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Conference Proceedings: National Developmental Conference on Individual Events

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Conference Proceedings

NDC-IE

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Overcoming Obstacles to Scholarly Engagement

Edward A. Hinck
Central Michigan University

Abstract

This paper reaffirms the idea that scholarship is essential to advancing the professional and knowledge based identity of the forensic community. To develop a vision for future scholarly activity, the paper outlines some possible areas for consideration in developing writing and research programs, reviews some of the obstacles that stand in the way of a more active community of forensic scholars, and offers solutions that hold promise for advancing the mission of scholarship in the intercollegiate forensic community.

Introduction

Most of us who gathered for the conference have professional duties as coaches, classroom teachers, and in some cases, expectations for scholarly activity. As I complete the revision of the comments I offered at the conference, weeks past the deadline assigned by the conference director, the enthusiastic sentiment expressed in my presentation in July encounter the reality of my duties as a director of a program in the first weeks of September. At the time of my presentation, the purpose of my paper was to address the perception that our coaching obligations might in some ways function as obstacles to scholarly activity. Now, two months later, I confront a conflicted sense of purpose: how can I effectively divide my time between organizing my team for the new season and the need to demonstrate some kind of philosophical and professional consistency regarding my call for more scholarly engagement at the conference. In a slightly less (or more) naïve and reflective mode, I believe that the call to action regarding scholarly activity is still vital, and difficult, but possible to fulfill with an on going commitment to the enterprise of scholarly inquiry. So I have settled in at my desk, hopeful, that the final words for this piece will come to me before the conference director can wait no longer to publish the proceedings, but committed to the endeavor of writing about the subjects that are important to us in our capacities as coaches, teachers, directors, and scholars.

Before turning to the question of how to get more scholarly work done, however, it seems important to note that some of us attending this conference might be hearing about the importance of scholarly activity in forensics for the first time. My comments, then, are offered in the hope of engaging you as scholars too, a role that you might not have initially associated with the more familiar coaching activities with which you might be currently engaged. However, scholarship is an important element for any group of professional educators. And so, toward the end of engaging you, I begin by reaffirming the need for scholarly activity. Second, I identify some of the issues that I believe we need to address in our writing and research. Third, I describe the pressures that might be holding us back as a community from greater productivity in scholarship. And finally, I offer some suggestions for overcoming some of the perceived barriers that make writing and research difficult when coaching and travel constitute a substantial degree of our professional duties in our appointments as coaches and directors.

Why Forensic Coaches Should be Engaged in Scholarly Activity

The call for research has been a ritual for the last few decades. In an article first published in a 1960 issue of *The Register*, forerunner of the *Journal of the American Forensic Association* and later *Argumentation and Advocacy*, Phillips and Frandsen (1970) called for debate coaches to prove the benefits of debating to the larger academic community. Four years after a collection of leading essays from *The Register* was published (McBath, 1970), forensic directors gathered for the Sedalia conference to address the state of forensics in the United States. More research was one of the recommendations (McBath, 1975) including a research agenda proposed by Samuel Becker (1975) and an assessment of the research generated to date offered by Rieke and Brock (1975). A decade or so later, closing the proceedings published from the Second National Developmental Conference on Forensics, Goodnight (1984) articulated a vision of forensics based on scholarly activity.

> Forensics is an expression of scholarship. The task of the forensic community is nothing less that the active, rigorous, on-going discovery, creation, interchange and critique of social knowledge. Social knowledge is the product of inter-disciplinary inquiry and prerequisite to public deliberation. In this regard, forensic scholarship is not so much treating contests as the object of study as it is engaging participants in the cooperative process of study. Accordingly, forensics is not so much a kitchen in which ideas are confected by recipe to suit taste as it is a la-

boratory in which intense and systematic programs of investigation are undertaken. As scholarship, forensics fits within a tradition of learning through doing and reflecting. (p. 97)

Almost two decades ago, closing a special issue of the *National Forensic Journal* devoted to assessing the scholarly needs of the forensic community, Sharon Porter (1990) offered a call to action for more research on the part of coaches and directors. Similar concerns seem pressing today as we review the papers of this conference, engage in discussions of what work needs to be done, and what steps to take next to ensure that our scholarly activities remain vibrant. The call for scholarship, then, seems to be an on-going concern for forensic professionals.

Scholarly activity is an essential mission for forensic educators. Any academic discipline hoping to define itself as important, valuable, or relevant to higher education must be able to lay claim to a body of literature that reflects the knowledge, research trends, professional scholarly interests and standards, and on going quest for new knowledge (McBath, 1975, see chapter two, pp. 34-40). Our departmental colleagues, administrators, and members of the communication discipline in general expect us to be engaged scholars, not simply coaches serving competitive ends (Kay, 1990). More importantly, if you are in a tenure track position or are in training as a graduate student to obtain a tenure position in a department as a director of forensics, chances are that there will be expectations for scholarly and/or creative activity (Aden, 1990: Madsen, 1990; McKerrow, 1990; Parson, 1990). To obtain tenure and get promoted you will be expected to produce scholarship that meets the standards of the department in which you teach. For these reasons scholarship can be considered an essential element of one's identity as a forensic director.

If your job does not require scholarly activity, research and writing might be one less thing you have to do. However, you might still consider scholarly activity as a creative outlet or as a way to refine your understanding of knowledge related to coaching or teaching (Dean, 1990). Aristotle argued that human beings are driven by what pleases them. Acknowledging that those who find “writing or doing sums unpleasant and painful” do not write or do sums because the activity is painful (Aristotle, 1988, 1175b14, p. 259), one might consider the sheer intellectual pleasure of what Nobel Prize winning physicist Richard Feynman described as “the pleasure of finding the thing out, the kick in the discovery” (1999, p. 12). Admittedly, we are not physicists but we are engaged in a vitally important educational enterprise. Thus, our scholarly activities should provide us with intellectual and professional satisfactions of “finding things out” about how to best train our students for more than competitive outcomes (Aden, 1990; Herbeck, 1990; Kay). So what kinds of things do we need to find out? What issues should we care about as coaches, teachers, scholars, or scholars in training?

Issues, Old and New

Scholarly inquiry starts with questions and issues, hypotheses and hunches, ideas and visions that need to be tested in argument with others, in studies designed to obtain the data needed to answer our questions, and in a set of on going educational concerns that seek to place forensic education at the heart of a contemporary curriculum of communication studies. I am resolute in the belief that the model of the forensic laboratory, despite whatever criticisms one might array against it, holds the greatest promise for actualizing the knowledge of communication that we teach in our communication departments across the nation. Despite my belief in this promise the range of research interests has been relatively limited as noted recently by Croucher (2006), and Kerber and Cronn-Mills (2005). So it seems to me that this conference is an ideal forum to frame discussions that might take us in new directions. Given that mission, I thought that I might offer a number of questions that might be related to the other important issues raised in the various sections. It is my sincere hope that the papers contributed here and the conversations begun here can serve as a starting point for even greater scholarly activity to come. So let me throw out some questions that have been on my mind in the hope that you will either join me in pursuing answers to these questions, or in disagreement with me, formulate what you believe to be more pressing concerns facing the forensics community.

Priorities. If we only had time to write about one thing, this month, or next semester, or next year, or this decade, what should we be writing about? What kind of priority might we consider setting as an urgent question either for ourselves individually or collectively as a community? If we could choose any kind of research project, any kind of question, any kind of methodology, what kind of research and scholarly inquiry should we be involved in? What would make us happy, proud, and satisfied as scholars? Should we limit ourselves to forensics pedagogy? If not, what other questions should we take up? The answer to these questions will vary across our individual interests. Regardless of what we perceive to be important, it is vital that we make a choice, and not worry about whether it reflects a consensus interest only that it is important enough to compel us to think about it, to inquire, interrogate, analyze and write about it. Given the demands on our time we need to prioritize our scholarly interests.

