educators that they "have a responsibility to reach beyond the competitive elements of this activity and to pursue methods to teach students communication skills in more varieties of settings" (p. 12). What Brand calls for is a conscious decision to shape and sell forensic success stories that reflect the diverse benefits of forensics as an extension of communication education. Educators who administer programs with diverse success stories are, perhaps, better able to ground their own professional activities in more visible and varied qualities such as outreach, scholarship, and teaching. The challenges facing forensic educators who must defend their cases for tenure and promotion are real, but not new. Many educators spend countless hours on the road with their team leaving little time for professional development outside of the forensic arena. These same people are often kept

from attaining terminal degrees due to the time demands posed by their forensic responsibilities. The lack of non-forensic scholarship combined with the lack of a terminal degree makes it challenging for forensic educators to petition successfully for tenure or promotion. Success stories must be told in such a way as to celebrate and promote not only the students in the program, but the educators as well. Helping faculty review committees and administrators to understand unique professional demands, and the scholarly activity inherent in forensic education can highlight successful professional activity where it might otherwise not be recognized. Tournament direction, for example, is very similar to directing a play; play direction is acknowledged on many campuses as creative professional development. Forensic educators should be assertive and proactive about communicating the norms of our activity, as well as how and why their professional activities are commensurate with their non-forensic colleagues.

Summary

Acclaiming stories are central to forensic programs. It is both difficult and irresponsible to exist in a vacuum; forensic programs must be responsive to and engaging of their campus communities. At the same time, there are myriad ways in which forensic programs and the professional and student members can shape and sell their stories of success. I was told as a student, and tell my students, that they will find no activity that combines the fun, educational enrichment, competitive thrill, and social opportunities more than forensics. Success is a subjective term, but if one accepts Benoit's (1997) frame of distinctive and desirable, there is little argument that forensic programs are inherently successful. The challenge is in how programs tell these stories within their communities. Facing that challenge is a necessary step in building successful programs, and a successful activity.

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Examining Leadership and Mentorship in Business and Forensics

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Abstract

Ten leaders representing both the forensics and business worlds were interviewed to examine the role mentorship plays in developing a leader's style and subsequent success. Similarities and differences concerning the influence of mentors emerged as dominant themes. Forensic leaders generally had fewer mentors each having greater impact on leadership development than business leaders who noted more influences from multiple models of effective leadership. This study links organizational communication concepts concerning leadership and mentorship to the role advisors play in the formation of leaders in forensics.

Examining Leadership and Mentorship in Business and Forensics

Communication is a prerequisite for all organizations to survive (Robertson, 1998). Since forensic teams are a kind of organization, principles of organizational communication seem relevant in explaining their success as large groups organized for both competitive and educational success. Dreibelbis (1989) defended his application of organizational principles to forensics, stating they do not have to be considered mutually exclusive from learning and group satisfaction. Individuals achieve satisfaction from attaining goals, working and socializing with others in an organization, and so one may certainly expect there to be a transfer of this satisfaction to a well-managed forensic program (p. 69).

Swanson (1992) draws a strong link between organizational culture and forensics by telling us each organization has a unique culture, with a

set of features that can be identified and promulgated. This notion has become a unit of study and is propagated in most organizational communication courses. Furthermore, an even simpler approach is provided for us by Deal and Kennedy (1982) who list four "features to organizational culture: values, heroes, cultural communication networks, and rites and rituals.... An active, functioning, forensic program encompasses each of these features, and therefore can legitimately be examined by students of organizational communication" (as cited in Swanson, 1992, p. 67-70).

Leaders play a key role in communicating the organizational vision in such a way as to bring every member of the organization on board (Goman, 2004). Walker (1997) noted that, "a leader empowers people—communicates candidly, motivates and inspires" (p. 23). Kolb (1996) claimed "an effective team leader is critical for successful team performance" (p. 173). In contrast, Yukl (1989) defines leadership effectiveness as "the extent to which the leader's group or organization performs its task successfully and attains its goals" (as cited in Kolb, 1996, p. 175). In effect, both the team and the leader become interdependent for success. Robertson (1998) stated, "in modern organizations, communication and leadership are regarded as inseparable 'comrades' in the struggle to liberate workplaces of their archaic command and control management styles" (p. 12).

