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Vol. 19, Nos. 1 and 2

**SPEAKER AND GAVEL**

Quarterly Journal of  
DELTA SIGMA RHO-TAU KAPPA ALPHA

# speaker and gavel

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## **DELTA SIGMA RHO—TAU KAPPA ALPHA** **National Honorary Forensic Society**

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# SPEAKER AND GAVEL

Volume 19

Number 1: Fall 1981  
and 2: Winter 1982

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1982 National Conference News</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Some Reflections on the 1982 National Conference</b> .....	
..... <b>Donn W. Parson</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Individual Events Competition Expands</b> .....	<b>James W. Pratt</b>
	<b>5</b>
<b>Student Congress Evaluation and Legislation</b> .....	<b>Robert O. Weiss</b>
	<b>8</b>
<b>Japanese Speech Activities</b> .....	<b>Donald W. Klopf</b>
	<b>16</b>
<b>Thunder Everywhere: The Developing Rhetoric of Jerry Falwell</b> . . . .	
..... <b>A. L. Zimmerman</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Representative American Speeches Revisited</b> .....	<b>Waldo Braden</b>
	<b>29</b>
<b>The Ponderosa Presidency: Reagan's Western Melodramatic Form</b>	
..... <b>Barry Alan Morris</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>The Editor's Last Word</b> .....	<b>38</b>

## **SPEAKER AND GAVEL**

**Published by Delta Sigma Rho—Tau Kappa Alpha  
National Honorary Forensic Society**

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The editorial policy of *Speaker and Gavel* is to publish refereed articles dealing with the *theory, practice or criticism of public argument*, and it welcomes contributions from established scholars and especially encourages submissions by those who are making their early efforts to achieve publication. We will give preference to topics drawn from the contemporary period, i.e., since 1960, and to manuscripts in the 1500–3500 word range. *Speaker and Gavel* will also publish survey articles, mostly commissioned, about major society projects.

Manuscripts should be typed double-spaced, documented with end-notes beginning on a new page at the conclusion of the text, and conform to the *MLA STYLE SHEET* (2nd edition). Manuscripts and correspondence should be directed to the editor at the address given above.

## 1982 NATIONAL CONFERENCE NEWS

Forty-nine chapters and three guest schools sent delegations to the 1982 National Conference of DSR-TKA, March 18-21, 1982, at Texas Tech University in Lubbock. Jack Rhodes, national president of the society, served as National Conference chairman, and Vernon R. McGuire, Director of Forensics at Texas Tech, organized local arrangements. NDT debate drew 31 teams, CEDA debate 36, the Student Congress 28 delegates, and there were 385 entries in ten Individual Events categories. A complete report on winners in the conference competitions is in the current issue of *THE NEWSLETTER*, distributed to chapter sponsors and forensics directors. The first three articles in this journal provide an overview of the major conference activities.

A special event was the public debate involving a visiting team from Japan: Kazuo Matsuya, a junior major in English and American literature at Aoyama Gakuin University, and Akio Naito, a junior major in law at Sophia University. In addition to their own debating both men carry other forensic-related responsibilities. Matsuyama is president of his university's English Speaking Society and Akio coaches high school debaters in Tokyo. An article in this issue puts their debating into the general context of speech activities in Japanese higher education.

A high point of the conference was the annual presentation of awards to persons whose achievements have been facilitated by outstanding communication abilities. *Speaker of the Year* honors went to **Vernon E. Jordan**, outstanding undergraduate student at DePauw University, and longtime leader in the NAACP, the Southern Regional Council, the United Negro College Fund, and the National Urban League. Analyses of his career as eloquent civil rights spokesman will appear in the next issue of *Speaker and Gavel*.

Three persons were given *distinguished Alumni Awards*:

**Charles B. Brownson**, University of Michigan debater, a four-term Congressman, a past president of the Former Members of Congress organization, and now a prominent Washington publisher.

**C. David Cornell**, University of Iowa debater, former debate coach at Pomona College, holder of a half a dozen major administrative posts, and now president of Westminster College.

**Thomas S. Sorenson**, University of Nebraska graduate, former officer of the U. S. Information Agency, political campaign coordinator, and now a business executive.

Full citations read at the presentations to these alumni appear in the current issue of *THE NEWSLETTER*.

*Service Awards* were given to three professors whose careers have included debate coaching and notable contributions to DSR-TKA: **James S. Benson**, of Ball State University; **Vernon R. McGuire**, of Texas Tech University; and **L. Scott Nobles**, of Macalster College.

## SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE 1982 NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Donn W. Parson

A common preoccupation of forensic educators is the examination of the health of the activity. These examinations most commonly occur at the beginnings of decades or in moments of crisis. The particular period beginning the 1980's may combine both of these motives for self analysis. In the Winter, 1980 *Speaker and Gavel* fourteen forensic clairvoyants predicted directions of the activity in the 1980's. Some of these conclusions were sobering indeed.

Michael Pfau argued that the number of college students would decrease, the number of debaters would decrease, and tournaments—because of cost—would become increasingly regional in nature.<sup>1</sup> Pratt and Schnoor echoed these comments but pointed out that participation in individual events is increasing.<sup>2</sup> Thomas Hynes supported these predictions and argued that the rigors of promotion and tenure might see the end of professional directors of forensics.<sup>3</sup> In a sweeping summary that would do credit to Cassandra, John Morello intoned: "... the 1980's may well mark the final collapse of competitive debate in this nation."<sup>4</sup>

There have been recent attempts to suggest ways of avoiding this forensic funeral pyre. Problems suggested at the National Debate Tournament Committee meeting this year at the Speech Communication Association National Convention led to an all-day open meeting prior to the Northwestern tournament. While the focus was on the health of NDT debate, a rambling discussion produced a number of individual recommendations, including: (a) narrower topics; (b) greater support for regional and junior division tournaments; (c) more judge interaction; (d) definition of terms in the topic or a recommendation for "the best" definition to be used in a round. While these were individual coach recommendations that found support, there was one motion that was adopted unanimously. It is recommended that the National Debate Tournament Committee encourage the American Forensic Association to "bring together leaders of the CEDA and the NDT debate communities in order to attempt to find common ground for future goals."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Pfau, "The 1980's: A Watershed Decade," *Speaker and Gavel*, 17 (1980), 108-110.

<sup>2</sup> James W. Pratt and Larry G. Schnoor, "Forensics in the Eighties," *Speaker and Gavel*, 17 (1980), 111-114.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Hynes, Jr. "Intercollegiate Debate in the 1980's—A Guess," *Speaker and Gavel*, 17 (1980), 79-83.

<sup>4</sup> John Morello, "Intercollegiate Debate: Proposals for a Struggling Activity," *Speaker and Gavel*, 17 (1980), 103-107.

<sup>5</sup> Minutes of the National Debate Tournament Open Meeting, February 12, 1982, p. 8.

One of the major movements in debate toward the end of the 1970's was the development of CEDA (Cross-Examination Debate Association). Selecting two value topics each season, this activity grew in popularity, especially in the western and Rocky Mountain states. Part of its origin came from a reaction to perceived excesses of NDT debate: unusual cases, excessive speed and incredible research tasks. While some of these problems were reduced, some CEDA rounds are characterized by unusual cases, excessive speed, and huge amounts of evidence. Both CEDA and NDT are forms of debate activity. Sadly, elements of both groups often take a "we-they" attitude in which the virtues of one "camp" should spell the end of the other. (Ironically, this has left some directors whose programs contain both CEDA and NDT debate somewhat confused.) When forensics, a small activity if measured by numbers of college participants, splits into groups that attack each other, the activity is weakened. Reminiscent of Lutherans, who broke away from the Catholic Church as a unified group only to disagree and create splinter groups, forensics is weakened by viewing changes in format under a banner of salvation. David Zarefsky summarized it well:

The only sad feature in these innovations in format is that they often are undertaken with an excess of evangelical spirit and missionary zeal. It is not necessary to decry the National Debate Tournament in order to propose an alternative format; nor is it essential to condemn debate in order to defend individual events. No good and much harm come from the inevitable fragmentation of interests and loyalties which results when new formats are introduced with an air of righteous indignation.<sup>6</sup>

Given decreasing students, increasing costs, and disagreements among forensic educators, it would seem logical that the size of tournaments across the country would decrease, as indeed they have. One might also expect that this trend would extend to the Delta Sigma Rho-Tau Kappa Alpha National Conference. To discover whether there has been a five or ten year trend, the attendance figures for the conferences in 1972, 1977, and 1982 were compared, and with surprising results. The 1972 conference at the University of New Mexico attracted approximately 240 participants from 48 chapters. Included were 56 teams in 2-man debate, and 11 schools in 4-man debate. At the 1977 conference held at the University of Utah, there were approximately 180 participants representing 43 chapters. This year there were approximately 340 participants representing 52 chapters.<sup>7</sup> These included 68 teams in debate (36 teams in CEDA and 32 NDT teams) and over 400 individual events slots (a student could enter a maximum of three slots). Thus, while national trends are for smaller tournaments, the Delta Sigma Rho-Tau Kappa Alpha National Conference had increased by nearly 33% over 1972 and was nearly double the size of the 1977 National Conference.

Several factors, including geography, could account for the differences,

<sup>6</sup> David Zarefsky, "Forensics in the Seventies: In Retrospect," *Speaker and Gavel*, 17 (1979), 65.

<sup>7</sup> In NDT debate, the University of Kansas won first and second places. Third places went to the University of Utah and Baylor University. In CEDA debate, first place went to the University of Wyoming and second to Weber State. Third place went to UCLA and the University of Florida.



although the three conferences were in roughly the same area of the country. Under the able direction of the conference director, Jack Rhodes, and the tournament host, Vernon McGuire, the tournament was publicized, even including package travel arrangements. In short, members were encouraged to come to Texas Tech, and those who attended will attest to one of the finest jobs of hosting a tournament in the history of DSR-TKA.

A second factor was the increase in individual events entries. The rise of participation in individual events has been another characteristic of the late 1970's and early 1980's. While in 1970, Jack Howe<sup>8</sup> reported that 53.7% of all college tournaments offered debate only, by 1980 that figure had reduced to 33.4%. Twenty-nine percent of tournaments were only for individual events and 36.9% offered both activities. By combining all three forensic activities, NDT debate, CEDA debate and individual events, DSR-TKA can make claim to a conference that is truly national in the scope of forensic activities.

If the predictions are correct that there will be fewer national and more regional tournaments, DSR-TKA as a national conference may take on additional import. This will be one opportunity for national gathering of students in various forensic activities. While budget constraints will continue to affect travel decisions, any encouragement by DSR-TKA and the tournament host (such as hotel discounts this year) will encourage chapters to be represented.

An encouraging sign for DSR-TKA is the number of new chapters and applications for chapter charters. At the 1982 conference, for example, Baylor University and Houston Baptist University attended for the first time. Seven applications for charters are currently being processed. This marks one of the most active periods of charter expansion in recent history.

With proper planning and publicity future DSR-TKA National Conferences may follow the success of the 1982 conference. In fact, if predictions of decreasing national travel patterns become reality, this may make DSR-TKA a really "special" national event. As a conference including a broad variety of forensic activities—NDT and CEDA debate and individual events—DSR-TKA might well consider assuming the recommendation sent to the American Forensic Association. If the goals of both CEDA and NDT debate can be furthered by the DSR-TKA National Conference, perhaps DSR-TKA leadership can help unite and strengthen the entire range of forensic activities. Then predictions of the end of debate in the 1980's may become hollow indeed.