Connecting Communication Theory to Forensics. What kinds of knowledge can forensics programs, directors, coaches, and professionals generate in the course of preparing a group of students to

talk about policies, literature, communication, politics, culture, and the arts, that we have not already generated—what kinds of questions remain as important opportunities? Can we produce knowledge about communication, leadership, team building, assimilation, competition, argumentation, etc.? If we have some degree of familiarity with theory and research in the field of organizational communication, culture, argumentation, interpersonal communication, or any other aspect of the communication discipline, can we take advantage of that knowledge to ask research questions about the student experience of competing in intercollegiate forensics?

Preparation for the "Real World." Does the college forensic experience we create for our students parallel "real world" experience in ways that a traditional college experience of education in the classroom cannot? If so, how are they different and what educational experiences can we demonstrate to stem directly or indirectly from participating in forensics? This question is essential to determining if we are a "value added" educational experience for the departments whose budgets support our activities Kay, 1990).

Forensic Educational Experience. What are the central research questions and problems that forensic educators should be concerned with? For example, what do we know about the process by which a novice competitor acquires the knowledge and skills to compete in one or more events? Do we have a theory of communication skill acquisition or any research demonstrating what teaching and coaching practices work best for various kinds of students? And if we had a body of theory, and teaching/coaching practices demonstrated to be successful through our research, in what ways could we contribute to the communication discipline's knowledge of skill development? How can we demonstrate and document the educational outcomes for students who choose to participate in forensics? How can forensic educators research and document the wide range of social skills that are developed over the course of a forensic education? And how do we connect that knowledge to the larger educational mission of departments of communication so that we can argue that forensics activities constitute important learning experiences for our students?

Professional Development. What are the professional development concerns that should be debated in our journals? What visions of the forensic educational experience should we be articulating, evaluating, and shaping for future forensic professionals? What training programs, methods, and practices are best for developing the next generation of forensic professionals? What are the obstacles to meaningful research for forensics coaches and how can they be overcome? How can forensic educators nurture, align, and coordinate research and writing interests with coaching and program administration interests? How can our teaching and coaching experience, scholarly inquiry and processes, obtain the professional recognition it deserves from our colleagues who do not coach?

Taking Advantage of Opportunities. How can we take what we have learned about various topics over the course of a season, in debate or individual events, and turn that knowledge into messages that reach a wider audience (see Herbeck, 1990; Madsen, 1990)? To what extent should forensic programs serve the status quo or an ethic for social justice? To what extent do we as directors, teachers, coaches, and judges challenge the cultural issues of sexism, racism, ageism, as well as other forms of discrimination or social ills framed as 'isms? Or, to what extent do our practices replicate these enduring social tensions in the pursuit of competitive success? How best do we educate our students about the risks and benefits, and the roles and responsibilities, of fitting in or out of expected norms for professional communicators? How can forensic programs develop a sense of citizenship in an increasingly alienated student body in our colleges and universities (see Chemerinsky, 2001)? How can we activate students' sense of political awareness, nurture political activism, and engage our students in significant issues of the day beyond the tournament format? How can forensics as an educational experience teach students the ability to constitute audiences for messages of significant social change and conscience? What responsibility do we have to advance the messages offered in our tournaments to larger audiences, empowered audiences, and real audiences uninvolved with the production of tournament results? What kinds of speaking activities, projects, or programs are directors and coaches pursuing with their students that do not fit into the competitive tournament format but advance understanding of communication theory and practices in the community? Can we write up these programs, document their planning and execution for others to study, and use them as significant ways to extend what is learned in the competitive format?

Enduring Questions About Competition. What is more important, the spoken word or the speaker? How do audiences process aesthetic assessments of speakers versus messages? How should they be processed? Are judges consistent in applying constructs of evaluation? How do we maximize the learning through intensive preparation for competition while minimizing the status associated with the human need for status markers? How do we teach students ethics? What do we know about ethics, the situations where ethics conflict, where the human need for status overwhelms the sense of connection to community values, and how to reconstruct relationships when ethical lapses occur? What responsibility do we have to identify and address the chal-

lenge of teaching, coaching, and judging students with disabilities (see Shelton & Matthews, 2001)?

Culture and International Education. In what ways can the forensic community in the United States reach out to the students of other nations? Can we engage them in conversations, dialogue, argument, exchanges, among other forms of interaction to build an international community of students and professionals interested in the ways that knowledge of the communication process creates meaning, relationships, communities, and the possibility of social change? Can we enrich our understanding of what constitutes an artful and appropriate message by studying the discourse of other cultures (see Logue & Shea, 1990)? In what ways can our best practices contribute to communication education in other countries and what can we learn from other countries? Should we be concerned about internationalizing forensics activities or is it enough to maintain a professional focus on activities in the United States?

Technology and the Post Modern World. What do tournaments do for us? What is their unique value? Why bother with tournaments given increasingly powerful forms of technology that allow real time interaction in geographically disaggregated locations? How can we continue to maintain the relevance and value of the speech tournament given recent developments in technology? What problems does technology pose for us and how might we as a professional community respond? Perhaps we should take up the study of change for forums and forms of scholarship. With new forms of technology come changes in the way humans shape and communicate knowledge. So it might be timely to ask if journals are the best way to disseminate research findings or are other electronic listservs taking over the role that journals were once designed to fulfill? If so, is this a good development, and if not, what should be done to recover the mission of our journals?

Concerns About Relevance. How can we connect our mission as a collection of forensic communities with the rest of the communication discipline? How do our practices and the experiences of participating in forensic activities help students to develop the marketable skills that career offices list for our graduates? How can we maintain our relevance to an education in communication studies or are our activities so specialized that untrained audiences cannot appreciate the product of our professional activities? Does that specialization make us an audience to ourselves and thus of little concern or relevance to the departments, universities, and communities we serve? If specialization does make us an audience to ourselves, how can we respond to that issue and ensure that our teaching and coaching activities remain relevant in the future (Kay, 1990)?

While some work has been started on many of these questions, they are far from framed well, not yet argued in detail to reveal the competing qualities of wisdom, and in terms of what we count as knowledge to support positions that might advance even a tentative answer, we are far from a well documented body of knowledge for the range of communication processes that make up speech and debate activities. Clearly, there is work enough for all of us to do. Yet, it seems we are held back from addressing these and other issues.

Obstacles

The obstacles to increasing the production of scholarship to pursue questions relevant to the forensic community are well known. However, I think the obstacles are significant and warrant identification in the hope of designing solutions to overcome them. Therefore I offer this brief review of the barriers to increasing scholarly activity organized around three basic categories of deficits: skill and training to conduct scholarly activity, resources needed to engage in scholarly activity, and professional rewards associated with research and writing about forensics.

Deficits in Skill and Training. (1) We lack training in research methods for the questions we might be interested in asking. (2) We often ignore our own scholarship in our journals and rehash old concerns without new insights. (3) We were not mentored to read the forensics discipline's literature, write papers and submit our work at conferences and to journals. (4) When directors retire or withdraw from forensics we lose mentors and mentoring opportunities regarding scholarly inquiry, processes, and productivity.