It is difficult to determine when command and control makes more sense as a leadership approach than does collaboration. According to Kolb (1996), the "differences found were in the categories of obtaining outside support, tolerating uncertainty, exhibiting personal and/or professional qualities, and confronting inadequate performance. High-performing leaders received higher scores in the first two categories; average leaders in the latter two" (p. 173). Members of the group felt attaining support helped them to work more effectively and therefore found the quality to be a valuable attribute. Furthermore, Kolb (1996) added "team leaders appear to do their teams a disservice if they concentrate their energies only on the internal functioning of the team" (p. 173).

Joni (2004) as cited in Morgan (2004) explains the importance of the people involved in the key-leader phenomenon, stating, "this is a team that must be built around you.... You should populate it with people you really click with, people of the highest caliber, people that you are completely committed to working with people who do not have an agenda or vested interest in influencing your decisions" (p. 3). Goman (2004) reinforces the idea of surrounding yourself with people you get along with, explaining "we're in a collaborative world, and that's dramatically changed what type of leadership is successful. The boards, shareholders and employees have colluded to agree that leadership has to be steadier, more visionary, more inclusive and more ethical" (p. 2). Robertson (1998) also believes in similar leadership philosophy, asserting, "great organizations are built on constructive, highly functional relationships, particularly between managers and their employees" (p. 14). Thus the inclusion of others, along with proper communication is crucial in effective leadership.

Research Questions

But what do business and forensics have in common? In leadership, is command and control as well suited as collaboration in the creation of a leader? Should we therefore ask leaders from the two fields where they got their notions of leadership?

The purpose of this paper is to establish a link between business and forensics to examine the role mentorship plays in the influence of a leader's style and subsequent success. The concept of collaboration with mentors, allows leaders to "slowly build a network of advisers, inside and outside the organization... one relationship at a time.... You cannot realize... [or] sustain your full potential alone" (Morgan, 2004, p. 3). This reinforces a solid structure based on reliable people which is crucial to success. So if mentorship and surrounding oneself with intelligent individuals is a crucial part of becoming a successful leader in the business or forensics world, then asking successful individuals about how they became leaders and the role their mentors played will bring us to a greater understanding of forensic and business commonalities through leadership.

Methodology

Data Collection

To find out the influences mentorship had on leaders and how they emerged as leaders in their fields, interviews of forensic and business leaders were conducted. All data collected for this project was approved by IRB at Minnesota State University, Mankato as a level 1 study. The methods of data collection were approved on March 16th, 2005, and were given #2329 as the approval number.

Each interview consisted of four open-ended questions regarding leadership. Participants answered the questions with the full knowledge they were being recorded, as well as full knowledge of the details disclosed in the consent form. Each interview was conducted in a semi-structured format. The identities of all participants have been kept secret, and the participants were selected based upon their past or present positions and availability. Code names were given to each participant to ensure anonymity when participants were quoted. The interviews lasted, on average, approximately one half hour each, but were not limited in time. Open-ended questions were posed to leaders in forensics and business: (1) Who has been most influential to your style of leadership? (2) How have you emerged as a leader in your field? (3) Was there a history or distinct moment when you realized you had become a leader? (4) If you could give a word of advice to the future leaders who will follow you, what would that advice be?

Analysis Process

In analyzing the data, I listened to each of the answers for every question. I broke the answers down by question with immediate trend analy-

sis thereafter for ease of analysis and data pattern discovery. In order to draw out themes, patterns and concepts, I utilized a method of deductive analysis. Endres (1989) likens deductive analysis to Geertz's (1973) "thick description," where a researcher continues identification until the patterns become redundant; thus allowing no new patterns to emerge (Endres, 1989). During my analysis, I reduced entire interviews to an abridged version. Next, I went over the abridged version of interviews repeatedly with each participant, and compared the participants to each other, within their respective categories. While engaging in the aforementioned process, I noted patterns ranging from the apparent to the less apparent, until they became so sporadic they were deemed irrelevant. I repeated the process with both groups, allowing me to finally observe how each category compared and contrasted with the others.

Responses from Forensics Leaders

Question 1: Who has been the most influential to your style of leadership?