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<sup>8</sup> Jack Howe, "Forensics in the 1980's—Predictions and Projections," *Speaker and Gavel*, 17 (1980), 69-79.

## INDIVIDUAL EVENTS COMPETITION EXPANDS

James W. Pratt

Individual events competition at the 1982 DSR-TKA National Conference attracted a large number of students from thirty chapters. This description of the individual events aspect of the conference is intended to provide information for those who were not in Lubbock.

The format for the individual events competition differed in several respects from that of the previous year's conference. Events were offered in two groups, rather than three: Group A included Impromptu Speaking, Prose Interpretation, Expository Speaking, Dramatic Duo, and Communication Analysis; Group B included Extemporaneous Speaking, Persuasive Speaking, Dramatic Interpretation, Poetry Interpretation, and After-Dinner Speaking. The conference schedule was arranged to maximize an individual student's opportunity to enter multiple events: Student Congress members could enter both groups of individual events; debate contestants could enter Group B events; and a contestant in individual events could enter a maximum of three events per group.

These multiple-entry provisions, as well as the size of the tournament and the size of the judging pool, required a change from the previous year's practice of using two judges in each preliminary round section; instead, one judge was assigned to each section in the three preliminary rounds. On the basis of cumulative rankings and ratings in the preliminary rounds, contestants were advanced to semi-final rounds in which three judges per section were used. Semi-finals were warranted in eight of the ten events; in Dramatic Duo and Communication Analysis, each with twenty entries, semi-finals would have required advancing more than half of the entrants. The top twelve contestants in each event were rank-ordered on the basis of cumulative rankings in preliminary rounds and were placed in semi-final sections in order to balance the strength of those sections: ranks 1 and 12 were in Section 1, ranks 2 and 11 were in Section 2, etc. The top three contestants from each semi-final section (based on total ranks, judges' preference, and total ratings) were advanced to a final round in each event, to each of which three judges were assigned. Contestants were ranked in the final rounds, using these priorities: majority of firsts, total of ranks, judges' preference, and total of ratings.

The number of schools participating in individual events and the number of entries in each event all showed increases over similar figures for last year's conference. Those figures are:

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SPEAKER AND GAVEL, Vol. 19, Nos. 1-2 (1981-82), 5-7.

## SPEAKER AND GAVEL

	1982	1981
Schools	30	22
Extemporaneous Speaking	59	21
Poetry Interpretation	52	28
Prose Interpretation	51	33
Impromptu Speaking	44	23
Expository Speaking	39	16
Dramatic Interpretation	37	17
Persuasive Speaking	35	24
After-Dinner Speaking	28	11
Dramatic Duo	20	11
Communication Analysis	20	13
Total Entries	385	197

These figures, of course, represent numbers of entries, not numbers of students. Because virtually all contestants exercised the multiple-entry option and many students entered the maximum of six events, the number of students participating in individual events was substantially fewer than the total number of entries.

The relative sizes of the various events are not surprising and appear to be consistent with what we might encounter at other tournaments. A specific comparison with the sizes of the events at the 1982 American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament, for instance, shows generally the same relative order of event size—with a few obvious exceptions that may readily be explained by differences between the two tournaments. That Extemporaneous Speaking is the largest event at the DSR-TKA tournament (and the seventh largest event at the NIET) might be expected when students participating in Debate or Student Congress are given the option to enter individual events at the same tournament (an option exercised by more than one-third of the contestants in Extemporaneous Speaking). Typically, though, students entered in Debate or Student Congress and Group B individuals events entered only one individual event, and that was Extemporaneous Speaking, perhaps because of the preparation time involved and the logistical difficulties associated with moving from one set of events to another. Such students would be likely to enter both Extemporaneous Speaking and Persuasive Speaking at tournaments offering only individual events competition; and that may explain the relatively smaller size of Persuasive Speaking at the DSR-TKA tournament (seventh largest, as compared to third largest at the NIET). The other notable difference in relative size of events at the two tournaments is in Dramatic Duo (which was tied with Communication Analysis as the smallest event at the DSR-TKA tournament and was the eighth largest at the NIET). The most likely explanation for that difference is that the NIET permits a single student to enter two Dramatic Duos (with different partners), and many students do so; the DSR-TKA tournament limited a student to one entry in Dramatic Duo.

The rules and time limits used for each of the individual events were

those of the NIET. In fact, no copy of those rules was included in the tournament information and invitation, on the (probably accurate) assumption that all tournament participants would be familiar with those rules and time limits and would already have access to them from other sources. An increasing number of tournaments are using the NIET events rules and time limits, and that trend toward uniformity is surely one that encourages increased participation in individual events competition. It is now possible for a student to use the same material, without modification, in an event at most tournaments throughout the school year; ten years ago, a student could not count on finding the same events at all tournaments, let alone with the same rules and time limits.

It is difficult to make judgments about the quality of competition at the tournament from the perspective of a tournament administrator who could not, of course, hear any of the rounds and so have first-hand observation on which to make even subjective evaluations. Those comments which were heard, from both judges and competitors, indicated that many of the tournament participants thought that the quality level of the competition was high. If we may draw quality inferences from the tournament results, we may observe consistently average-to-high rating point totals throughout the tournament, suggesting that the judges were positive in their assessment of contestant quality; and all final round contestants in all events received ratings in the superior and excellent range. Many of the final round judges showed significant differences in the rankings of the contestants, which may suggest a consistency and similarity of quality among finalists. If we wish to look for consistency of achievement, we may observe that several of the students who did well in the DSR-TKA tournament also placed high in other national tournaments during the following month. Obviously, the range of events that we offer and the number of schools and students who choose to participate in them suggests that we are providing a worthwhile competitive opportunity to our members.

## STUDENT CONGRESS EVALUATION AND LEGISLATION

Robert O. Weiss

Student congress undoubtedly has higher purposes, and more of them, than any other forensic activity. The current "Rules of the National Student Congress of Delta Sigma Rho-Tau Kappa Alpha" explicitly set forth no less than seven purposes, all of them noble. From the early days of the student congress movement, its partisans have seen themselves as engaged in reinforcing the premises of a democratic society and developing the skills that are necessary for maintaining it. Furthermore, more narrowly, for the academic discipline of speech communication and its close relations, the congress activity can be seen as providing opportunities for communication that is interactional, contextual, and emphatically functional. Even within the little world of forensics itself, this activity is grandly summative, a place where debate, discussion, persuasion, and interpersonal communication may all be brought together and effectively employed.

The 1982 DSR-TKA National Student Congress at Texas Tech University, perhaps less concerned with fulfilling elevated purposes than with getting a job done, was the 19th such congress conducted by the organization as a part of its National Conference tournament program.

The job the delegates faced was to arrive at a respectable set of approved legislation on the broad topic of "Government and Business." The student congress format calls for consideration of all proposals by appointed committees before they are brought to the general legislative sessions, so for committee purposes the broader subject was divided into four categories: (1) investment and taxation, (2) foreign trade, (3) government regulations, and (4) labor relations. All committee meetings and general assemblies were scheduled for convenient rooms in the same building at the university and took place during Friday and Saturday, March 19 and 20. The officers elected by the delegates were John "Monty" Stokes, University of Florida, as Speaker of the Assembly and Mike L. Edmonds, University of Mississippi, as Clerk.

This report will discuss the evaluations and recommendations which will be used as guidelines for planning future congresses and will describe the legislation that emerged from the 1982 sessions.

### Evaluation

To improve the student congress and to provide an instrument for periodic change in it, a degree of methodical evaluation is normally incorporated. In the DSR-TKA Student Congress, a committee is usually given the responsibility for assessing the reaction of delegates to various features of the activity and for providing a report for consideration in planning the

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following year's event. The Evaluation Committee at the 1982 Congress consisted of Jeff Brinkmann, Indiana State University, Felicia Hammett, Mississippi State University, and Ben Cattle, University of Nebraska-Lincoln. This committee gathered opinions informally and then conducted an open discussion of their recommendations with the assembly as a whole, coming up with five formal recommendations and noting three other suggestions that were rejected by the group.

### *Preparation*

Two of the recommendations of the Evaluation Committee reflected a lack of satisfaction with the amount of advanced preparation that delegates had done for the event.

- Recommendation 1. Each school should bring at least one prepared bill.
- Recommendation 2. Each person should prepare a portfolio regarding the subject area.

The implied complaint is a venerable one. In his critique of the first Delta Sigma Rho National Student Congress in 1939, Professor E. C. Buehler was but one of many who, although lauding the congress, commented in this vein:

I believe the faculty representatives should be more conscientious in getting the delegates prepared to discuss the issues intelligently. Too many came inadequately prepared and were unable to make a worthwhile contribution to the committee session.

At the 1982 Congress one sensed that the concern with lack of preparation stemmed not so much from irritation with other members, since few were manifestly well prepared, but from the demands of the legislative process, which needed more "meat" to chew upon. The two suggestions might have a remedial effect in this direction. With bills prepared in advance, the committee work could proceed with more dispatch, debating, discussing, and amending suggested bills rather than writing them from scratch. Following the second suggestion, more thought might be given to the subject by the members ahead of time and more specific information would in any event be available within easy reach. The word "portfolio" may now be entered into the vocabulary of forensics.

### *Relation to Other Events*

Three years ago, at the DSR-TKA National Conference at Emory University, the individual events sector of the conference was substantially expanded, and in order to maintain adequate time for the congress an overlapping was allowed with respect to the final rounds. In other words, delegates who were in finals were excused in order to go to their rounds. This situation created only minimal difficulties at Emory, but it became more serious the next year at Denver, where intentional strategies emerged such as reconsidering motions after their proponents had absented themselves. Again, this was not serious in 1981 at Mankato, but with the further collapsing of the schedule so that most events could end on Saturday night this year at Texas Tech, the conflicts became so difficult that some com-

mittees had to adjourn and, indeed, at some of the scheduled times the general assembly itself could not meet. Furthermore, the absence of key presenters of bills and even of the officers occasionally brought business to a standstill.

Recommendation 3. Congress and other conference events should not meet simultaneously.

Recommendation 4. If someone in a major position should have to leave, power should be delegated to another person to fill that position.

The members of the congress through their Evaluation Committee expressed the idea that, if possible, the problem of overlapping be eliminated by having a schedule that allows the time allotted for the congress to be used for this activity. It should be noted, however, that another proposal, which called for prohibiting students from entering both congress and individual events, was rejected by the delegates. Most of the delegates, of course, were this year entered (some of them triple-entered) in the individual events competition.

The second recommendation made allowance for the fact that some overlapping may continue to be necessary. It provides for a technical adjustment so that in any case presiding officers (speaker and clerk) will be available at all times either in person or through an orderly provision of substitutes.

#### *Public Relations*

The 1982 Congress membership, though adequately enthusiastic and dedicated, was relatively small. For instance, the DePauw congress, which draws almost entirely from Region V, was larger this year.

Recommendation 5. More public relations should be utilized to make the student congress larger.

Without analyzing the possible causes for a limited entry list in the congress, the delegates were convinced that if more chapters and more coaches knew about the congress and its values, the enrollment would be more substantial. Student congresses do not constitute a large part of many forensic programs and thus most don't give it much attention. A more systematic effort is therefore called for on the part of the tournament committee and the National Council to make sure that the event is adequately publicized.

#### *Rejected Proposals*

Three suggested recommendations were rejected by the delegates after discussion. One such proposal was mentioned above, that of not allowing students to enter both congress and other events.