Deficits in Rewards. (1) We are not rewarded for research in forensic pedagogy; our scholarly and creative work is held in lower regard than that of those working in other areas of the communication discipline. (2) We fear rejection; decoding reviewers and editorial suggestions is difficult; revising and resubmitting a manuscript is time consuming; the result of a time consuming revision is difficult to assess and so expectancy theory undermines our motivation to persevere in the process of revising a manuscript for publication. (3) We want time for a normal life with family and friends; pursuing writing projects absorbs the time needed to maintain relationships and friendships.

Deficits in Resources. (1) We lack time, support, and resources. (2) There is a lack of coordination of resources, expertise, and efforts, when such elements might be available. (3) We want time to rest; pursuing writing projects absorbs the time needed to rest and regenerate for the next forensic season. And depending on whether this list covers the obstacles that you face, feel free to fill in the ones that I

missed. Regardless of these or other barriers, we are called to be scholars as well as coaches.

Solutions

First, we cannot be paralyzed with concern over where to start. We need to just get started. However, it seems possible, partly through this conference, to identify areas of on going concern to the forensic community.

Second, more specific actions might enhance the training of new members as they join the ranks of forensic professionals. For example, we might undertake more mentoring activities for undergraduate and graduate students. Presently, the training of graduate students might not always include the encouragement to submit one's work to conferences or journals. Making that a concern draws attention to the need for scholarly inquiry. Workshops at tournaments and conferences might be a first step to developing a more strategic approach to mentoring.

Third, we should consider drawing on communication theory in areas that might be related to forensics. Some examples: Forensics and organizational communication (Croucher, Thornton, & Eckstein, 2006), forensics and leadership development, forensics and interpersonal communication, forensics and performance studies, forensics and critical/cultural studies, debate and public policy argumentation (Herbeck, 1990), debate and organizational decision-making processes. Some of this work has been done but the possibilities have by no means been exhausted. Given the large scope of the communication discipline these connections do not seem so far fetched. But the more traditional research program can inform forensic pedagogy with concepts and theories useful to advancing the educational concerns of the forensic community.

Fourth, we should engender cooperation across forensics programs in addressing research concerns of common interest. If you have a research concern about how novice students get assimilated into an existing team structure, a team building concern about how to create a championship culture, or a professional development concern about how to document your activities as a coach, chances are, other directors have similar concerns. Thus, our conversations about common problems we face as coaches, teachers, and directors can serve as a way to join forces, coordinate resources, and address an issue in a research project that would be more daunting for a single director to complete.

Additionally, and perhaps more importantly, we should seek to develop greater cooperation across the various professional organizations. Much progress has made in this area over the last decade or so. However, intensifying the degree of coordination helps frame important issues, alerts professionals across the communities of common concerns, maximizes the intellectual resources of those with a stake in the community, and holds much promise for addressing major priorities facing the forensics community.

Fifth, rather than taking on a major research project by one's self, it seems possible to take advantage of the prospect of forming research teams. In a related way, we can enlist the support of undergraduate research assistants or graduate students by involving them in our research and providing valuable training in research methods. Our students also have the chance to pursue opportunities for presentation at undergraduate research conferences through the development of greater expertise as researchers and writers.

Sixth, make writing an important part of your professional life by integrating it into the present time demands you face as a coaches and/or director. For example, it seems possible to offer workshops on writing and research at conferences, to hold summer and winter workshops on writing and research, to write while at tournaments--especially with a research team, and to write at the conferences we attend. In short, there is time in between all of the things we are called upon to do if we take advantage of it. We need to be creative and dedicated to do so, however.

Seventh, work on our follow through. Every year, many papers and panels are submitted to national and regional forensic interest groups for presentation at these organizations' annual meetings. We should view every convention paper as a submission for a journal; we need to be submitting our work for consideration for publication in our journals; we need to revise our work; we need to keep submitting. We need training, mentoring, experience, and support for the difficulties faced in evaluating our work (see Klumpp, 1990). However, this should not hold us back since we engage in the process of evaluation at every tournament as judges. We should extend our critical processes to reflection and writing about our practices.

Eighth, we need to write more, we need to write more often, and we need to write on a greater number of subjects. We can do so by reflecting on trends after every season, disappoints or success stories, theoretically interesting or frustrating developments. But reflect and write we must even it means tasking an undergraduate to take dictation on the way back from a tournament as we keep the minivan on the road at 2:00 am. We can take these reflections and make them the subject of our writing. For example, what role might reflective coaching logs or even blogs play in identifying issues of concern to the community?

Ninth, we should not let listserv discussions serve as a substitute forum for working on professional issues regarding theory, practice, professional development, community concerns or research. We should take listserv discussions and turn them into

papers, then into submissions, then into polished articles. We should spend less time on the more ephemeral forums for discussing professional issues of theory and practice on listservs and more time on permanent forums for our scholarship by polishing manuscripts and submitting them for publication.

Tenth, we cannot hope that someone else will carry the banner of scholarship for us so that we can continue to do what we have been doing if it does not involve scholarship. We must take responsibility for the intellectual health of our educational community. The way to raise the visibility and prestige of our scholarship is to refine it, to augment the body of work in our journals thus far with increasing sophistication in our writing and research. We have much scholarly work to be proud of but we also have more work to do. We need to get started.

A Modest Action Plan

First, if you are new to ranks of forensics professionals it seems appropriate to start gathering ideas. While you are at this conference write down your ideas for research and scholarly inquiry during each session, each evening before you socialize, during the conversations you have while socializing, and before you turn in for the night. Make each session, each conversation, and each new person you meet an important opportunity for sharing your thoughts, learning what others think, and developing ideas for scholarly projects concerning the many vital issues raised in the discussions here. Find out what forms of research expertise are represented by the folks attending this conference; try to align your research questions with contacts and interests of those who also are motivated to engage in scholarly activity. Apply the same strategies of networking, note-taking, and idea development to future conferences you attend at the regional and national level. In short, if you do not have the support and connections needed, commit yourself to building the professional network necessary to sustaining the kind of writing and research projects the forensic community needs.

Second, make a commitment to a challenging project. Before August 1, 2009, if you have not already done so, make a commitment to writing or co-authoring at least one paper. More importantly, before August 1, 2009, map out a program of research for yourself that can be executed in writing cycles of 1-2 years, 2-5 years, 5-10 years. Creating a scholarly agenda of such a nature commits you to the project, sustains your interest in writing, gives you something important to share with other forensic coaches and directors, allows you to celebrate the progress along the way, increases your stature among your students and administrators who evaluate your work, and constitutes an important intellectual investment in the future should you choose to get out of forensics and into a more traditional faculty position.

Getting started is not nearly as challenging as it was a decade or so ago. Given the good work of Dr. Dan Cronn-Mills in constructing a database for forensics literature, conducting a search as a starting point for a review of literature has never been more easy or comprehensive. A link to this index can be found on the National Forensics Association's website. Make a commitment so submit at least one paper or one panel to a forensics interest group at the national or regional level. The professional organizations that depend on your submissions can be found on the organizational web pages of these organizations: National Communication Association, Central States Communication Association, Eastern Communication Association, Southern Speech Communication Association, and Western States Communication Association.

Third, persevere. Determine what obstacle(s) hold you back from writing and research. Write them down. Now take the solutions that have been offered and see if they can address those obstacles. If the solution still falls short, consider alternative strategies. But do not give up an identity of a scholar unless it is absolutely necessary to do so to survive with all of your other duties and responsibilities. After aligning possible solutions with the obstacles you have identified, commit yourself to overcoming those obstacles through dedicated action. If possible, find colleagues who are willing to support you in your role as a scholar. Any of us who have had the good fortune to get a manuscript into print have also had friends and colleagues who were willing to read our work and offer honest feedback.