The primary theme surfacing among the individuals who were interviewed from the forensics community was a mentor from within their profession has specifically influenced each of them. Of the three interviewed, the only individual to make mention of a family member being a profound influence on their style of leadership was Faith, who made mention of her father's role in her development. In addition, Faith was the only individual to specifically comment on the sex of one of her influences. The comment was made because both the mentor and the participant are female, and thus she felt she could connect with and relate to someone with a similar background in a leadership position.

While most mentors surfaced from the workplace, there were two participants who listed environmental factors as having been influential. The aforementioned participant, Faith, listed the "environment" her father created when dealing with other people as a major influence in her education. She constantly found herself amazed at how his language would change depending on the people he spoke with. Faith clarified this notion when she said of her father, "I realized he was adapting his behavior depending on whom he was speaking with." When Faith asked her mother a few years later about her father's highly unusual habit of swearing while on the phone with certain individuals, her mother replied, "If he's talking to someone who swears he'll throw in one now and again, helps get him credibility with them."

Frank also noted environmental influences, though far broader. Having listed such influences as the U.S. terrorist attacks on September 11th 2001, fuel economy and its relation to travel, the idea of a national epidemic, and the current U.S. political landscape, Frank emphasized the lessons he learned, and continues to learn from these events while evolving as a leader. He was the only participant to broadly comment on outside events such as the September 11th attacks shaping his style of leadership. When asked to further explain how these elements rather than people affected him, Frank said,

"All of this [family interchanges, or interpersonal relationships affected by outside events] has to be involved in how you approach what direction you are going to take, what style of leadership you are going to use, and things of that nature."

In further observance of mentor patterns, three dominant themes arose. With each mentor, behavior was displayed at some level where the participant appreciated and respected what the mentor had thought or done. In these cases, the mentor was perceived as the teacher in a teacher-student relationship and each participant was excited by the knowledge they gained from their mentor.

Another theme with two of the three participants was identification. In both cases, when the participants were faced with a situation they were not sure how to handle, they spoke of placing themselves in the shoes of their mentor to better understand how to handle the circumstance. Fredrick was particularly vocal in utilizing the aforementioned approach to problem solving, and was a strong advocate because he believed in perpetuating the lessons he had learned.

The final dominant theme among forensics participants was the practical application of lessons learned through mentors. Fredrick was particularly vocal when mentioning the skills he learned; being able to work with people in various situations at both a local and national level. In each case, mentors were profoundly influential and the application of their lessons to leadership situations emerged among participants as the most dominant theme of all.

In the second part of the question, asking why the mentors were influential to each participant's style of leadership, all three answers overwhelmingly indicated usefulness of the information learned. Furthermore all three, including Fredrick, who had strong allusions to his learned information being crucial to his development in the former part of the question, openly gave unprompted examples of how he used the lessons he learned from mentors in his own life. For example, when speaking of one of the founders of the AFA-NIET and personal friend Larry Schnoor, Fredrick said,

> With Larry Schnoor, I observed lots of interaction with individuals, lots of different kinds of individuals...ways in which he would respond to individual concerns and kind of guide organizations through a variety of kinds of situations.... It sounds almost too exotic to be on a national level, but because of [the people in] associations...and where people are located, then those [people skills] are the things I picked up.

Overall, compiling the first and second half of the first question, these individuals had few mentors, but they were of high quality and frequent interaction. Environmental factors also developed as thematic influences, and one participant saw difficult situations "through their mentor's eyes." Finally,

usefulness of information was one of the primary reasons the participants were so close to their mentors.

Question 2: How Have You Emerged as a Leader in Your Field?

After hearing lengthy answers to question number one, I was surprised to be met with decidedly shorter answers for question number two. Though the answers were shorter, a few patterns became evident, the most dominant of which was perseverance. In fact, Fredrick's entire answer to the second question was, "Perseverance. Stay around long enough." Though Fredrick's answer was concise, the answer was reaffirmed by both of the other participants. When Faith was asked the question, she immediately answered, "Slowly.. .evolution occurred." And Frank immediately stated,

> One doesn't become a leader overnight. One may think that they become a leader overnight, I don't think that's possible. I think that in order to become a leader it's an involving process; an evolving process. One serves up one's time, so to speak. And you become a leader, not because of what you are, but because people recognize within you the ability to lead. How do they recognize that? Because they see your dedication.. .they see your vision.