The other two related to the party system. Whether to incorporate a party system at all is a continuing issue in student congress administration. Parties, such as conservative and liberal, are bound to be artificial, but they provide additional structure and interaction which some students find useful and interesting. One rejected proposal was simply to discontinue the party system. In the straw vote, only one 1982 delegate supported this position. At the other end was an effort to provide greater emphasis on parties by providing more caucus time. This idea was also rejected. The party system and

its place in the congress will no doubt be left approximately the same for the 1983 Congress at John Carroll University.

### Legislation

The outcome of a student congress appears not as a "results sheet," but as a set of legislation which has been approved by the participants.

At the 1982 National Conference, the delegates gave approval to six formal bills concerning government and business and to two resolutions. Copies of these bills have been sent to the President of the United States, as well as to influential congressional and business leaders, and to top it all off are herewith being made available to the select readership of *Speaker and Gavel*. The fact that they are made public in these ways provides a degree of real accountability for the activity.

The approved bills appear in print, but there is also some significance to the proposals that were not passed, which were debated and rejected by the assembly. Three were given extended consideration before being defeated. One called for corporations to be responsible for retraining workers who were displaced by automation in their plants. A second, also not surprisingly voted down by an assembly which by a two-to-one margin designated itself as "conservative," proposed to give all public employees the right to strike. As more of a surprise, finally, the assembly defeated a bill which called for the abolition of the Federal minimum wage.

Although the bills as published below do not necessarily represent a comprehensive treatment of the major issues facing government and business today, and although all of the delegates were conscious that there are substantial weaknesses in them which time and other constraints did not allow to be repaired, the record does demonstrate a set of conclusions based upon the value systems of the delegates, genuine and at times strenuous discussion and debate, and the particular interests and information levels of this group of forensically experienced individuals attending a conference at a national level.

### DSR-TKA National Student Congress 1982

#### CONGRESS BILL #1

By Felicia Hammett, Mississippi State University

AN ACT to extend the copyright protection of computer software.

Whereas, the use of computers is an integral part of today's industry, and  
Whereas, the object code (machine code) of a computer program is not specifically protected by the copyright laws, and

Whereas, innocent consumers of pirated computer software can be held liable for copyright violation.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE STUDENT CONGRESS OF DELTA SIGMA RHO-TAU KAPPA ALPHA:

Section 1. That all object code generated from a copyrighted computer program shall also be protected under copyright laws.



Section 2. That consumers who purchase computer software from a supplier who has violated another person's copyright is not liable for copyright violation damages.

Section 3. All speeches and records shall serve as legislative intent.

CONGRESS BILL #2

By David Kraus, DePauw University

AN ACT to establish tax incentives for College Savings.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE STUDENT CONGRESS OF DELTA SIGMA RHO-TAU KAPPA ALPHA:

Section 1. Individuals shall be allowed a tax-exempt account for college related expenses (tuition, textbooks, and housing).

- (a) This exemption shall be limited to parents or guardians with dependent children, or adults who intend to attend college.
- (b) This exemption shall be limited to \$40,000.00.
- (c) This exemption shall be limited to savings and loans, federal home mortgage agencies, and life insurance savings.
- (d) This exemption shall be limited to savings accrued at \$5000.00 or less annually.

Section 2. Should these funds not be used toward the aforementioned purposes, they shall be taxed at the standard rate.

- (a) This will occur at early withdrawal.
- (b) If, twenty-five years after the establishment of the said account, the funds are not used toward a college education, they shall be taxed at the normal rate.
- (c) The account may be transferred to the name of the said dependent, without penalty of taxation, and upon such action, a new timetable shall be established.
- (d) Payment shall be paid directly to the college and receipt will be certified by the receiving institution. Funds removed without certification shall be deemed early withdrawal.

CONGRESS BILL #3

By the Foreign Trade Committee

AN ACT to protect the American Economy.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE STUDENT CONGRESS OF DELTA SIGMA RHO-TAU KAPPA ALPHA:

Section 1. That a goal be set on Japanese imports to the United States for fiscal year 1983 of not more than 90% of the import level in fiscal year 1982.

Section 2. That the Export-Import Board is empowered to use Tariff increases to ensure that the 90% goal is met.

CONGRESS BILL #4

By the Government and Regulation Committee (David Campbell, College of Wooster; Felicia Hammett, Mississippi State University; John David, Occidental College; Phil Doepfner, Southern Methodist University; Jim Friedman, University of Nebraska; Michael Kranitz, University of Florida; John Tippit, Southern Methodist University)

AN ACT to abolish the mandatory retirement system.

Whereas, valuable experience, intelligence, and manpower is lost due to mandatory retirement, and

Whereas, mandatory retirement causes duress,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE STUDENT CONGRESS OF DELTA SIGMA RHO-TAU KAPPA ALPHA:

Section 1. That the mandatory retirement system is hereby abolished.

CONGRESS BILL #5

By Jeff R. Turley, Murray State University; Alan R. Horky, University of Florida

AN ACT to provide for a uniform system for the regulation of legalized prostitution.

Whereas, this body does not encourage or condone prostitution, we do realize that it is an inherent aspect of any society, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE STUDENT CONGRESS OF DELTA SIGMA RHO-TAU KAPPA ALPHA:

Article 1

The Department of Health and Human Services shall be responsible for the enforcement of the provisions of this bill.

Article 2

Section 1. Contextually defined, prostitution shall be sexual acts for consideration.

Section 2. All states and municipalities shall retain the right to govern prostitution within the said states and municipalities.

Section 3. Those states or municipalities opting to legalize prostitution shall require and enforce a bi-weekly medical examination for the detection of communicable venereal diseases.

- (a) The individual prostitutes shall pay the nominal cost of the examinations.
- (b) All prostitutes shall be required to register and purchase a license.
- (c) These licenses shall be issued at state option and their cost shall be determined by the state/municipality.
- (d) Prior to application for a license, the said prostitutes must furnish proof that they are in fact, free of communicable diseases.

Section 4. All income derived by prostitutes must be reported and shall

fall under the bylaws of the Internal Revenue Service and the appropriate state/municipal taxation agencies.

Article 3

This bill shall be effective as of January 1, 1983.

Article 4

Violators of this bill shall be dealt with at the state level.

CONGRESS BILL #6

By Homer Reynolds, John Tippit, Phil Doepfner and Chris Lowden, Southern Methodist University

AN ACT to provide measures for monitoring foreign investments in the United States.

Whereas, foreign investment in the United States has, in recent years, become a matter of growing national concern due to a combination of events:

- (a) substantially increased rate of growth in foreign investments;
- (b) emergence of new countries as actual or potential investors in the United States, and
- (c) the acquisition by foreign firms of a substantial number of American industries, and

Whereas, the increasing foreign investment in the United States indicates a growing trend for foreign control over segments of the American economy as evidenced by the ratio of foreign investment to American net national investment, and

Whereas, the potential for significant political consequences is increasing as foreign interests achieve their own objectives within the United States through the use of foreign investment money, and

Whereas, significant questions have been raised as to whether foreign investments are sufficiently monitored for their amount and impact upon the United States

BE IT ENACTED BY THE STUDENT CONGRESS OF DELTA SIGMA RHO-TAU KAPPA ALPHA:

Section 1. That the Department of Commerce and the Department of the Treasury form an Inter-Agency Committee sufficiently staffed with appropriate personnel to adequately research and report data relevant to foreign investments in the United States by:

- (a) requiring annual disclosures and reports of foreign investments in the United States be made by major financial institutions, and
- (b) dissemination of reports and studies to appropriate agencies and to the American public as to the levels of foreign investment in the United States.

Section 2. The Inter-Agency Committee will be charged with responsibility to conduct studies and report findings in these specific areas of foreign investment:

- (a) stocks and bonds,
- (b) paper investments, and
- (c) general securities.

Section 3. The Inter-Agency Committee will be charged with the responsibility to monitor and report to the appropriate congressional committee any major change in the status of foreign investment in the United States.

#### CONGRESS RESOLUTION #1

By Jeff Turley, Murray State University; John "Monty" Stokes, University of Florida

Whereas, the Japanese International Debate Team, of Akio Naito and Kuzuo Matsuyama have invested a great deal of time and effort in their American tour, and

Whereas, they have enriched the lives of those people they have come in contact with by broadening our knowledge of Japan and subjects relative to their topic,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE STUDENT CONGRESS OF DELTA SIGMA RHO-TAU KAPPA ALPHA:

Section 1. That Akio Naito and Kazuo Matsuyama be recognized for outstanding achievement in International Debate, and for representing both their universities and their country in such an upstanding measure.

Section 2. Be it further resolved that copies of this resolution be presented to both Akio Naito and Kazuo Matsuyama, C. A. Holman, the American co-ordinator for the Japanese-American Forensics Associations who sponsored the debate team and to each debator's school signed by the Speaker of the House and the Sponsor of the resolution.

#### CONGRESS RESOLUTION #2

By the Regulations Committee

Whereas, running any forensics tournament, especially a national tournament, involves a tremendous amount of work; and

Whereas, the 1982 DSR-TKA National Forensics Tournament was executed with great efficiency, and

Whereas, the 1982 DSR-TKA National Tournament fell over the spring break of Texas Tech University, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE STUDENT CONGRESS OF DELTA SIGMA RHO-TAU KAPPA ALPHA:

The DSR-TKA National Student Congress here assembled hereby extends its most cordial thanks to the Forensics team and department of Texas Tech University with special thanks to Vernon and Ruth McGuire, Conference host and hostess and Director of Forensics at Texas Tech University; Dr. Robert Weiss, Director of Student Congress; Dr. Jack Rhodes, Conference Director; Vera Simpson, Assistant Director of Forensics, Texas Tech University, Lezlie Roberson, typist; and Linda Vancil.

## JAPANESE SPEECH ACTIVITIES

Donald W. Klopff

Since American debaters have been touring Japan for at least a decade and Japanese debaters have been visiting America under Speech Communication Association sponsorship, most forensic-minded Americans realize that Japan does have speech programs. They may not know, however, what sort of speaking activities take place there or how the activities are conducted. The purpose here is to explain what does happen, beginning with a description of the English speech organizations that run virtually all of Japan's contest activity.

### English Speaking Societies

About 375 Japanese colleges and universities have English language departments or offer English language courses. In eighty-five percent of these schools, extracurricular English speech programs are conducted through a student organization known in most schools as the English Speaking Society (ESS). With the goal of helping students learn to speak English, the ESS provides instruction in English speaking and opportunities to practice English in speech activities. Since few university English departments give such instruction, concentrating instead on reading and writing skills, and the students recognize the value of speaking English and want that ability, the societies were formed.

The first ESS allegedly was established in 1896 at the Kwansei Gakuin University. Among the other early ones are those at Meiji University (73 years old), Shitootsubashi University (68 years) and Seinan Gakuin University (64 years). Thirty percent of the remainder have existed for more than twenty-five years.

The membership ranges from a dozen students in the newest to almost two hundred in the ESS attached to the larger universities. The average is thirty-three members. However, the majority limit membership to a certain number of Freshmen each year, thereby controlling their growth. But forty percent do not restrict the number of newcomers and their membership is increasing.

Practically all of the ESS and their activities are student managed. The few not so directed are apt to be in church-related schools where a faculty member takes an active part. Faculty sponsors serve all the rest but their role is perfunctory and largely ceremonial in nature.

The students not only manage the activities, they teach English and coach as well. A few ESS, however, have sought expert help and this help usually comes from laymen (both Japanese nationals and Anglo-Saxons) and English teachers, with the latter group predominating.