Fourth, if you have never submitted anything, train up on the process of participating in the "big conversation." Find a mentor if one has not yet found you. There are several at this conference and chances are, at least one is sitting within an arm's reach of you right now. Ask someone to demystify the process of submitting for conferences or to journals for publication; to explain how a journal works; to provide a context for the process of moving an idea along from conceptualization, to drafting, to revising, to submitting, to revising and resubmitting. Many individuals at this conference (as well as those you might know who are not attending the conference) have a substantial amount of experience in evaluating manuscripts and would be more than happy to sit down with you to talk about the process of getting a manuscript into print. But if you don't ask, you'll never learn. If you did not attend the conference or did not talk to folks about the submission process, an excellent essay that explains the expectations for quality work can be found in James F. Klumpp's (1990) article, "Wading into the Stream of Forensics Research: A View from the Editorial Office."

Fifth, surround yourself with other creative people. Create or join a research team. Make a date to write at tournaments where you see other members of your research team over the course of the season. If the paper is not finished by this time next year, finish in the fall of 2009, or the next semester, or the next. But commit yourself to the project, take actions to begin the project, and celebrate whatever incremental progress you can make toward its completion. Scholarship is a time intensive activity but taking the long view of the process will reduce some of the psychological barriers to getting started.

In closing, I hope you have a start on developing some strategies to overcome the obstacles to scholarship that forensic directors face, that you can become creative in finding time for writing, and that you can find others to support you in your work. I hope you will become motivated to start writing, continue writing, or write more, by yourself or with some one else, or a writing team, and that you will submit your work to the appropriate outlets soon. Much good work has been produced in response to the periodic calls for research. However, as a scholarly community, we have much more to offer and much more work to do to in fulfilling our obligations as scholars, coaches, and program directors. We need to get started.

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The Pitfalls, Perils, and Promise to Increasing Forensic Research

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Research in Forensics: An Overview

Research is the core of higher education and provides the foundation for what we teach. Research, in fact, provides the foundation for all we do in forensics. According to McBath (1975), "because research and scholarship are the foundation from which all specific areas within a field evolve, and because they establish the basis for interrelationships among the areas, a field of study is both as strong and weak as its research and scholarship" (pg. 34).

Forensic professionals must heed a warning issued by Ryan in 1988: "Scholarly writing has always been a requisite for respect in academia. Folks in forensics cannot expect their non-forensic colleagues to take them seriously if they do not take themselves seriously enough to publish" (pg. 77). Harris, Kropp, and Rosenthal (1986) provide a second reason forensic scholars need to engage in research. "Scholarship enhances the image of forensics both within the field of speech communication and in the larger academic context. Many colleagues feel that we are merely, in the words of Plato, teaching a "knack" which is not worthy of academic treatment. This negative image may be changed if the forensic tournament is viewed as a place to study the relationship between communication/rhetorical theory and practice (Harris, Kropp, & Rosenthal, 1986).

Based on the above statement by Harris, Kropp, and Rosenthal (1986), I feel compelled to qualify my opening sentence to this article. I opened by stating "Research, in fact, provides the foundation for all we do in forensics." A more truthful statement is that "research should provide the foundation for all we do in forensics." I am not convinced this is the case. The most notable illustration is in Program Oral Interpretation (POI). Contemporary practice in POI involves splicing/dicing/weaving together multiple texts. Postmodernity provides potential theoretical justification for the practice. However, anecdotal evidence demonstrates the vast majority of competitors (and potentially coaches) could not clearly articulate the postmodern assumptions underpinning this performance approach. The competitors (and potentially the coaches) are merely copying the form they have seen successful competitors employ. I was around when the splice/dice/weave approach was first introduced into the event. In this opening foray, significant theoretical discussions were held among coaches and competitors as everyone attempted to grasp the fundamental concepts underlying such a dramatically new approach to interpreting literature. Over time, I believe the theoretical discussions have gone away and only the mimicry of the practice remains. Forensics may have, at least in this example, devolved from a scholarly art to a Platonic knack. The de-evolution of pedagogy in such an instance is described by myself and Al Golden in our 1997 article "The 'Unwritten Rules' in Oral Interpretation: An Assessment of Current Practices." We describe the evolution of an unwritten rule in a list titled The Evolution of an Unwritten Rule: A Twelve-Step Program:

> Unwritten rules do not just spring forth fully formed from pen of a forensic judge. Rules have a genesis inherent within the forensic practices in which we engage. The twelve steps articulated below describe the basis for the generation, perpetuation, and discontinuation of unwritten rules in oral interpretation.
>
> 1. A talented student tries something new/different;
> 2. talented student is rewarded by judge for a strong performance (judge may not even have liked the new approach, yet votes for student because overall performance was strong);
> 3. student continues to win at a variety of tournaments;
> 4. other students observe the winning student and attribute success to the new/different approach;
> 5. other students adapt the new approach into their performances;
> 6. judges see "everyone" doing the new approach and assume this is how it is supposed to be done;
> 7. judges start expecting everyone to include the new approach;
> 8. judges start penalizing students who fail to include the new approach;
> 9. students believe they *must* include the new approach to be competitive;
> 10. seniors graduate;
> 11. forensic alumni return (as either graduate coaches or hired judges) the next season and employ the "unwritten rules" they learned as competitors in order to render decisions;
> 12. the unwritten rule is perpetuated by the community until we return to Step One

> when a talented student tries something new/different." (Cronn-Mills & Golden, 1997, n.p.)

Finally, Aden (1990) listed three reasons forensic professionals should engage in research. (1) forensic research is the cornerstone for appreciating the events offered in intercollegiate competitive forensics. (2) forensic research is how professors and students expand on their understanding of forensics. Ballot comments are only a beginning to understanding forensics; research should provide the full explanation of forensic expectations. (3) forensic research is the necessary link between theory and practice. Research is necessary for effective praxis.

Research has, however, never been the strong suit of the forensic community. The 1974 Sedalia Conference was the first national assembly to focus on forensics. One conference agenda was forensic research. Parson in 1990 argues "the conference clearly created a call to research in forensics" (pg. 69). The Sedalia request, now more than 30 years old, may have been largely unheard by many forensic professionals. Editors of forensic-related journals have for a significant time cajoled and lambasted the forensic (and specifically the individual-events) community to increase forensic research. Geisler (1998) during her time as editor of the National Forensic Journal stated that "the associate editors have found a dearth of suitable material for publication in this journal" (pg. 59). Ryan, during his tenure as editor of NFJ (1998) faced the same problem—lack of submissions: "A basic fact of a journal's life is that the editor cannot publish essays that are not submitted" (pg. 77), and Croucher (2006) highlights a lack of theoretical density and rigor in forensic research. Croucher contends "forensics research, at least from a communication theory point of view, really is not all we claim" (pg. XX).

The number of sessions at NCA available for forensic research is staggering (especially when compared to other interest areas). According to the 2008 Convention Planners' Packet (Bach, 2008), forensic organizations had more than 50 sessions available for scheduling. (A listing from 2005-2008 is provided in the table below.) Few other interest areas come even close to this number of sessions. 50+ sessions is a considerable amount of time devoted to forensic scholarship. Such an impressive array of conference sessions should be producing an equally impressive array of quality journal publications. The significant number of conference presentations, however, does not logically correspond to the limited number of journal submissions and journal articles.