Frank's answer cited the importance of time in acquiring a leadership role. The answer also brings forth another trend present among Faith and himself; the importance of acquiring other influences in the leadership process. Frank speaks of those he surrounds himself with by stating,

> If I surround myself with good people, I will become better, I will look better. And I've always said I am where I am today not because of what I may do has much as what I and others do together that rewards all of us.

Faith also notes the importance of people in the leadership process, however, in her mention of others, her focus went more toward their direct actions in supporting her.

> I'd have to say that I think people saw something in me that I didn't see in myself when I was younger... Almost every position I've ever had... I get voted in once and I do my job, and then just keep doing it.

So the three overall dominant themes for question number two among the forensics participants involved the people they were surrounded with, perseverance, and evolution.

Question 3: Was there a history or distinct moment when you realized you had become a leader?

The only dominant trend that emerged occurred in the responses of two participants. In their responses, it seemed as if there was no distinct time they realized they had become leaders. In addition to those responses Fredrick added he still didn't know if he was a leader or not.

When asked the same question, Faith said she believes there are many different times you realize you've become a leader depending on what part of life you are in. In high school her emergence as a leader was through theater. In college, many people wanted her to be the head of various organizations. When she was teaching, she felt she had become a leader when she was asked to start a league. Incidentally, it was starting a league probably more than anything that pushed her into forensics. After that she evolved into a person who is now much more confident and more often able to speak her mind within her leadership role, despite some remnants of insecurity. Overall, there were many times she had realized she had become a leader, and that leadership is constantly an evolving process.

When Frank was asked if there was a distinct time he realized he'd become a leader, he said the realization took place when he was elected chair of the department. However, Frank continued to speak of other events as well. Frank said he started to realize he was a leader when people who he respected started to come to him for advice. He also started to realize his emerging leadership when he was put in charge of a few specific projects. Frank noted when he was asked again to work on more projects, the increased requests became a stronger indication he had demonstrated the ability to be a leader. Frank went on to say that without his being self-serving there were many examples of times where he started to realize he had become a leader.

Overall, the participants' answers indicated no distinct time they felt they had become a leader. Frank was the only exception at first, but then his answer seemed to take the same form as the others when he indicated people started asking him for advice over time. Regardless of small discrepancies the pattern of leadership emerged over time.

Question 4: If you could give a word of advice to the future leaders who will follow you, what would that advice be? Why? When asked the question of what advice he would give to future leaders who follow him, Fredrick said we all have choices to make, and sometimes these choices are unfortunate. He added that there are consequences to those choices and that you must weigh them carefully. Furthermore, Fredrick advised future leaders to prepare for consequences, whether they be positive or negative, that they gather their choices from the whole picture and be prepared to stick with them. Finally, Fredrick stated he would advise his successor be prepared to admit when they've made a mistake, and be able do their best in defusing situations.

Faith advised future leaders not to be afraid to ask questions. Even when not doing anything, Faith believes asking questions will prepare them for future leadership roles. She would suggest that future leaders learn from the mistakes of others because they do not have enough time to personally make them. She would tell the person who follows her to not shy away from anything because the task is too much of an undertaking, and would strongly recommend they utilize the people around them. She would also advise that they share, and ask for advice and input from people, even if the advice is small because the favor will be returned later on. Finally, if somebody asks you to do something, Faith believes you should do what is asked, but watch out for having too many irons in the fire at once. Faith also believes laissez-faire leadership is bad, and doesn't understand why the word leadership would ever even follow the word laissez-faire, that humor can help rally people, and that without the little people, you have no one to lead. She would tell a future leader to remember it is not their institution; it is the institution of the people.

If Frank could give one word of advice to the future leaders who follow him, he would tell them they have to develop patience. He would advise that change happens over a period of time and not all change is necessarily good. Frank believes sometimes change for change's sake only, is something one needs to be careful of, and would recommend future leaders serve their time with the promise that after a while all the qualities listed above will come out, helping them to become a leader. Furthermore, Frank warns that sometimes becoming a leader is a matter of being in the right place at the right time but that every part of the leadership process relates back to being patient. Other things Frank would tell future leaders who will follow, are that leadership is not just a term that can be defined in words. Leadership is a personality factor, a charisma factor, the ability to evolve and relate to others with a level of equality and acceptance. Leadership is the willingness to give when giving is necessary, to be firm and resolute when necessary, and always make sure people understand why you are doing what you do.