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SPEAKER AND GAVEL, Vol. 19, Nos. 1-2 (1981-82), 16-21.

Most ESS operate on modest budgets. The average is \$800 but a few spend as much as \$2,500 per year. The activities are such that money is not all that vital. Travel funds are not a necessity since few groups travel beyond their immediate vicinity and, when special events are held, business and industry supplies financial help.

Typical ESS members devote an average of five-and-one-half hours per week to speech activities. Some give as much as ten hours but they are the exception. This time does not include the days spent in camp-seminars and other special training programs explained later.

The ESS, then, administers and directs just about all of the English speech activities in the Japanese colleges and universities. The members plan the programs, raise funds as needed, conduct the contests, and do much of the teaching and coaching.

#### Varied Activities

Each ESS gears its speech activities to member needs and, since these differ from group to group, few programs are identical. Everyone provides articulation and pronunciation training and almost all hold intra-school contests. A few concentrate instead on staging theatrical productions. Three-fourths participate in intercollegiate events, sponsoring several each year and entering an average of three a year. A small group of ESS is much more active, participating in a dozen or more events each year.

As an illustration of what the ESS do, brief descriptions follow of three ESS programs. The first represents the twenty-year old Kagoshima University ESS with 65 members. Debate, drama, public speaking and discussion constitute its principal activities along with an unusual feature. The society provides a guide service of Kagoshima, a southern Japanese city, for English speaking tourists. Five bureaus (Education, Negotiation, Proceedings, Financial, and General Affairs) conduct its business, working closely with the juniors who make up the Executive Committee. Only 25 freshmen are enrolled each year, keeping the membership limited to an agreed upon number. Twice a week, there is basic English practice in addition to preparation and practice for the speaking activities. The society belongs to the Kagoshima Student English Federation, a part of the All Kyushu Student English Federation.

The eighty-year old Meiji University ESS has 130 members, all of whom take part in debate, discussion and public speaking. It runs two major national events annually—the "Gathering of Winners of Major Speech Contests" and the "All Japan Open Discussion" contest. This Tokyo group belongs to four leagues or federations, participating in a dozen events per year.

Kitakyushu University's ESS is thirty-six years old with 115 members enrolled in debate, discussion, drama and public speaking activities. Its unique feature is daily English practice with forty-minute sessions during the noon hour and mandatory home study. Active in three leagues and entrants in many intercollegiate events, the society is known for its interscholastic speech contest for high school students in southern Japan and for its New Year's Debate Contest, the first Japanese event held each year.

### Popular Events

The most popular event is the public speaking contest. About eighty-five percent of the ESS take part in it. The event is very similar to the American original oratorical contest. The entrants prepare an original speech in English and then deliver it once in that language, usually before a large audience in a school auditorium. The winners are determined on the basis of the single performance and they receive considerable attention for performing well enough in a second language to garner prizes.

Debate, which ranks a distant second in popularity (forty percent of the societies participate), is described in the next section. Discussion, interpretative reading, and drama contests are other popular events, each engaging thirty-six percent of the ESS. Other types of events are held, but they attract few groups.

Interpretative reading differs little as a contest event from its American counterpart. Like public speaking, however, the readers usually perform once rather than the multiple performances typical of American contests. The same holds true for the drama contest as the performers act out the roles in excerpts from British or American plays.

The Japanese discussion contest, an event which soon should pass debate in popularity, tends to resemble debate with two groups of five-six students arguing opposing sides rather than a group of discussants mutually interactive about a common problem. The contest attracts students because almost everyone except the poorest English speakers can enroll and it gives them a chance to practice both speaking and listening without the intensity and spontaneity characteristic of debate. Should a team member be unfamiliar with a particular issue, chances are someone else on the team can talk to it.

### Debate

While it is far from being a common activity, Japanese debating nonetheless seems to be of interest to many American debaters and it does stir up the curiosity of the Japanese. Although it appears in two, three, four and five person formats, the five-person style is the more prevalent. Introduced about the time five-person debate was practiced in the nineteenth century American literary societies, this style retains its top rank probably because it permits a large number of ESS members to practice English in a competitive situation. Every debater has to speak at least once so everyone can use the language.

The typical five-person format begins with a ten-minute affirmative followed by a ten-minute negative constructive speech. Then the negative members have eight minutes to question the affirmative debaters and the affirmative questions the negative for a similar time. Each side has eight minutes of rebuttal, and the debate concludes with four-minute summaries from each team.

Only a fourth of the schools engage in American-style, two-person debates. Those students who do debate this style tend to be the best English speakers and the ones most interested because of the amount of preparation and speaking time required. They are motivated not only by the desire to learn

to speak better English, but also by the desire to learn about Western thought and behavior. By knowing Western logic, the debaters seemingly will be able to understand the West and be better able to communicate with Westerners, a prized goal for many students.

Cross-examination debate is the principal two-person style, following a format of eight-minute constructives, four-minute cross examinations, and four-minute rebuttals. Preparation time, nine total minutes, is distributed between the three divisions of the debate. Unfortunately the typical Japanese team is not adept at cross-examination and orthodox debate with its heavier reliance on prepared positions would appear to be better suited to Japanese debating abilities. Confronted with questions to answer or expected to adapt or extend arguments, most Japanese debaters have language difficulties.

Average Japanese debaters experience other problems, many of which relate to inexperience or inadequate coaching. Among them are ineffective uses of the negative block, of the rebuttal periods, and of reasoning, problems compounded by the debater's lack of fluency in English. In addition, they are handicapped by inadequate sources of evidence. English language publications are not readily obtainable and Japanese materials require translation which more often than not cause inaccuracies to surface. There are few research libraries and hardly any exist outside the big cities.

Added to these problems is the absence of a national debate proposition. Debaters could argue a different one in every tournament, making preparation a formidable undertaking. The trend, however, is toward a common topic and at this time most leagues and associations are restricting debates to two propositions a year, different ones in the Spring and Fall. Few leagues, unhappily, use the same propositions.

Japanese debates are notable for other reasons. Invariably they attract crowds and occasionally admission is charged. Ceremony is important. A presiding officer normally opens each debate, announces the topic, introduces the judges, explains the procedures, and introduces the debaters as they speak. The judges have been known to meet privately and discuss their reactions to a debate with the hope of reaching consensus about the decision. Often they will orally critique the debate for the audience's and debaters' benefit. The debaters like to use visual aids, for instance, charts, graphs and maps, as support, and precious time can be spent displaying and explaining these.

Tradition dictates that seniors do not debate or engage in other ESS contest activity. Supposedly they need to devote their energies to seeking employment. Freshmen ordinarily are too inexperienced to participate. Hence, the bulk of the contest work falls upon the sophomores and juniors. Nevertheless, the best veterans among the most active ESS would be competitive in average American tournaments. But they would be talking in a second language and except for an occasional person would never speak English on a par with native speakers.

#### Judging

As in America, the questions "Who should judge?" and "On what bases should decisions be made?" provoke controversy. Should the judges be



subject matter experts, English language teachers, English speaking lay persons, forensic coaches, or experts in argumentation? As in America, the questions are hypothetical. The reality is that the contest sponsors take whomever agrees to judge as long as such persons comprehend English. Consequently, the judges are apt to be Westerners residing in Japan, teachers of English, senior ESS members, and former ESS members.

As in America, complaints about the judging abound. Argumentative excellence, for example, may not be rewarded because the English is incomprehensible while a disorganized, poorly delivered speech may win because the English is understandable. Much of the discontent stems from the fact that the ESS coaches are stressing the technicalities of the event as much as the use of English whereas the judges are more prone to favor the English usage.

Those persons who do judge usually are well compensated for their time. Either they are paid a stipend or receive some sort of gift. A cadre of Westerners volunteer to judge for the revenue it brings.

### Training Programs

Each ESS conducts a varied and vigorous training program. Much of it takes place on campus during or after school hours. In addition, a great deal of instruction occurs at camp-seminars and during workshops and conferences.

In the majority of the ESS, the members are assigned to a training section according to their abilities and interests. The beginners go to the conversation or pronunciation drill section, the debaters work in the debate section, those interested in theatre to the drama section, and so on. In each, they will work for several hours, two or three times a week while school is in session. More time will be put in prior to a forthcoming event such as a debate contest or theatrical production.

The camp-seminars also feature sectional training. Roughly seventy-five percent of the ESS conduct such seminars before the school year begins in April, during the August summer vacation break, or early in the Fall. Held in a resort-hotel, a University-owned retreat, or other out-of-town facility, the camp-seminars run an average of seven days with a small number lasting for as many as fifteen days. Besides a heavy dosage of instruction, fun activities are provided for relaxation purposes. Occasionally, guest lecturers or English teachers will help out.

In addition, instruction can be had in workshops and conferences sponsored by the leagues and associations and by the Japan English Forensic Association (JEFA), an organization similar to the American Forensic Association. JEFA assists interested ESS in other ways—providing speakers, publications, debate materials, book fairs, and training for judges. It cooperates with the Speech Communication Association in arranging the Japan-American debate tours and also sponsors tournaments.

Except for JEFA's help and that of the leagues and associations, as noted previously, virtually all of the instruction is by students, normally the senior ESS members. They teach the beginners how to speak English, coach those entering the contests, and direct the plays.

## Leagues and Associations

Almost every region has a league, union, federation, association or similar organization for the local ESS to join. About thirty of these exist. Some are exclusively debate leagues. One is an oratorical contest association. Others conduct a variety of contests and workshops for their ESS members. The twelve-year-old Kanto Universities English League allegedly is the largest with roughly fifty Tokyo and Yokohama ESS in membership and it schedules numerous events, some fairly large. Its 1981 Freshmen Discussion contest, for example, attracted 1,500 discussants and over 1,500 observers, making it Japan's largest speech contest to that time. The typical league, however, has about ten ESS as members and attracts a more modest number of participants. But this is partially the result of a limitation placed on the number of contest entries from any one ESS. Usually only one debate or discussion team per society can enter such tournaments and only a handful can enroll in the individual events.

## Summary

University-level English language speaking activities flourish in Japan. Administered by student organizations, primarily the English Speaking Societies, the activities are offered to assist students to learn to speak better English, a skill desired by the students but not stressed in English classes.

The typical society provides its members with varied speaking experiences in contests, tournaments and theatrical productions besides extensive language training. The instruction and coaching for the most part come from the senior students, not from teachers, although teachers of English or subject-matter experts occasionally lecture or help by judging.

The public speaking contest ranks first in popularity with debate a distant second followed closely by discussion, interpretative reading, and drama contests. Five-person debate far surpasses in interest the two-person style Americans prefer. But the two-person style finds favor with those students wanting to think logically and to speak better English.

In addition to language problems, a host of other difficulties prevent all but the highest motivated to achieve the debating proficiency level of average Americans. The *quantity* of training is not a limitation, however, as much is available from the ESS, regional associations, and JEFA. The *quality* is another matter, as it is not on a par with American instruction. Nonetheless, the level of competition is increasing not only in debate but in the other activities as well as the Japanese slowly become more sophisticated in their knowledge of forensic procedures.

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## THUNDER EVERYWHERE: THE DEVELOPING RHETORIC OF JERRY FALWELL

A. L. Zimmerman

Although Jerry Falwell exhibits a stance of single-issue legislation, and a persistent emphasis on fundamentalism, he is, in reality, a man of many complexities and many rhetorical strategies. In this paper I will examine the three main types of rhetoric Falwell currently utilizes: congregational, political, and functional. Through their identification, common elements will emerge, especially those of contradiction and ambiguity. The effects of these rhetorical styles will be discussed, and suggestions for further research recommended.