Table One: Sessions/Slots for Programming at NCA

Organization	2005	2006	2007	2008
Argumentation and Forensics Division	18	15	16	16
American Forensic Association	25	25	18	18
International Forensics Association	2	2	2	2
NFHSSDTA*	4	4	3	3
National Forensic Association	8	7	7	7
Phi Rho Pi	2	2	2	2
Pi Kappa Delta	5	5	5	5
Total	64	60	53	53

*National Federation of High School Speech, Debate & Theatre Association

McKerrow (1990) notes a specific question to ask of conference papers: "are papers presented at regional and national conventions moved through the process toward publication? While this is not a prerequisite for every paper presented, the record should reflect a general movement toward publication, whereby convention presentations represent an initial step" (pg. 74). The considerable disparity between the number of presentations at NCA (and other conferences) and the dismal number of manuscript submissions to journals would require us to answer McKerrow's question with a resounding "no, papers are not moving from conference presentation to peer-reviewed journal publication."

A caveat: Understandably, different institutions place varying emphasis on the research expectations of their faculty. Such varying emphases, however, do not account for overall limited production of forensic-related research.

The *Online Index of Forensic Research*

http://fmp.mnsu.edu/forensicindex/online_index.htm

One of the major hurdles forensic researchers faced was writing an effective literature review. A sound literature review is central to almost all research endeavors. A literature review demonstrates the relationship between the current research effort

and previous works. Sound research does not materialize from thin air but is built on a sound framework provided by other scholars. As Feeley (2008) argues, "for knowledge to advance, one must access and build upon published research in a given area of scholarship" (pg. 505).

The dilemma confronting forensic scholars was identifying the articles relevant to their research interests. NCA sponsored for years the Index to Journals in Communication Studies, commonly known as Matlon's Index after the original editor Ronald J. Matlon. (CommSearch History, n.d.). NCA has converted Matlon's into CommSearch, a searchable online index of communication scholarship. Few forensic-related journals were listed in Matlon's/CommSearch. Argumentation and Advocacy, the journal of the American Forensic Association, was one of the very few listed in Matlon's. Inquiries by other organizations to list their journals were turned down by the Publications Board of NCA for a variety of reasons. Forensic scholars were left without a central repository for discovering articles related to their research aspirations. Such a significant roadblock can quickly cripple a promising research inquiry.

In the Fall of 2000 steps were taken to assist forensic scholars in their research endeavors outside Matlon's/CommSearch. I contacted the editors of all the forensic-related journals and requested a meeting at the annual NCA conference being held that year in Seattle, WA. The editors met, discussed the issues of forensic research, and determined an online searchable index of forensic-related articles was a critical necessity. A few basic assumptions were agreed upon by the editors:

1. The system should be housed within a university server to minimize any costs.
2. The system design should be supported by IT professionals. The editors agreed a system designed by students was problematic. Once the student graduates and leaves the institution, all key components of the system would leave with the system. A significant issue could result in a "crash 'n' burn" of the entire project.
3. IT professionals must be available at the host institution to provide technical support.
4. The system would have both an automatic backup mechanism and a means for exporting the citation data into other digital formats.
5. Once the system was up and functioning, the editor of each journal would be responsible for initial data entry of all article citations from their respective journal.
6. The editor of the database would be responsible for data entry of article citations after pt. 4 (above) was completed. The editor would, therefore, be responsible for keeping the database current. This approach was developed due to the short lifespan of academic journal editors. Most editor terms are for a 2-3 year period. The relatively consistent turnover of journal editors means the requirement to populate the database could be easily lost as editors transition over time. Data entry by the database editor would hopefully provide a mechanism to alleviate this constraint.
7. All editors would request of their organizing body that the editor of the database be added to the permanent mailing list of their journal (thus making #6 possible).

An initial effort to create the database was attempted at Moorhead State University (now Minnesota State University, Moorhead) by then NFJ editor Timothy Borchers. The Moorhead endeavor, however, did not meet a number of basic assumptions laid out by the editors at the 200 meeting. The Moorhead project was student-designed, did not have full-time IT staff support, and did not have reliable backup capabilities. The Moorhead project was soon abandoned as untenable.

I initiated a second effort to bring the database to life at Mankato State University (now Minnesota State University, Mankato). I developed the data-entry fields and primary layout of the online documents. IT professionals at MSU double-checked my work, offered suggestions and made the final alterations necessary to bring the database online. This time the project was successful and the Online Index of Forensic Research was born. The Index is built using Filemaker Pro and delivered online using a dedicated Filemaker server housed on the campus of MSU, Mankato. The Index has full-time professional IT support , is backed up every 24 hours to an off-site server, and has the ability (by the editor) for exporting all data. The Index has proven to be a very robust, effective, and worthwhile addition to the tools available to forensic researchers. In fact, the Filemaker system has proven so effective, additional online databases have been constructed to provide the forensic community with:

1. *Intercollegiate Forensics Tournament Calendar* - http://fmp.mnsu.edu/cofo/
2. *Minnesota High School Speech Tournament Calendar* - http://fmp.mnsu.edu/ctam/
3. *The Online GTA Index for Communication Studies* - http://fmp.mnsu.edu/gtas/search.lasso

The Online Index of Forensic Research is not without limitations. First, not all editors have taken the initiative to complete #5 (listed above). Such journals are to date not listed in the Index. Second, the editor of the Index is frequently dropped from the mailing list of the journals. When the editor is

dropped, new issues are not received or entered into the system. Finally, organizations and editors are occasionally remiss in responding to requests from the Index editor for copies of the latest issues of their journals. All three of these limitations constrain scholars access to the latest research in forensics.

Steps to Improve the *Index*

Specific steps can be taken to improve the Online Index of Forensic Research. First, editors/organizations/journals who have yet to participate in the Index can begin by conducting the initial data entry of all previous back issues of the journal. Interested editors should contact daniel.cronn-mills@mnsu.edu and request information for accessing the data entry module of the system. Second, journals already in the Index can ensure the data is up to date by confirming I am on the permanent mailing list for the journal. Additional back issues may need to be submitted if the journal is behind on citations. Journals published online can send issue link(s) to daniel.cronn-mills@mnsu.edu. The address for a permanent mailing list is:
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Finally, faculty at master and doctoral-granting institutions can add to the robust environment of the Index by submitting citation information for any theses and/or dissertations with a forensic-related research focus.

Steps to improve Forensic Scholarship

The Index has helped to create a more conducive environment for conducting online research. However, the Index alone is not panacea for all that troubles forensic research. Additional steps can and should be taken to improve the overall climate for the production and acceptance of forensic research.

First, graduate students involved in forensics need to be treated and trained as forensic scholars and not just as assistant coaches. Forensic research is not an agenda only for the "old guard" but also for the "young turks" in the discipline. Madsen (1990) has an entire article in the National Forensic Journal dedicated to incorporating graduate students into forensic research. I will not take the time to review all his reasons here, but do highly encourage all faculty with graduate students to read his article.

I strongly concur with Madsen's position, and I speak from experience. I have taught a course titled "Forensics Pedagogy" at MSU, Mankato. After a brief hiatus the course is now offered again by Dr. Leah White. I also have experience co-authoring and advising graduate-student forensic research (e.g., Cronn-Mills & Cook, 1995; Cronn-Mills & Croucher, 2001; Cronn-Mills & Golden, 1997; Cronn-Mills, Sandmann, Sullivan, & Golden, 1996/97; Kerber & Cronn-Mills, 2005; Rowe & Cronn-Mills, 2005; Sullivan, 1997). The earlier students engage in the forensic research experience, the more likely they may continue and become strong contributors to the development of forensics. Graduate courses in forensics pedagogy and research would be a major step to improving graduate student research. I implore all departments with both forensics and graduate programs to offer such a course. Students will become engaged in research in those subjects which they study. A course in forensics pedagogy and research would provide the necessary imperative for students to write, present and publish forensics research.