Responses from Business Leaders

Question 1: Who has been the most influential to your style of leadership?

The first thing I noted when interviewing business leaders was that there were many more mentors and their contributions were much more indirect. Traditionally, the function of a mentor is to intentionally influence an individual through their actions or words. Instead of this occurring in the business world, I discovered many more situations where mentors did not know their actions were setting a precedent, but rather as teachers, shoved people in the right direction bringing their "mentee" into a life-altering state. Thus, their basic function as a mentor was indirect. Bill accurately summed up this sense of "indirect functionality" when saying,

Every person who influences you in one way or another

doesn't necessarily do it with the intent of making a leader out of you, but they do it with the intent of getting you started in the right direction, and getting you educationally equipped to continue earlier in life... these [my teachers] were all truly dedicated teachers at that time; they existed solely to teach, and they did that very effectively... and you quietly assimilate their kind of thinking without knowing it at the time.

Stating that some of his mentors "existed solely to teach" was also present in Blake's statement regarding outside influence. In both cases the influences noted were not from the participant's profession, but rather from earlier, influential parts of their lives. Blake supported the concept of indirect functionality through both of these patterns experienced first in the general influences one has in life; and second, at the time when one's influences occurred. Blake stated:

It's the culmination of people. And that's what makes your own unique leadership style. I think it's important that people recognize that too. Because of the different styles of leadership and different leaders that you can gain the knowledge from to perform your own leadership skills. I think that each way and level of maturity as you grow determines...you know... you begin to grow and recognize [it and go] from there.

Bonnie re-affirmed the concept of indirect functionality through multiple influences but added that her mother was influential at an earlier time in her life, teaching her to be nice, thus continuing the early and multiple influences trend noted in the prior two participants' responses. Both Bonnie and Blake were the only two participants to mention family as being influential, and when they did mention family, both thoughts were brief.

Another trend where indirect functionality emerged was in the participants' influence of negative leadership through experiences with people or situations, which taught them to "never be like that." All four participants spoke of these negative mentors, and all four spoke of the profound influence these experiences had on them. Bonnie went so far as to mention the negative leadership phenomenon twice in her reply to the question; once when responding to micromanagement, and again when explaining her choice to do the exact opposite of what was recommended by a "management grid.".

Bob was less specific in addressing negative leadership stating, "When your bosses do something that you don't like you remember it and don't pass it on, and when your bosses do something that you do like, you find a way to repeat that process." Blake was nearly identical in his response:

I took what they did that was successful, and put it into
my style of leadership, and took out what was unsuccess-

> ful, and did not use it. And I was able to gain from their successes and failures... to make my leadership style more successful. It's an array of things that you watch as they lead to determine what works and what doesn't work. And as you culminate those things you determine, what is best for your style and what works for you.

Along similar lines, Bill notes adapting one aspect of his leadership style through the indirect functionality of an individual who had positively mentored him in the sales department through being non-political. As a result, Bill never became a politician in his work and consequently went on to survive many departmental cutbacks through learning political mastery or avoidance of politics. He specifically noted it as a lesson that became essential for survival.

Overall, the business participants generally had multiple mentors from whom they learned specific skills as communication, organization, and flexibility. Of the four, Bonnie was the only participant to mention the influence of a personal, self-affirming mentor who existed in her life. Furthermore, no direct pattern of mentors coming from within or out of the participants' professional life were prevalent. Among the participants' leadership influences, family was the only form of mentorship that seemed to be more than sporadic in influence. Furthermore, negative leadership or leading by example of what not to do, was an emergent theme that could not be ignored. This added a different angle to the concept of indirect functionality, allowing one to see how small things that people do can affect a person to avoid any action related to the initial mentor's behavior.

Question 2: How Have You Emerged as a Leader in Your Field?