Jerry Falwell began his Lynchburg, Virginia church in 1956 with thirty-five members. A week later, he initiated a radio program and six months later he entered the television arena. Today, Falwell claims a seventeen thousand person membership in the Thomas Road Baptist Church.<sup>1</sup>

It should be noted that I have arbitrarily labeled the three rhetorical strategies evident in Falwell's communication. I do not claim that they are exclusive, only that it appears that these three typological categories encompass the largest part of his rhetoric. I have defined *congregational* as any of his rhetoric, spoken or written, that appeals to a particular fundamentalist audience. This rhetoric usually reinforces theological convictions. *Political* rhetoric is used when Falwell refers to social issues. These issues are normally redefined as "moral" issues, and Falwell's primary audience is ecumenical by nature. The *functional* rhetoric is used intermittently, and explains, clarifies, or justifies the congregational and political. It should also be kept in mind that Falwell's boundaries between audiences and types of rhetoric are often obscure and overlapping.

As early as March, 1978, journalists perceived a disturbing paradox in Falwell's message. Edward Berckman noted, "at the same time it both utilizes and condemns elements of the secular culture around it."<sup>2</sup> Berckman continued:

The appeal of "The Old-Time Gospel Hour," then, lies in its ability to maintain a precarious balance: to communicate the sense of a threatened minority holding on to the true faith in a collapsing world while, at the same time, vigorously presenting an image of success—a thriving, expanding institution rising with skill in a society's most influential medium.<sup>3</sup>

Perhaps this exposes a fundamental philosophical paradox, but it does not

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<sup>1</sup> Jeffrey K. Hadden and Charles E. Swann, *Prime Time Preachers* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1981), p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Edward Berckman, "The Old-Time Gospel Hour and Fundamentalist Paradox," *The Christian Century*, 95 (March 1978), 334.

<sup>3</sup> Berckman, 337.

SPEAKER AND GAVEL, Vol. 19, Nos. 1-2 (1981-82), 22-28.

delineate the differing rhetorics. One observation Berckman made, however, is closer to our present purposes. After listening to both televised and non-televised sermons, Berckman concluded that when Falwell spoke only to his congregation, the "sense of imminent doom" came principally from "liberal threats to society and the church." When the same message was televised, said Berckman, "Falwell does not ignore these threats, but his references to them are more sporadic."<sup>4</sup> Clearly Falwell perceived different audiences, but his attempt at retaining their independence became progressively less successful.

The semantics of politics have been of continued use to Falwell. Referring to his schools he stated, "We take our students from kindergarten through college so we can shape them. We find that when they grow up that way, they don't revolt." Three sentences later he says that the Reverend Sun Myung Moon "... is like the plague: he exploits boys and girls."<sup>5</sup> Falwell "shapes," another "exploits." Wordswapping is not uncommon among politicians, but when asked about politics, he responds by saying, "I stay totally on spiritual issues. I don't talk politics."<sup>6</sup> Now it tends to become confusing, especially when he is asked if he feels he has political influence over his followers. To avoid muddying the waters, one would expect the answer to be "no." Instead, Falwell answers "yes . . . but I feel that my highest calling is spiritual, and if I'm too political, it will dilute my effectiveness."<sup>7</sup>

Jerry Falwell was not sufficiently knowledgeable about, or ready for, a political audience. His concepts and his rhetoric were confusing and contradicting. His views needed to be clarified and tested if he were going to move into the political arena. It is no surprise, then, that in 1979 he announced his emergence into politics by staging a series of patriotic rallies. These rallies would offer him a no-man's land somewhere between the spiritual and the secular.

Lawrence Barrett traveled with Falwell the first week of his campaign. Barrett reported, "Jerry Falwell's explanation of his move to politics seems simple: God wanted me to look beyond Lynchburg. We cannot be isolationists."<sup>8</sup> From someone who didn't talk politics, Falwell was now proclaiming, "If there is one person in this room not registered . . . repent of it. It's a sin . . . The order of the day must be: Get them saved, baptized, and registered."<sup>9</sup>

From this point on, there was no doubt that Falwell was politically involved. In mid-1979, Moral Majority, Inc. was born at the suggestion of Paul Weyrich and Howard Phillips. The actual formation of Moral Majority is beyond the scope of this article. It is sufficient here to say that its purpose, as Falwell defined it, was to "... educate Americans everywhere to the tragic decline in our nation's morals and to provide leadership in establishing an effective coalition of morally active citizens."<sup>10</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Berckman, 336.

<sup>5</sup> Mary Murphy, "The Next Billy Graham," *Esquire*, 90 (Oct. 1978), 29.

<sup>6</sup> Murphy, 32.

<sup>7</sup> Murphy, 32.

<sup>8</sup> Anonymous, "Politicizing the Word," *Time*, 114 (October 1979), 62.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 68.

<sup>10</sup> Maxine Negri, "Humanism Under Fire," *Humanist*, 4 (March/April 1981), 6.

Despite his political involvements, Falwell's congregational rhetoric seems to have undergone little change. He stands on the inerrancy of the Word of God, and the ever-present need of world salvation. In his book, *Listen, America*, he unshakingly states, "the only difference with the decade of the seventies was that it produced new terminology for human sin."<sup>11</sup> It is in redefining this sin for the American public that Falwell alters and mixes his congregational and political rhetoric.

Falwell quotes Marvin Stone as commenting, "... exhausted from our exertions of the sixties, all we ask for is relief . . . . The impetus to rethink—reform—transform has long since slid into the ennui."<sup>12</sup> Perhaps it is no mere chance that journalists perceived Falwell and the Moral Majority as accepting the role of change agent. Judy Haiven noted,

The Moral Majority intends to transform its thoughts and words into deeds. Among these are the nation's return to military and political pre-eminence in the world, the outlawing of abortion, putting prayer back into schools, suppressing homosexuals and clamping down on pornography . . . . Indeed, Falwell's crusade has polarized Americans in one of the fiercest debates in recent history.<sup>13</sup>

Unquestionably, Moral Majority was a move from the congregational to the political. Father Patrick Farrell warned, "when you get into politics, you get into compromise. And politics has to do with the art of compromise."<sup>14</sup> But Falwell's congregational rhetoric allowed no room for compromise, and this new arena highlighted his steadfastness as inconsistency, and laid bare his political naivete. On October 1, 1980, Falwell told broadcasters that "his movement is not geared to any candidates at the state or national level."<sup>15</sup> The evidence seemed to contradict that statement.

Brata and Duncan observed, "Moral Majority . . . materially contributed to the defeat of more than a dozen liberal and ideologically 'suspicious' congressmen and senators in the last election."<sup>16</sup> A year earlier, *U.S. News and World Report* stated that Falwell's Moral Majority and the Christian Voice were "trying to raise hundreds of thousands of dollars for conservative candidates."<sup>17</sup> The closer the 1980 election, the more boastful the right-wingers became. James Adams of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* reported that "Christians campaigning for Ronald Reagan say they are convinced the fundamentalist Christian vote is virtually locked up for the Republican presidential ticket."<sup>18</sup> In September, *Christianity Today* printed a review of the Religious Roundtable meeting, and concluded that, "speaker after speaker railed

<sup>11</sup> Jerry Falwell, *Listen, America!* (New York: Doubleday, 1980), p. 62.

<sup>12</sup> Falwell, p. 58.

<sup>13</sup> Judy Haiven, "Putting America on the Glory Road," *Macleans*, 94, (March 1981), 24.

<sup>14</sup> Lynn Watkins, "Mississippi Churchmen Spurn Religious Lobbies," *Clarion Ledger*, 22 October 1980, 123:A10-11.

<sup>15</sup> Ed Briggs, "Reagan Held Cooling on Morality Groups," *Times-Dispatch*, 1 October 1980, 111:C5-6.

<sup>16</sup> Sasthi Brata and Andrew Duncan, "Reverend Jerry Falwell," *Penthouse*, (March 1981), 59.

<sup>17</sup> Anonymous, "Old-Time Religion On the Offensive," *U.S. News and World Report*, 88 (April 1980), 40.

<sup>18</sup> James Adams, "Fundamentalists Throng to Reagan Camp," *Post-Dispatch*, 24 August 1980, 71:C9.

against the policies and performance of the Carter administration and when it was over it was plain that Reagan had the hearts if not the formal endorsement of the new religious right."<sup>19</sup>

It is important to note, however, that not all contradictions occurred between Falwell and the press. As his political involvement increased, a new need developed. I have called it functional rhetoric because of its purpose. It was to explain, justify and ultimately mitigate the blatant discrepancies in Falwell's rhetoric. As an example, we will look at five instances and the inconsistency of their content.

"Theology, to me, is an exact science," Falwell professes, "God is God. The Bible is the inspired, inerrant Word of God."<sup>20</sup> The statement itself can be tested for validity. Were theology an exact science, which by definition is based on unchanging principles, there would not be so many variations in its laws. One variation is in the approach to material wealth. A Mozambican priest equates Marxism and materialism, and concludes they are not Christian.<sup>21</sup> Falwell unabashedly maintains, "Material wealth is God's way of blessing people who put Him first."<sup>22</sup>

In May, 1981 Falwell suggested on the Phil Donahue show that it was the churches that should feed the poor. But as Fitzgerald pointed out, "the line along which the church should separate itself from the state was thus not at all clear; nor was the place where one man's religion should not interfere with another's."<sup>23</sup> Apparently this line was not clear to Falwell either, and in September, 1981 he tried to differentiate more clearly:

We could never bring the issue of the poor into Moral Majority because the argument would be, Who is going to decide what we teach those people?  
... We just have to stay away from helping the poor.<sup>24</sup>

Unfortunately, such a statement did little to bridge the widening gap of doubts surrounding Falwell. Questions were not restricted to the "secular press," but were increasing among clergymen of all denominations.

His political naïvete could be demonstrated in many ways. A practical example is his widely-known denunciation of humanism, which he blames for all the world's evils. A basic tenet of humanism is the commitment to a "pluralistic" society in which individuals can have differing opinions.<sup>25</sup> Thus, it would seem that Jerry Falwell opposes such a philosophy. However, when he was asked why there was such diversity within Moral Majority, he easily replied, "It will not be a national movement unless there is pluralism in the leadership."<sup>26</sup> One might perceive a double standard emerging within the evolving functional rhetoric of Jerry Falwell. If it is not properly called a

<sup>19</sup> Bruce Buursma, "Evangelicals Give Reagan a Non-Partisan Stump," *Christianity Today*, 24 (Sept. 1980), 50.

<sup>20</sup> Brata and Duncan, 150.

<sup>21</sup> Anonymous, "Christian Clergy Raises Voice in World," *U.S. News and World Report*, 88 (February 1980), 84.

<sup>22</sup> Woodward and Fineman, "A \$1 Million Habit," *Newsweek*, 96 (Sept. 1980), 35.

<sup>23</sup> Frances Fitzgerald, "Reporter at Large," *New Yorker*, 57 (May 1981), 128.

<sup>24</sup> Anonymous, "An Interview with the Lone Ranger of Fundamentalism," *Christianity Today*, 26 (Sept. 1981), 27.

<sup>25</sup> Negri, 5.