Second, scholars need to identify the reasons why the majority of forensic presentations done at conferences are never submitted for publication. I can guess the major the reason. I believe many of the forensic conference presentations are never actually written as formal papers. I believe many of the presentations are done from notes and outlines but not with formal, written papers. The lack of a formal paper written for the conference would mean the paper would need to be written after the conference and then submitted for publication. Such practice is a hurdle to any submission process.

Finally is the issue of incentives. I read during the summer Freakonomics by Levitt and Dubner (2006). One concept addressed in the book struck me as highly relevant to forensics research—incentives. According to Levitt and Dubner, "an incentive is a bullet, a lever, a key: an often tiny object with astonishing power to change a situation.... we all learn to respond to incentives, negative and positive, from the outset of life.... An incentive is simply a means of urging people to do more of a good thing and less of a bad thing" (pg. 16-17).

Forensics is laced with incentives. Student-competitors receive incentives to perform well at tournaments (trophies and the recognition of their peers during the award ceremony). Directors, assistant directors, and graduate-student coaches receive incentives to have their teams perform well at tournaments (trophies and the recognition of their peers). Departments have incentives to have their programs perform well at tournaments (trophies and recognition from other departments, administrators, and the community). Almost all forensic organizations also have incentives (awards) to provide service to the forensic community. A similar vein of support is not as strong for forensic research.

Let's take a look at the AFA-NIET as an example. Competitive trophies for speakers and teams are handed out the award ceremony attended by almost all (numbering in the hundreds) competitors and

coaches/judges. The AFA-NIET Distinguished Service Award is presented to the recipients at the opening assembly to the national tournament attended by almost all (numbering in the hundreds) competitors and coaches/judges.i The AFA-NIET Outstanding New Forensics Coach Award is presented to the recipients at the opening assembly to the national tournament attended by almost all (numbering in the hundreds) competitors and coaches/judges.ii And most recently, the AFA-NIET has recognized individuals who have attended the NIET for 25 years. These individuals are honored at the award ceremony attended by almost all (numbering in the hundreds) competitors and coaches/judges. (Notice a pattern?) The national champions in each individual event, the national champion in individual sweeps, the national champion in team sweeps, the Distinguished Service recipients, the New Coach recipients, and the 25-year recipients are further "immortalized" by a historical listing in the tournament booklet. (Notice the pattern from the previous paragraph being reinforced?) In summary, we have across the board for competition, service, coaching, and longevity a significant public and print presence for these deserving recipients.

And what public and print presence do we have at the national tournament that honors forensic research? First, to its credit, the AFA-NIET does distribute every year the Dr. Bruce Manchester NIET Scholar Series (a research grant program).iii The recipient is announced at the AFA-NIET Committee meeting during the NCA convention, and then again during the AFA-NIET opening assembly. A public research presentation is also expected of each recipient during the AFA-NIET. The scheduling of the public presentation varies and attendance is often sparse (especially when compared to the hundreds at the opening assembly and the awards ceremony). We should be sure to note only the announcement of the recipient is made during the opening assembly; the actual presentation is not at the opening assembly nor at the award ceremony (which, if case we've forgotten, are attended by almost all—numbering in the hundreds—competitors and coaches/judges). Second, however, the AFA-NIET does not have any awards for outstanding research or for outstanding thesis/dissertation.iv The AFA-NIET does not list in the tournament booklet or anywhere during the tournament any form of forensic scholarship (including no listing of the recipients of the Dr. Bruce Manchester NIET Scholar Series).

A glaring disparity obviously exists between the incentives speakers, graduate students, and faculty have directed toward competition and service, and the incentives focused on research. Research during the national tournament is the bastard step-child of the activity.

Want to prove to yourself this disparity exists? Ask any 3rd or 4th year competitor (or graduate student, or director, or assistant director, or coach, or judge) to name as many coaches from top 20 programs as possible. Then ask them to identify as many published forensic researchers from the last year (or last 5 years, or last 10 years). Want to bet which list is longer?

I propose all national organizations take a close look at the incentives provided to their members to produce forensic research. Levitt and Dubner (2006) state incentives come in three flavors—economic, social, and moral. I believe economic and social are the most applicable and compelling incentives for forensic scholars.

1. Economic Incentive—Research Grant Programs. Money is always a good incentive. Money can also be problematic. Organizations have only so much money available. Too small a grant and few will be interested in applying. Too large a grant will wipe out the coffers of the organization. Levitt and Dubner (2006) provide numerous examples, in fact, where economic incentives actually proved counter-productive to the intended outcome. For example, a forensic scholar who does not win a research grant may now feel less inclined to carry out the research agenda detailed in their grant application.

2. Social Incentive—Award Recognition. People in forensics love awards. For a reminder how much we love awards just review the paragraphs above detailing the competitor, service, and longitudinal incentives. Forensic organizations spend thousands (maybe even hundreds of thousands) on awards. Awards are cheaper (much cheaper) than grants. Forensic organizations could easily create numerous awards to honor individuals who have written and published strong forensic research. Award recognition as a social incentive is not restricted to just national organizations/tournaments. The same task could be carried out at invitational tournaments (e.g., best forensic/IE article written by a person in attendance at the tournament) and NIET district tournaments (best forensic/IE article written by a person in the district).

3. Social Incentive—Recognition by Listing. Organizations can also tap into the forensic ethos for recognition by an even cheaper means. List in the national tournament booklet all publications, theses, and dissertations published/completed since the previous national tournament. And list all forensic publications, not just from the organization's own journal. Spread the word of forensic research with a wide

net. The organization may wish to limit the list to research applicable to their "branch" of forensics (e.g., the NIET would list only individual-events research and not debate research). Students and coaches/judges read the national booklet. Students and coaches/judges will see which individuals are active forensic scholars (and inversely who is not). The listing of articles may spur on students/coaches/judges to engage in discussions of the research. The listing of articles may spur on students/coaches/judges to read forensic research. The listing of articles may spur on students/coaches/judges to write, present and publish research so their name may join the list in the future. The social incentive of recognition by listing is also not limited to national organizations and tournaments. The same practice could be carried out at invitational and district tournaments.

What we really need to do strengthen forensic research is respect it, promote it, disseminate it, and discuss it.

My primary call here is to move forensic research to the forefront of the activity. Make research and researchers visible. Provide researchers with incentives to produce and our journals will (hopefully) overflow with astounding scholarly works.

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Endotes

[i] The award was previously presented at the AFA-NIET banquet but was moved to the opening ceremony when the banquet was discontinued at the 2007 tournament.

[ii] The award was previously presented at the AFA-NIET banquet but was moved to the opening ceremony when the banquet was discontinued at the 2007 tournament.

[iii] I am proud to admit I wrote and presented the original proposal that compelled the AFA-NIET to create the NIET Scholar Series. The Series was later named in honor of long-time forensic scholar Dr. Bruce Manchester.

[iv] The NIET parent organization, the American Forensic Association, does present the Daniel Rohrer Memorial Outstanding Research Award which "honors the outstanding research monograph published in argumentation research during the given year" (Honors and Awards, 2005), and an award for top thesis/dissertation in forensics.

Retention, Retention, Retention
Keeping Our Colleagues in the Trenches

Joel Hefling
South Dakota State University

Over a period of years (thirty or more, probably), a number of coaches have left forensics. Some have retired from education. Some have retired from coaching. Some have left coaching to pursue other academic interests. Some of those individuals have returned to positions that are solely teaching positions. Others have moved into administrative positions, at a departmental level, or at a college or university level. Invariably, those individuals have left "holes" to be filled. Filling the positions is not necessarily a concern or a problem.