The predominant theme among all four participants was the ability to hit the ground running. Whether it was Bonnie's immediate response to the question "She did what she needed to do to the best of her abilities," Blake's immediate response of "I take responsibility and direction and figure out solutions to problems or situations and better them... I tell people what to do... and bingo you're leading," Bill stating "I started early in my job with hands-on movement. I did what I wanted to do, and in most cases, knew exactly how I wanted to do it... I never faltered or hesitated," or Bob, who mentioned the Bible as a source of guidance, and supported his thought further by stating "you have to be strong in your beliefs and convictions and be true to them [to lead quickly and effectively]," each participant cited a dominant theme of hitting the ground running.

The only other trend that emerged from two of the four candidates was the specific mention of avoiding politics in the workplace. In both Bonnie and Bill's opinion, avoidance of politics was crucial to emerging as a leader in their field.

Having the most extensive answer among all four participants was Bob, who said standing up for your staff against management was crucial to emerging as a leader in his field. He furthermore noted facilitating communication as a two-way street as being important to not only the people who worked under him, but to his further emergence as a leader in his field. Finally, Bob noted the importance of sitting down with each of your employees and reviewing their goals, and progress towards them. In reviewing goals with his workers he effectively applied a sense of responsibility to his workers, crucial to achieving goals, and stated, "The palest ink outlasts the strongest memory."

Overall the themes that emerged as prevalent included "hitting the ground running," avoiding politics, and emphasis on communication. The combination of these factors is reminiscent of a political race, where a candidate tries his or her hardest to communicate with the people, endures the campaign with unbounded energy, and tries to avoid the most political of questions at all cost.

Question 3: Was there a history or distinct moment when you realized you had become a leader?

Of the four participants interviewed, three of them noted distinct times they had realized they had become a leader. For Bob, realization of leadership came when he was in the service and had a platoon reporting to him. He became the first and second lieutenant, and had to deal with a lot of incidents. In that situation, Bob noted there is little room for non-leaders.

Bonnie noted she first felt like she had become leader the day she was promoted to her first supervisor job. Even though the position was the lowest level of supervisor positions she could be, the appointment was the first leadership position she had ever had. It was during that moment, she felt others believed she could do the job, and she started to believe she could do the job too.

Bill had a very special experience, unlike any other participant in the study, where he first realized he had become a leader. Bill distinctly recalls a colleague and friend, pulling him to the side and telling him one day he would like to be exactly like him, and he admired the way Bill accomplished things. Before then, Bill had never thought he was necessarily a leader. Because of the interaction, Bill explained that moment will stay with him for the rest of his life.

The only dissenter in the question was Blake, who claimed that leadership was something he evolved into. He said his evolution started with the small projects and just grew. For example, Blake cited the time he spent in school. During that time, it had been important for him to get people together using his skills. He developed confidence in his skills and that confidence sustained him in future leadership transactions.

Question 4: If you could give a word of advice to the future leaders who will follow you, what would that advice be? Why?

In compiling the information gathered from the business end of the spectrum, I discovered one trend that was evident through three of the four responses to the question; that future leaders listen to the people they work with while listening to the people for whom they work. Like forensics, the business answers showed no dominant themes among the participants' replies to the question. As a result, their replies are summarized.

When asked what advice he would give to future leaders, Bill stated only that a leader must maintain their objectivity and stay out of the political arena. This, above all, is the most important thing to know. When asked the same question, Bob had a different suggestion. He advised future leaders to watch the people they work for and learn from them. Bob advised that when a leader sees something good, they write down what they have seen, and look for opportunities to repeat it. This way, individuals learn from everybody with whom they come into contact. Bonnie approached the question with similar advice, recommending that future leaders listen to the people who work for them and take care of those people. She would tell future leaders they always must strive to do the right thing, because if you listen to the people and take care of them in their needs, they'll do just about anything for you. Bonnie furthermore warned that sometimes a person needs to stop everything to work through an issue in order to get the issue out of the way and get back on track. She said management will discourage such behavior but doing so always pays off in the long run, even if you have to stand up against management—that it is always important to strive to do the right thing.

Finally, when asked if he could give a word of advice to the future leaders who follow him Blake noted that, you need to listen to the people you lead because there are too many people in leadership positions who do not get in the trenches with the people. As a result, they end up dictating policy and end up losing. Blake would suggest not forgetting where you came from and warned that there are a lot of people in leadership positions who don't remember where they came from, and that he has seen businesses die because of it.