<sup>26</sup> Anonymous, "An Interview with the Lone Ranger of Fundamentalism," p. 23.

double standard, it can at least be modestly designated as "selective morality" when Falwell explains his organization's stand on violence and tobacco. "We are very careful about the violence thing. We do fudge there, because I happen to think that violence is detrimental, but there are some in our group who do not." When asked if alcohol and tobacco are listed as drugs, Falwell continued, "Yes, we do with alcohol, but not tobacco. We have lots of Moral Majority members who smoke."<sup>27</sup>

After reviewing just these five instances, one might ask if ambiguity is something to be desired. Falwell clearly denounces it, and even rejects the Equal Rights Amendment because, "the language is very ambiguous."<sup>28</sup> Imprecise terms and shifting alignments are scattered throughout Falwell's rhetoric. Carl Henry, journalist reporter for *Christianity Today* observed,

Falwell at times wears enough hats to confound his critics over which role he speaks in on issues . . . He considers it virtuous to speak with a simplicity that assures wide news media exposure.<sup>29</sup>

Perhaps this last term offers us a key to understanding the phenomenon of Jerry Falwell. By his move to the political arena, Falwell needed to integrate a political, and eventually, a functional rhetoric into his congregational monologues. He found new audiences that were an ". . . entirely different public from what he was used to . . . this new audience would not go away when he talked to his old audience in the old tone of voice."<sup>30</sup> To accommodate his exposure, he tried to moderate his language as the campaign progressed. Indeed, the members of the press felt, "Falwell had moderated his approach to politics."<sup>31</sup>

The theme of his campaign, however, had not significantly altered. Terminology was softened and he had become more "liberal" in his approach, but the answers he proposed were still a series of overly simplistic solutions, for example: "Reagan and politics. I think the problem is simply this,"<sup>32</sup> or "Christians marched to claim Washington for Jesus . . . their official platform was simple: National righteousness."<sup>33</sup> Critics of the New Right are objecting to the movement's "inexorable reduction of religious and moral values into crude political options."<sup>34</sup>

Despite, or perhaps because of, his simplistic answers, Falwell has gained tremendous popularity in the last two years. Undoubtedly his extensive use of media has strengthened his exposure. But the obvious question still remains: Why do people follow and support him? There are many theories, but all seem to have a common element. The United States is in a state of confusion and uncertainty. Charles Park explains, ". . . at the base of our

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 26-7.

<sup>28</sup> Brata and Duncan, 150.

<sup>29</sup> Carl Henry, "The Ricochet of Silver Bullets," *Christianity Today*, 26 (Sept. 1981), 30-31.

<sup>30</sup> Fitzgerald, 135.

<sup>31</sup> Fitzgerald, 53.

<sup>32</sup> Brata and Duncan, 152.

<sup>33</sup> Editorial, "Onward Christian Soldiers," *Christianity Today*, 24 (May 1980), 12.

<sup>34</sup> Alan Mayer, J. Lindsay, H. Fineman, S. McGuire, J. Kirsch, and M. Reese, "A Tide of Born-Again Politics," *Newsweek*, 96 (Sept. 1980), 36.

developing controversy are the uncertainty, fear, and frustration that accompany a rapidly changing society."<sup>35</sup> At the same time, the present and future seem uncertain, the past is often remembered as a more secure environment. James Wall posits, "It is this longing for the certainties of the past that has created a receptive audience for the New Right."<sup>36</sup> To capture such tension is to retain a form of power. Frances Fitzgerald asserts that Falwell does indeed secure his authority "by maintaining the tension between his congregation and the society at large."<sup>37</sup>

To maintain tension, you need to identify a force that is against you and your people. For Falwell, the specific platform shifts from textbooks to city taxes, but the all-pervasive enemy is identified as "humanism." Jeffrey Hadden and Charles Swann succinctly identified the purpose of this enemy:

All social movements need enemies, and the fighting fundamentalists recognize this. Jerry Falwell said in a speech at the National Affairs Briefing, "A man from whom I took great inspiration used to say, 'Fellows, if you're going to be successful, keep a fight going all the time' . . . The New Christian Right found a good enemy when it latched onto secular humanism."<sup>38</sup>

By identifying the enemy which has caused their uncertainty, Jerry Falwell has become a representative and a symbol to many fundamentalists. "What you see is the community he heads, the kind of people he represents, not just himself. It's an epitome . . ." <sup>39</sup> Nimmo explains the importance of symbols: "As significant symbols of political talk, the words, pictures, and acts of political communicators are tipoffs to people that they can expect fellow citizens to respond to symbols in certain anticipated ways."<sup>40</sup> Falwell not only is a symbol, but uses symbols to induce the roles he expects people to play.

As this symbol of "back to basics" fundamentalism moves further into the political arena, it will be advantageous for us to continue to examine his rhetoric and its effects. Talcott Parsons once observed,

Neither individuals nor societies can undergo major structural changes without the likelihood of producing a considerable element of "irrational behavior" . . . We can expect irrational rhetoric in the foreseeable future.<sup>41</sup>

The term "irrational" may be too prematurely passionate for me. I will agree, however, that we will see a different kind of rhetoric coming from the clergy. Whatever we may choose to call it, congregational and political rhetoric, by their very nature, demand a moderating force, a "functional" rhetoric. Clergymen are not taught the modes and uses of this type of communication, and hence, during this trial and error period, I believe we will see an evolving rhetoric that will attempt to adapt itself to the needs of the

<sup>35</sup> Charles Park, "Preachers, Politics, and Public Education: A Review of Right-Wing Pressures Against Public Schooling in America," *Phi Delta Kappan*, 61 (May 1980), 612.

<sup>36</sup> James Wall, "A Changing Political Climate," *The Christian Century*, 97 (Sept. 1981), 867.

<sup>37</sup> Fitzgerald, 110.

<sup>38</sup> Hadden and Swann, p. 86.

<sup>39</sup> Joseph Sobran, "Good News," *National Review*, 32 (June 1980), 793.

<sup>40</sup> Dan Nimmo, *Political Communication and Public Opinion in America* (Santa Monica, California: Goodyear Publishing Co., 1978), p. 69.

<sup>41</sup> Charles Park, 608.



religious right. This period of testing has already begun, and is often manifested by inconsistencies and ambiguities.

As rhetoricians, we need to analyze further this developing rhetoric through its content and contextual usage. It has taken a relatively short time for Falwell to "moderate" his rhetoric toward a more unified structure and amicable compromise. To understand the effects of religious conviction in the realm of politics, we must also understand the "how." How is it merging? Are the lines between congregational, political, and functional rhetoric becoming clearly distinguished, or are they melding into a single rhetoric? It is clear that we cannot ignore the Falwell phenomenon, and whatever our political or religious views, it is certain that with increased instability in the world, there will be other Jerry Falwells. We need to approach them rationally, and to do this, we must have a broadened understanding of their basic rhetoric.

## REPRESENTATIVE AMERICAN SPEECHES, REVISITED

Waldo Braden

James Reston of the *New York Times* recently observed that "one of the clichés of our time is that masters of the written and spoken word have vanished from the political world . . . Eloquence is suspect in this complicated and skeptical age, and good speakers are usually losers." Much in the same mood, Theodore Sorenson, adviser and speech writer for President John F. Kennedy, lamented that "relatively few public addresses of our time will be included in future editions of 'The World's Greatest Orations.'" During my ten year editorship of *Representative American Speeches*,<sup>2</sup> I found little to refute these statements. Out of the over 2,000 speeches that I considered during the decade (190 were published) I found not many that could be called eloquent in the traditional sense of the word. None of them had the lasting quality found in Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" or John F. Kennedy's 1961 Inaugural. But on rare occasions there were exceptions. As has always been the case, speakers today are likely to strive for rhetorical excellence under three conditions.

First, *speakers excel when their personal pride is at stake*. To the contrary, many political aspirants today are in such a hurry for demonstrable poll results that they settle for rapidly-turned-out-press-copy-speeches, sounding much alike and usually sterile in content, except for a few carefully planted pronouncements or slogans intended as tidbits for reporters or for later abstracting as press releases or radio-television spots.

I thought that Representative Barbara Jordan was eloquent in her ten-minute-keynote address, delivered to the 1976 Democratic Convention. The Texan, under the pressure of being a Black, a woman, and the spokeswoman for the party faithfuls, spoke with directness and force, stirring weary delegates to stand and cheer.<sup>3</sup> One of the most eloquent speeches I published was a little Bicentennial sermon entitled "The Tall Ships," delivered June 27, 1976, at Trinity Church in Newport, Rhode Island. Francis B. Sayre, Jr., the dean of the Washington (D.C.) Cathedral, touched his listeners through apt analogies between the square-riggers visiting the port, and the lives of the listeners.<sup>4</sup> I discovered consistently good the speaking of Theodore M. Hesburgh of Notre Dame, William J. McGill of Columbia, and René Dubos, the bacteriologist. These learned men were vivid and impressive. They obviously respected their listeners enough to honor them with carefully prepared remarks.

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<sup>1</sup> *New York Times*, December 13, 1978; August 19, 1979.

<sup>2</sup> *Representative American Speeches* has been published annually by the H. W. Wilson Co. since 1938 under the editorships of A. Craig Baird (1938-1959), Lester Thonssen (1960-1970), Waldo W. Braden (1971-1980) and Owen Peterson (1981- ).

<sup>3</sup> *R.A.S.*, 1976-77, pp. 11-17.

<sup>4</sup> *R.A.S.*, 1976-77, pp. 181-84.

SPEAKER AND GAVEL, Vol. 19, Nos. 1-2 (1981-82), 29-30.

Second, *speakers are likely to respond to important and demanding events when they face determined opponents.* U.S. Senators and Representatives and government officials devote much of their speaking to routine or mundane subjects—tariffs, budgets, and the daily activities of government. In this context they are often too harried or lackadaisical to polish what they say. But the Watergate investigation, the debate over the Panama Canal, the Camp David Accords, and the return of Hubert Humphrey to the Senate after a long illness motivated some of the memorable oratorical efforts. Likewise representing their causes well were speakers for minority rights. Vernon Jordan of the Urban League is probably the most polished black speaker today. Notable among women speakers are Shirley Chisholm, Elizabeth Holtzman, and Eleanor Holmes Norton.

Third, *speakers produce their better efforts when they face demanding and alert listeners.* They want to do well before the National Press Club in Washington, business and professional conferences, and college and university assemblies. These are the moments when they are likely to face discerning listeners who will follow carefully, ask probing questions, and sometimes give stinging replies. At such times the principles of feedback are clearly at work.

I thought that I saw the listeners' influence upon Senator George McGovern when he spoke at the Oxford Union,<sup>5</sup> upon J. William Fulbright when he appeared before the National Press Club,<sup>6</sup> upon Daniel P. Moynihan when he addressed the Council of the United Nations,<sup>7</sup> upon Daniel J. Boorstin when he conversed with a select audience at the Library of Congress,<sup>8</sup> and upon René Dubos when he gave the Phi Beta Kappa oration at Harvard.<sup>9</sup> Likewise political figures sometimes far exceed their usual flatness when they appear on college and university forums. At such times, Senators Frank Church of Idaho, Mark Hatfield of Oregon, and Charles Mathias of Maryland are most effective. Could it be that mediocre speaking results from "the sorry nature of the audience"? Probably audiences get what they deserve.

<sup>5</sup> January 21, 1973. R.S.A., 1972-73, pp. 21-38.

<sup>6</sup> December 18, 1974. R.A.S. 1974-75, pp. 109-116.

<sup>7</sup> R.A.S., 1977-78, pp. 36-42.