Positions can and have been filled by competent coaches and educators. The "natural" attrition provides new/young coaches some opportunities to take their place in the profession. We understand that new coaches will develop and establish new/different ways of doing things, and that can be a healthy experience. We welcome the new coaches and wish them well in their new positions.

Some positions, unfortunately, are not filled, for a variety of reasons. Some departments may wish to be rid of a forensics program that is seen as a drain on department resources. We have learned from experience that leaving those positions unfilled frequently means that a forensics program will be terminated, or allowed to disappear. Whether the department chooses to not fill the position, or whether there are not suitable applicants for the position, the result tends to be the same. The program will be allowed to disappear.

Coaches who are leaving a coaching position may know that the position likely will not be filled. Some certainly know that, others may speculate, still others may believe that the position will be filled. In any case, those coaches leave the coaching position, regardless of the outcome for the forensics program. Up to that point, those coaches have been perceived as dedicated, enthusiastic, concerned for the health of the forensics program and the educational opportunities for their students. The question, then, is why do those coaches leave the activity? Knowing that there is a very real possibility that the position will not be filled and that the program may be terminated, why do those coaches turn their backs and walk away from students and programs to which they have been so dedicated?

The short answer is that many are feeling burned out. They feel that their reservoir has been depleted, and that they have no more to give. They have had little or no opportunity to get rejuvenated. Unfortunately, they may be the only coach, and juggling a teaching load, rehearsing, traveling, and handling all the administrative responsibilities takes a toll on their energy and their spirit. While some may have the luxury of having a graduate assistant, many do not. They have no one with whom they can share those responsibilities, and no one to help lighten their load. With luck, there might be a part-time person who is hired to assist with coaching, but too frequently that individual does little or no traveling with the team. Burn-out sets in pretty quickly when the coach feels there is no relief in sight, and eventually he or she may begin to feel that no one cares about the stress of carrying the program alone. He or she feels they have no one with whom they can confidentially talk about the problem student who seems to be a disruption on the team, or vent about comments written on ballots, or the student who refuses to follow suggestions in coaching sessions. They have no one with whom they can safely and comfortably test ideas for a new case, or to feel supportively challenged about a plan for managing the team. These feelings of being alone are complicated if the coach is also trying to develop or maintain a personal relationship or support a family. In short, burn-out sets in when the coach feels alone in the coaching position, without a support system to help him/her survive.

They are tired, and tired of feeling overwhelmed, over-worked and underpaid. The days are long and the nights are short. The weeks are long and the weekends are longer. Teaching and coaching for 5 days (and 4 nights) during the week is tiring. Then the coach puts the team in a van, gets behind the wheel, and drives several hours to a tournament. Saturday and Sunday are spent being on duty for 24-hour days, judging and coaching. Then the tired coach puts the tired team in the van and drives several hours to get back home. On Monday morning, the cycle begins again. Somewhere along the way, the coach needs to prepare for classes, grade papers, write exams, perhaps serve on departmental or university committees, and conduct some academic research and participate in professional activities so that he/she can be considered for tenure or a promotion. On top of these responsibilities, he/she may need to work on a doctorate, in his/her spare time. This coach soon becomes physically and mentally

exhausted. The quickest option/solution is to stop coaching.

Many experienced coaches are familiar with the strain described here. While those who have been coaching for a few years may have learned to adjust or to accept these factors, many new coaches struggle with the pressure of the new situation. Graduate students may be given numerous opportunities to experience life as a coach. However, their travel schedule may be modified or monitored so that they are not traveling weekend after weekend. Their coaching responsibilities may be adjusted in order to allow them sufficient time to complete work for their classes. While they may have opportunities to share some of the responsibilities for managing a team or directing a program, the major portion of the responsibilities are assumed by the Director under whom they are working and studying. They rarely are faced with the complexities of handling the daily work load of the full-time coach and faculty member.

Initially, we may feel that we are protecting the graduate student who is the coach in-training. The assumption seems to be that it is too soon or too early in the training process to expose the prospective coach to all the duties of being a Director of Forensics, or a full time coach. After all, we don't want to scare them away or deter them from completing their program. The activity needs these enthusiastic, energetic young professionals to fill positions that are empty and waiting. This seems like a good way to keep programs alive and active.

These new coaches, however, may be the very ones who are at risk of needing to be retained. Once they begin their new position, it won't take long for them to realize how much they have missed in their training, and how unprepared they feel for their new professional role. When we train them, they likely are part of a team, composed of 2 or more graduate assistants. They may have several graduate-student coaching colleagues with whom they can share responsibilities and headaches, with whom they can brainstorm and commiserate. We seem to expect them to learn by observing that sometimes a coach is handling all the responsibilities alone, except that no one around them is operating alone. We forget to tell them that they may feel somewhat deserted when they get out into their own position. We neglect to point out that their local support system may not be in place down the hall, or in the office next door. If they are lucky, they might start their career as an assistant, working with a Director who will continue to guide them through the process of learning new policies and procedures on the new campus.

New coaches, whether they are beginning their first position, fresh from graduate school, or whether they are new to a school or position, or new to an area, need mentoring. The mentoring needs to be of two types. The first type of mentoring is practical guidance to help the new coach understand the processes and procedures of managing a program in a new setting. There likely will be a myriad of questions about how the local system works, or who to contact to reserve vehicles, or how to put together a budget request. Some of these questions can be answered by other members of the coach's department, but some may be answered better by someone with whom the new coach is more comfortable.

In addition to practical mentoring, the new coach will need some more personal mentoring. This type of mentoring may be more critical in helping to retain the new coaches, and sometimes is harder to accomplish. New coaches who are struggling with trying to function in a new environment need someone to listen. The mentor might need to provide some answers or give some suggestions, but a majority of the time might be spent listening. The new coach needs have someone with whom they can vent their frustrations and not be concerned that a new colleague will think less of them because they seem to be unsure of what they are doing. The new coach needs to know that there is someone available who will listen, who will be sympathetic and non-judgmental, who understands, and who cares.

Volumes have been written about the need for and the value of mentoring. Frequently presented from the perspective of the business world, nearly all of the sources indicate that mentoring takes time, effort, and dedication. Experienced coaches who are Directors of Forensics already have busy schedules and heavy demands on their time. It may seem unfair or unreasonable to ask them to take on one more task. But taking the time to make a call or send a message could help retain a new coach, and potentially save a program. The mentor may not need to do anything more than just listen to a frustrated colleague vent about the events that seem almost intolerable at that time.

There are two key factors to be met for a mentoring relationship to work. The first is that mentors need to be identified and be willingly available to the new coaches. If mentors are unwilling or unavailable, the process won't work. The mentor doesn't need to be available at any hour of the day or night, but it is reasonable to expect that the mentor would be available to at least schedule a specific conference time. New coaches need to be provided with information about who they can contact. The second factor is that the relationship between the mentor and the new coach will need be comfortable, so that the new coach can confidently and safely express concerns without fear of ridicule or reprimand. It can be very difficult for a new coach to reveal a lack of knowledge or understanding, and it is important that the new coach know that those revelations will be confidential.

Twenty-five or thirty years ago, Dr. Gary Horn talked about the role of a director of forensics. He observed that "A director of forensics must be all things to all people." While he may not have specified exactly what that list included, he did identify many of the roles that we all recognize. In the intervening thirty years, that list has undoubtedly grown and one role to be added is that of a mentor. While we expect that current, experienced coaches will mentor their former students and graduate students, we should also expect that all experienced coaches will take on a mentoring role and share their knowledge and expertise with any new coach. An active mentoring program can help to retain many at-risk new coaches.