Comparing Forensics and Business Leaders' Responses

Distinct differences exist between the responses of forensics and business leaders. First, when viewing the participants from the business end of the spectrum, was the overall tone with which they approached their mentors. Leaders involved in forensics answered in more humanistic ways, as opposed to business leaders, who seemed to share a more social scientific approach to leadership. Whereas forensics leaders listed fewer mentors and a greater personal connection to them, business leaders unanimously spoke of having multiple mentors, none of whom had been solely responsible in influencing their styles of leadership. Furthermore, the connections the business

leaders had with their mentors were much less personal, more sporadic, and not always positive. Additionally, the concept of indirect functionality, where leadership lessons were drawn from multiple sources rather than fewer and more limited models of leadership, emerged among the business leaders.

Further consensus among the business participants that contrasted with the participants from forensics was in the notion of taking the influence of many individuals throughout a person's life to create a well-rounded leader. A notable difference in the depth of relationships existed between business and forensics leaders. Whereas forensics leaders tended to have fewer mentors with greater influence, business leaders were much more likely to have more, less notable mentors who taught them through indirect functionality. The connection the business individuals had to their mentors was consequently far less personal than connections established in forensics leaders.

For the final question, if there were a word of advice to the future leaders who will follow what would that advice be, virtually all answers were different. The only trend that emerged in the aforementioned question was among the business participants, where three out of four advised that the future leaders listen to the people they lead. Too often, leaders do not listen to those they lead, which can ultimately lead to a leader's downfall. While there was a call for increased communication on both sides, business leaders seemed to call for more effective communication out of desperation in difficult times while the forensics leaders' call to communicate seemed to be more out of a need for organizational maintenance.

Discussion

When examining the difference between the responses of forensics and business leaders, in many aspects, a chasm exists. I do not believe that one is better than the other and both could probably learn much from each other. Often accused of being stagnant in format and event evolution, the forensics community could learn to reinvent itself to curb trends of dwindling participation. Agility may be exactly what the activity needs to thrive in an age of cash strapped universities and disappearing teams. Changing to an environment involving a little less conversation and a little more action could be met with high regard allowing forensics to finally enter the communication era. Sure to be met with the resistance from traditionalists, this paper urges the consideration of leadership practices from other disciplines to create a leaner, more agile set of communication practices related to leadership.

Conversely, business leaders could learn from the humanistic approach of the forensics community. Corporate environment has drastically changed from the days of the 1950's. No longer are there "company people" who will work for and retire from the same corporation. Today, there are millions of workers who leave their jobs for something better. Company loyalty is the lowest it has been in years, and as a result, a new emphasis is put onto human resources to try to retain the people they have and thus maintain

stability. Gone are the days where a command and control structure is the most effective means of running an organization. Taking the time to evolve one's communication environment can yield more content and thus effective employees. Having mentors involved in nurturing the lives of new people in the company for example, creates a more pleasant environment to work. The employee is actively engaged in learning and evolving, therefore feeling fulfillment, which allows them to stay with the company because they are enjoying a higher quality of life and consequently creating stability for the company that calms investors and maximizes profits. Furthermore, business could also learn from the ethics and rules set forth in the forensics community. Although there are violations that occur at times, forensics seems to create an essentially good moral code by which to live. With corporate corruption at an all time high, and the economy performing rocky at best, business can benefit from the forensics philosophy, reminding companies, as Blake says, "to listen to the people" and "never forget where you came from."

Conclusion

My study was created to establish a springboard for future research in leadership and forensics. The primary limitation is the small number of participants and the locations in which those participants became leaders. With ten participants, it is possible that larger samples could reveal different themes. Furthermore, the Midwest provides a unique theatre in which all participants in the study emerged. The Midwest's cultures and customs vary from those of the east coast, west coast, and south. Therefore, leadership experience reflections in my study could be unconsciously influenced by the situations in which the leaders were raised.

In this paper I have linked forensics to business through common organizational structure and analyzed commonalities and disparities between the two. I also examined the evidence and trends found in my interviews and considered what forensics and business leaders can learn from each other. In analyzing the interviews, I determined forensics leaders could be more limber in their approach and that the command and control structure of business can be limiting to that environment. I also examined mentorship as an influential force in the formation of leaders and, hopefully, provided insight on the complex communication process of mentorship in the development of leadership in business and forensics.

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