<sup>8</sup> November 9, 1976, R.A.S., 1976-77, pp. 138-148.

<sup>9</sup> June 6, 1978. R.A.S., 1978-79, pp. 11-22.

## THE PONDEROSA PRESIDENCY: REAGAN'S WESTERN MELODRAMATIC FORM

Barry Alan Morris

Nothing about Ronald Reagan has been more highly touted or slightly scrutinized than "his celebrated skills as a political communicator and educator."<sup>1</sup> Editorialists imbue in him "an oratorical directness and an aura of sincerity,"<sup>2</sup> while even his detractors begrudgingly deem him a "super salesman."<sup>3</sup> But attempts by rhetorical critics to account for his success have been sparse and generally uncreative.

In what does the "Great Communicator's" greatness lie? Hedrick Smith claims that he is "blunt and simple,"<sup>4</sup> and that his "folksy examples and informality"<sup>5</sup> account for his rhetorical success. Many other critics point as well to Reagan's well-developed speaking style.<sup>6</sup> But style is often what we label what we don't know how to label. And such, one may suspect, is the case with many of the evaluations cited. In fact, a survey of Reagan's major Presidential addresses finds them remarkably unremarkable.

For analytical purposes three randomly selected ten sentence sections were extracted from Reagan's Inaugural address, his State of the Union message (1981), and his July 27 tax cut message.<sup>7</sup> Is he blunt? Bluntness implies a certain willingness to speak to a problem directly, foregoing caution. Arnold states that "most people use a good many modifiers and qualifying clauses in their talk. Extensively used, these conventions make talk seem cautious."<sup>8</sup> Of the ninety sentence sample, only eighteen had neither modification nor qualification; and some of those eighteen were transitional modifiers themselves.<sup>9</sup>

Such extensive modification stifles not only directness, but clarity. This is not to say that Reagan's style is not clear, merely that clarity is not conspicuous in Reagan's speeches, either by its presence or its absence. The average sentence length to which Americans are accustomed, according to Arnold,<sup>10</sup> is fifteen to seventeen words. Reagan's speech samples fall, with only three exceptions, within or below that range on the average, implying that his

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<sup>1</sup> Hedrick Smith, "Blunt and Simple," *New York Times*, Feb. 6, 1981, A-12.

<sup>2</sup> Smith, A-12.

<sup>3</sup> "Response by Democrats to President," *New York Times*, July 28, 1981, B-7.

<sup>4</sup> Smith, A-12.

<sup>5</sup> Smith, A-12.

<sup>6</sup> Among them are Martin Kondracke, John Sayles, and Robert Tucker, who did analyses of Reagan's speaking for *New Republic* after the 1980 convention.

<sup>7</sup> Transcripts as published in the *New York Times*.

<sup>8</sup> Carroll C. Arnold, *Criticism of Oral Rhetoric* (Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill, 1974), p. 146.

<sup>9</sup> Examples include such statements as "Now let us turn to the business at hand."

<sup>10</sup> Arnold, p. 178.

SPEAKER AND GAVEL, Vol. 19, Nos. 1-2 (1981-82), 31-37.

sentences are relatively simple and easy to understand. But of the ninety sentences examined thirty-four were over twenty words in length and seven of those were over thirty. Sentence length, in itself, is not always an accurate measure of clarity, but the figures presented should at least convince us that the President's language is in no way remarkable for its stark simplicity.

Doubtful also is the contention that the President's success stems from his use of "folksy examples."<sup>11</sup> He uses anecdotes, visual aids, and demonstration as well as any recent President, but no better than any of the thousands of hucksters on American streets and television screens to whom he must inevitably be compared. Reagan's language, his examples, his delivery—all of these are important, but none is the key. The key to the generally positive public response to Ronald Reagan's rhetoric is its overall form, its persona. He has mastered what I will call the "Western Melodramatic Form." Using it, Reagan has managed to build an image of himself and his administration that is, at once, attractive and obscure—attractive because it is so value-oriented and basic to our shared experience, obscure because it is so deeply ingrained in our common experiences that we daily take it for granted.

Reagan's western form is perlocutionary; it operates in the general sense in much the same way that Stelzner's "quest" operated in the specific sense for Richard Nixon.<sup>12</sup> According to Stelzner, "a leader speaks and orders a reality, a form . . ." <sup>13</sup> If that reality is one with which the audience is familiar, if it interacts with the "subjective experiences of his listeners,"<sup>14</sup> then the speaker has a natural rhetorical advantage going in. Arnold claims that "listeners start with some idea and feelings about whatever is discussed."<sup>15</sup> The speaker who is able to predict those ideas and feelings, or better yet, to manufacture them, enhances his probability of rhetorical success. Such is precisely what Ronald Reagan attempts to do. He carefully and consciously builds an image consistent with the traditional western melodramatic form. Audiences respond positively to that form, so the only demand placed on the anchored message is that it be consistent.

While Reagan's melodramatic form is analogous to Nixon's quest, the two are not exactly alike. They are alike in that both depend on a central hero who in turn depends on "helpers who with their knowledge and/or magical powers assist the hero and but for whom he would never succeed."<sup>16</sup> But they differ in that the quest is a "long journey to find the Object, because its whereabouts are not originally known,"<sup>17</sup> while the object of the western form is the rescue, then maintenance of a familiar status quo. The remainder of this essay will be committed to describing the western melodramatic form, discussing Reagan's use of it, and exploring its manifestations in his rhetoric.

<sup>11</sup> Smith, A-12.

<sup>12</sup> Herman Stelzner, "The Quest Story and Richard Nixon's November 3, 1969 Address," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 57 (1971), 163-72.

<sup>13</sup> Stelzner, 163.

<sup>14</sup> Stelzner, 164.

<sup>15</sup> Arnold, p. 119.

<sup>16</sup> Stelzner, 164.

<sup>17</sup> Stelzner, 164.

## The Western Melodramatic Form

"Form," says Kenneth Burke, "is the creation of an appetite in the mind of the auditor, and the adequate satisfying of that appetite."<sup>18</sup> In the literary sense, where the appetite in question must be directed toward a specific body of work, creation may be the proper term. But in the context of political involvement the auditor's appetite is directed toward a consistent concept and must only be directed, not created. Once directed (or defined) that appetite is responsive to meaning interpretation. Meaning supplies the assurance and security that satisfy the appetite.

Another way to picture form is as the structure and interrelation of themes. Themes are not created; they are drawn from common experience as extrapolations of value and belief. Imposing structure on the theme (be it a dramatic structure like tragedy or such formal structures as logic or musical notation) provides the means of its exposition. In isolation the theme-structure relationship has no meaning. Meaning is imposed by the introduction of a theme-structure into a set of previously accepted theme-structures that have been integrated into the individual's experience, and from which meaning patterns have previously been established. If a theme-structure fits a meaning pattern it is integrated; if not, it is either rejected or, if possible, altered. As themes organize around common elements of structure an overall sense of meaning, against which the individual themes are evaluated, emerges. That sense of meaning is form.

Among those themes are various concepts of behavior and personal attributes, interpretable both positively and negatively by the individual as a member of society. The perceived compilation of an individual's behaviors and attributes constitutes image. Nimmo defines image as "the meaning one has for others, a subtle integration of the various attributes that a person projects and that people perceive in light of their beliefs, values, and expectations."<sup>19</sup> Image is important to form because it places structural restrictions on the actor. The hero's image in tragedy, for instance, is subject to some formal restrictions. Traits or actions inconsistent with that image (such as Hamlet chucking the entire escapade and running off with Ophelia to open a bakery) either cause the action to dysfunction or alter the structure.

The western form refers to a set of traditional themes played through the structure of melodrama. The themes of the western form are fundamental. Casebier states that "the western has one of the strongest connections with the mythic. The oppositions that make up the core of the western are grounded in archetypes concerning man's place in nature."<sup>20</sup> Casebier also reinforces the relationship between the supporting assumptions and the structure. As a theme is tested, a story develops within the framework imposed by the structure. As the story develops, the myth develops as well.

<sup>18</sup> Kenneth Burke, "Psychology and Form," in Morton D. Zabel, ed., *Literary Opinion in America* (New York: Harper, 1937), II, p. 668.

<sup>19</sup> Dan Nimmo, *Political Communication and Public Opinion in America* (Santa Monica, CA: Goodyear Publishing Co., 1978) p. 43.

<sup>20</sup> Alan Casebier, *Film Appreciation* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), p. 159.

"The two things arise together," says Casebier, "because our very perception of the events of the story is accomplished via mythic categories."<sup>21</sup>

Among the dominant themes of the western form are: 1. the Virtue of Martial Superiority, 2. the Value of Rugged Individualism, 3. the Dominance of Man Over Nature, and 4. Respect for Traditional Roles. It is essentially human and essentially antitechnical. That, according to McLuhan, is one of its most attractive features. "To people overwhelmed by industrial scale," he says, "the west restores the image of the human dimension."<sup>22</sup>

Each of the four themes listed has been interpreted by and integrated into our common comprehension of the western form. It is a "stylized world of timeless properties,"<sup>23</sup> distinctly American, traditional, and perfectly suited to "a population bedrugged by mechanical routine and befuddled by complex economic and domestic changes."<sup>24</sup> Ronald Reagan uses the western form both to define the image of his administration and to provide a context for his rhetoric. Reagan's messages are orchestrated to be consistent with the attractive western form, as a discussion of his speeches according to the western themes set forth should illustrate.<sup>25</sup>

#### The Virtue of Martial Superiority

"If anyone fights anyone of us, he's got a fight with me!"<sup>26</sup>

That quotation is from the theme song of one of the longest running, most highly rated television series in the medium's history. As *Bonanza* fans will recall, the series followed the lives of empire-builder Ben Cartwright and his three sons, Adam, Hoss and Little Joe, on the Ponderosa, a massive tract of land in some undesignated quarter of Nevada. As one might surmise from the title of this essay, the Cartwright legend is a strongly representative example of the western melodramatic form that Ronald Reagan constantly emulates for the public. The quotation refers to what Casebier calls, "the myth of the natural appropriateness of combat."<sup>27</sup> The traditional western hero was slow to temper, but when the need arose, could duke it out with the best of them. Some western heroes (notably the Lone Ranger, who swore never to take a life), went out of their way to inflict as little damage on their adversaries as possible, while others were less skilled and more pragmatic. The hero (fighters were almost always men, one notable exception being Marlene Dietrich's brilliantly staged bar fight in *Destry Rides Again*) was an upholder of truth, justice and a woman's honor. McLuhan called Roy Rogers ("King of the Cowboys") "a combination Quaker Oats salesman

<sup>21</sup> Casebier, p. 160.

<sup>22</sup> Marshall McLuhan, *The Mechanical Bride* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1951), p. 156.

<sup>23</sup> McLuhan, p. 156.

<sup>24</sup> McLuhan, p. 157.

<sup>25</sup> While his style leads one to assume that his delivery is extemporaneous, there is evidence in the popular media that he uses state-of-the-art techniques in attitude survey and public opinion polling as tools in constructing even the most "off the cuff" segments of his messages. Given this, there is little reason to believe that Reagan's thematic trends are not also the result of intentional strategy.

<sup>26</sup> *Bonanza* theme. Warner Brothers-Seven Arts.

<sup>27</sup> Casebier, p. 159.

and Mr. District Attorney."<sup>28</sup> Michael Marsden referred to Shane, the archetypal western hero, as "... the pearl-handled-gun-toting Messiah who can save the endangered land from the forces of lawlessness."<sup>29</sup>

While Ronald Reagan has traded his pearl-handled revolvers for inlaid ivory china, his message is essentially the same: We're pleasant enough on our own terms, but if you mess with us, or pick on any of our friends, "you've got a fight with me." Speaking of peace in his inaugural address, Reagan said, "We will negotiate for it, sacrifice for it; we will not surrender for it—now or ever." He added that "we will maintain sufficient strength to prevail if need be . . ."<sup>30</sup> In isolation, there is nothing unusual about these sentiments; they are the standard message espoused by most presidents. But in light of Reagan's insistence on raising the military budget, while cutting back on virtually every other government agency, the words have additional impact. Reagan has made it known through many rhetorical acts (including the holding of naval maneuvers in waters claimed by the Libyan government when there was no other than symbolic purpose for doing so) that he considers military action a viable response to conflict. His attitude is clearly reflective of the theme of the natural appropriateness of combat, and, as long as the issue is framed according to the popular western theme, it is likely to receive a positive public response.

#### The Value of Rugged Individuality

One of the most well-established clichés of the western form is that of the loner who rides into town, defeats the desperadoes, and rides off into the sunset. From the earliest days of John Wayne and the "Three Mesquiteers" through Clint Eastwood's spaghetti westerns the iconoclast has been a staple of western drama—as long as he supported traditional values. In contrast to the opulence of the Ponderosa were the "sod busters" and "drovers" like Lucas McCain (*The Rifleman*) and Rowdy Yates (*Rawhide*)—men who had only what they needed to survive and strict taboos against going outside the traditional morality to get more. But neither social class begrudged the other as long as their gains were honestly acquired.

The power and sanctity of individual effort, "the energy and individual genius of man,"<sup>31</sup> is a recurring theme in Reagan's speeches. The closing image of his inaugural address was that of a soldier, killed in action, who had written "I will fight cheerfully and do my utmost, as if the issue of the whole struggle depended on me alone."<sup>32</sup> That image was chosen and placed to enhance the theme of individuality, as was the metamorphosis of his tax cut plan into the "peoples' tax reduction" and its subsequent hostage to the insidious forces of "The Committee."<sup>33</sup>

The sanctity of the individual is the fundamental element of Reagan's strategy, because it is, naturally, his most personal identification point. He

<sup>28</sup> McLuhan, p. 156.

<sup>29</sup> McLuhan, p. 159.

<sup>30</sup> Inaugural Address, Jan. 20, 1981.

<sup>31</sup> Inaugural.

<sup>32</sup> Inaugural.

<sup>33</sup> Tax Speech, July 27, 1981.



consistently characterizes our economic problems as a matter of "getting government off the backs of the people,"<sup>34</sup> as if the government was composed of some other intelligent life-form, and swears that he will "match the American working man or woman against anyone in the world,"<sup>35</sup> as efforts to extol the value of individual effort.

#### The Dominance of Man Over Nature

This theme can also be characterized as the legitimacy of private property—the idea that nature should be used to man's best economic advantage. The origins of this theme can be traced to the Old Testament and probably beyond, and through American folk tradition. Ben Cartwright's Ponderosa was as big a tract of land as he and his sons could claim and defend. They raised livestock, felled timber, and mined an assortment of rare metals, all in their own backyard. Another old western family, the Barkleys of Stockton, California (*The Big Valley*) also built up a considerable empire, all at the old homestead.

Reagan's attitude toward private property is well-advertised. Most of his proposals for "removing the roadblocks that have slowed our economy and reduced productivity,"<sup>36</sup> are intended to remove regulations against the amassing of property, put into place by more anti-trust conscious and environmentally concerned administrations.

The theme of man's dominance over nature, like the theme of rugged individualism, was generated, in part, by the traditional American work ethic and in part by the theme of Manifest Destiny developed during the 18th and 19th centuries. Individual Americans are labelled by Reagan, in most instances, as "workers." He eulogizes "the heroes at the factory gate,"<sup>37</sup> and speaks with horror of the "personal indignity and human tragedy of unemployment."<sup>38</sup> The reason he can make such claims and depend on such obviously emotional appeals while living in, and insisting on, such lavish surroundings, is that his lifestyle is consistent with the image he portrays. Like Ben Cartwright, he can preach individual effort, because he is perceived as a model of the philosophy he espouses.<sup>39</sup>

#### Respect for Traditional Roles

The last of the major themes encompasses, in part, each of the others. It is more than just a reinforcement of stereotypes or a resounding faith in "the Code of the West;" it is a philosophical willingness to look backward,

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<sup>34</sup> State of the Union Address, Feb. 5, 1981.

<sup>35</sup> Tax Speech.

<sup>36</sup> Inaugural.

<sup>37</sup> State of the Union.

<sup>38</sup> State of the Union.

<sup>39</sup> This perception can change radically with just a little bit of contrary evidence, such as a continued rise in unemployment. Reagan must be seen to deserve his rewards instead of just gaining them by virtue of his position; if not, the support he gets on the basis of this claim is likely to slacken. Especially dangerous to this image is the giving of gifts to the President's family (such as Nancy Reagan's wardrobe), since such gifts will likely be viewed by the public after a time as gratuities and not the result of any special effort.

instead of forward, for solutions. Western melodramas (*True Grit* and *The Over the Hill Gang*, for instance) often present the theme of a rueful realization that the times are changing. The general enemy of such change is usually the encroachment of technology. Attendant to such encroachment is the inevitable complication of pastoral existence that "progress" always brings. The backward glance, therefore, often implicitly incorporates a simplification of both problem and solution.

Examination of the goals of Reagan's addresses reveals that his commonly referred to "New Beginning" depends heavily on such past-historical orientations as promises to "renew the American spirit," to "make America strong again,"<sup>40</sup> to re-ignite an "era of national renewal," and claims that we will "again be the exemplar of freedom."<sup>41</sup> Such past-orientations serve two important rhetorical functions. They provide attractive, recognizable goals, within the context of the western melodramatic form, but they also reinforce a susceptible audience's willingness to look backward, and thus to strengthen the rhetorical strength of the form. The relationship is cyclical—and effective. As suggested earlier, McLuhan proposes that the public is willing to look to the comforts of the past. "As the frontier recedes historically, it looms larger and larger imaginatively."<sup>42</sup>

Reagan uses the attractiveness and rhetorical possibilities of the western melodramatic form to great personal effect. The question, though, is: Would the general public be as responsive to such appeals if it recognized the strategies underlying them? This is not to say that there is anything inherently negative about such appeals, it is simply to say that questions of effect in political communication deserve more honest speculation.

It is undeniable that Reagan's rhetorical prowess has served his economic strategies well, and probable that they will play no small part when his attention turns to other matters of foreign and domestic policy. The point is that such prowess, whether natural or artificial, deserves adequate analysis, not the series of ingenuous self-serving platitudes that have passed, in the popular media, for criticism.

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<sup>40</sup> Tax Speech.

<sup>41</sup> Inaugural.

<sup>42</sup> McLuhan, p. 157.

## THE EDITOR'S LAST WORD

It is traditional for journal readers to indulge a new editor for at least one statement about matters of mutual concern. Both have high hopes for the term of his editorship. Readers are free to read, react to what they have read, and to respond in letters of outrage, applause, or puzzlement—but they do any or all of these things only if they wish to. Editors have the fixed responsibility of formulating and following an editorial policy to guide the journal, but it is an operative one only so long as circumstances, including reader response, do not require its modification.

As this editor sees it, the policy of *Speaker and Gavel* is to serve the needs of this national honorary forensic society, as they are perceived by its national officers, chapter sponsors and members, and within the context of its ideals and purposes. This means, first of all, carrying in its pages *survey articles on major society programs* (but leaving details and archival matters to *The Newsletter*, a "house organ" more frequent in issue and more flexible in format). Many of the articles of this type will be commissioned, such as the observations of the National Conference written for this issue by Parson, Pratt and Weiss. This was also true for the article written by Klopf, an expert witness for providing an orientation to the speech experiences of our visiting team from Japan.

Secondly, our editorial policy obligates us to provide descriptive and analytical *articles appraising public argument, its theory, practice, and criticism*. It is our preference that they deal with the American scene, and the contemporary period (i.e., post 1960), and that they be in simple and compact rather than prolix style. We welcome long-established scholars, such as Waldo Braden in this issue, as well as Zimmerman and Morris, doctoral candidates who are at the near end of the scholarly trail.

Implementing this twin-track editorial policy will, we trust, demonstrate to our readers the importance not only of becoming ethical and effective *producers* of public argument but also informed and critical *consumers*. In a democracy, after all, not everyone may choose to speak, but everyone should feel obliged to listen.

In the distant past your present editor edited *Communication Monographs* for the Speech Communication Association. Often he was challenged with "why don't you ever publish an article about ——?" The very simple answer was "I can't publish manuscripts that aren't submitted." What this really means is that journal editing cannot be done from a dry well. It needs one that is always brimming full of clear, fresh resources. For that we rely upon the entire forensic community—undergraduate debaters and orators, graduate students and teachers of speech communication, alumni practitioners of the art of oral argument, chapter sponsors and forensic directors. In short, we encourage submissions of manuscripts by anyone who has something significant to say, or who recognizes an exigence when something must be said.

Of course, we guarantee to publish none of the above, but we do promise to direct full and fair consideration by qualified consulting editors to any manuscript submitted, and to publish, on a refereed basis, as many as their

quality and our pages will permit. (For technical requirements, please see the table of contents backup page in this issue.)

The record will show that the first article ever written by your editor was published in *The Speaker* of Tau Kappa Alpha in 1937, and the second was in *The Gavel* of Delta Sigma Rho in 1939. The most recent, by happy coincidence, was in *Speaker and Gavel* of Delta Sigma Rho—Tau Kappa Alpha in 1981. Whatever is relevant in what he has learned in the intervening years he promises to apply to the editorship of this journal.

J. Jeffery Auer

## SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

The Delta Sigma Rho—Tau Kappa Alpha National Council has established a standard subscription rate of \$5.00 per year for *Speaker and Gavel*.

Present policy provides that new members, upon election, are provided with two years of *Speaker and Gavel* free of charge. Life members, furthermore, who have paid a Life Patron alumni membership fee of \$100, likewise regularly receive *Speaker and Gavel*. Also receiving each issue are the current chapter sponsors and the libraries of institutions holding a charter in the organization.

Other individuals and libraries are welcome to subscribe to *Speaker and Gavel*. Subscription orders should be sent to Allen Press, P. O. Box 368, Lawrence, Kansas 66044.

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Please send all communications relating to initiation, certificates of membership, key orders, and names of members to the National Secretary. All requests for authority to initiate and for emblems should be sent to the National Secretary and should be accompanied by check or money order. Inasmuch as all checks and money orders are forwarded by the Secretary to the National Treasurer, please make them to: "The Treasurer of Delta Sigma Rho—Tau Kappa Alpha."

The membership fee is \$15.00. The official key (size shown in cut on this page) is \$10.50, or the official key-pin is \$11.75. A lapel button is available for



\$7.00. **Prices include Federal Tax.** The names of new members, those elected between September of one year and September of the following year, appear in the Fall issue of *Speaker and Gavel*. According to present regulations of the society, new members receive *Speaker and Gavel* for two years following their initiation if they return the record form supplied them at the time their application is approved by the Executive Secretary and certified to the sponsor. Following this time all members who wish to receive *Speaker and Gavel* may subscribe at the standard rate of \$5.00 per year.

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