Finding Strength in Numbers
A Collaborative Team Approach to Directing Forensic Programs

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Abstract

Much has been written regarding pressures facing directors of forensics and forensic educators in general. Most of these pressures are associated with managing a slate of professional responsibilities that exceed those of most professional educators, along with balancing professional and personal lives. While much attention has been paid to the role of the director of forensics as an educator, colleague, and mentor, less has been written regarding the director as a manager of professional colleagues. Similarly, little discussion is found within forensic scholarship regarding the challenges and opportunities associated with multiple staff members within a single forensic program.

We advocate a collaborative team approach to directing the forensic program. Our paper addresses the rationale for such an approach, justifying assistants as a means of improving programs and enhancing lives of the professionals leading those programs. We also detail one model for collaborative administration that has, on balance, worked to attain and exceed university and program goals. Finally, the paper outlines particular issues associated with collaborative administration and strategies for responding to such issues. In the end, we advocate a collaborative team approach to directing forensic programs as an excellent means of maximizing the potential of forensic students and professionals.

Introduction

Forensic education is an odd profession. Like other time-demanding careers, forensic professionals find themselves trying to balance excessive professional commitments with personal lives. Within the educational arena this means teaching, committee work, pursuing professional development projects, advising, grading, and any other job one's chair or dean finds. Forensic educators then add to this slate of responsibilities their forensic position, which often may be another 20 or more hour a week commitment. Of course personal lives must be calculated into this delicate exercise in time management and prioritizing. At the same time, most forensic professionals simultaneously acknowledge profound and unique work pressures with extreme satisfaction with their career choice (Jensen and Jensen, 2004; McDonald, 2001).

Despite the passion most forensic educators feel for their professional calling, few would reject the offer of a helping hand. Many programs benefit from multiple professional staff. In fact, some research confirms what would seem to be a logical correlation between competitive success and size of the professional staff (Bauer and Young, 2000). Many programs benefit from multiple staff members who can share the myriad responsibilities that accompany administering a forensic program. With a professional staff come decisions as to how these colleagues can best be integrated into the overall culture of the program. Managed ineffectively, assistance can become counter-productive to the goals of effectively administering a forensic program with limited stress and emotional labor.

We acknowledge the need for multiple staff members within forensic programs. While we understand that, ultimately, someone must be the director and delegation of responsibility is important, a spirit of collaboration is an effective approach to administering a forensic program. In this paper we outline the need for forensic staffs. We then propose a hierarchical collaborative model of forensic program administration. In the end we suggest potential challenges and responses to these challenges associated with such a collectivist approach to forensic program management.

A Rationale for a Team Approach to Program Administration

Forensic educators face unique pressures that make their professional lives challenging. Burnett (2002) paints a rather pessimistic view on potential burnout of collegiate forensic directors. She writes "forensics coaches are caught in a vicious circle in which the system, as it currently exists, will continue to burn out those individuals who wish to educate their students and administer a fine forensics program, and who also wish to be valued faculty members in their departments as well as have a life outside the activity" (p. 80). As young educators or even program directors, individuals can be overwhelmed by the challenges of balancing personal and professional lives as well as how to handle the nuances of a

professorship/forensic duality. While it is grounded in debate, Dauber and Penetta (1994) preface the draft document from the Quail Roost Conference. This conference and document, while outlining rigorous expectations for debate educators seeking tenure, also acknowledges the importance of professionally evaluating debate educators in ways that reflect the inherent dimensions of their appointment. Williams and Gantt (2005) report a study that outlines responsibilities that define a director of forensics from other educators. Jensen and Dersch (2007), in their framing of forensic educators as at-risk professionals, offer inventories of both challenges and coping strategies associated with forensic education and administration. Ultimately, the pressures we suggest stem from the differences between a forensic and non-forensic educator. Further, these pressures can lead to profound ramifications for the forensic professional's health and personal life (Jensen and Jensen, 2007; Leland, 2004). Each of these differences and challenges provide independent warrants for a staff, or team approach to administering a forensic program.

The opportunity, or lack thereof, for forensic educators to take sabbatical leaves is an issue for forensic educators. Some forensics educators are expected to teach their classes, coach their teams, and travel without the luxury of a sabbatical. Often these are the directors of forensics whose appointment is not tenure track. The inability to take a sabbatical as forensics educator also contributes to burn out that can lead to ineffective administration and teaching, or a departure from their jobs. Many who travel frequently, coach long and late hours, and teach a number of classes need a sabbatical but are not given the opportunity to take one. Conversely, other directors of forensics who are allotted a sabbatical are often unable to seize the opportunity due to the lack of an assistant or the fear the direction their program might take in their absence. Forensic programs are infused with new people and the risk of new norms being established each year. Many directors fear that the patterns established while they are on sabbatical may not be consistent with their vision of the program. Other directors might be told that they can take a sabbatical if they find their replacements, or are willing to allow the program to be student run or put on hiatus in their absence. One would never expect or accept a successful sports coach taking a sabbatical. The idea that Lou Holtz or Bobby Bowden would select a successor to " hold the fort" during their sabbatical is actually pretty funny and yet no one so much as blushes at the proposition for forensic educators.

A substantial number of institutions underestimate and undervalue the amount of time and effort put into running a successful forensic program. Forensic educators are expected to participate fully in service and committee responsibilities, research and writing, course development and refinement, and usually the forensic allowance they are given is a one course reduction in their teaching load. For that three hour course credit each semester the forensic educator engages in long coaching sessions, traveling each tournament weekend (generally a Thursday through Sunday), budgeting, planning schedules, arranging transportation and accommodations with various bureaucratic hurdles, planning and holding organizational meetings, administrative tasks associated with qualifying students for travel and then entering them into tournaments, creating and enforcing a set of standards and policies as well as other duties, managing staff, leading meetings, recruiting, and promoting the program. If the program hosts a tournament there are another lengthy set of tasks to be managed and accomplished. All of this is underscored with the reality that forensics is not their primary academic appointment. In the long run it is imperative that we come to understand the risks and responses to risks of forensic educator burnout (Richardson, 2005). In the short term, institutions must realize that to successfully execute this agenda of responsibilities a forensic educator must have other professionals who s/he can rely upon to assist with the management of the program.

Several teams are fortunate enough to have an assistant or team of assistants. Klosa (2005) suggests high schools as outlets for coaching assistance. Other potential resources include alumna, colleagues with particular interests in events or debate (when topics correspond with their areas of expertise), parents, and students themselves. There are many ways that assistants can be effectively utilized, including assigning responsibility for one event or group of events, placing an assistant in charge of the team as it travels, or even placing assistants in charge of tournament hosting or other service activities sponsored by the program. Other programs share responsibilities for teaching and administration among all staff members with clearly drawn boundaries of responsibilities. Still, other programs have directors of forensics who administer the program but do little if any coaching/teaching or traveling. Each of these models work wonderfully for select programs. This paper is offering another possible configuration for utilizing assistants that we believe has distinct advantages for most programs.

The Collaborative Hierarchical Model

We call this a collaborative hierarchical model because it strives to achieve the greatest degree of collective input from and discussions with staff before final decisions are made about policies, scheduling, practice regimens, program and student development, tournament administration, travel and most other operational and philosophical issues. The

input is without regard to status of contributing staff members, and is shared with the goal of reaching consensus while reinforcing an interdependent relationship between all professional educators in the program. The model remains hierarchical in that the director maintains final responsibility and therefore final authority on all decisions. While this model may not represent a universal solution, it has succeeded for us over several years. We believe that broadly trained, versatile assistants who operate collaboratively with the director of forensics offer advantage not afforded by other staff configurations. Assistants who are constrained in their responsibilities simply are not trained or possibly inclined to tackle a whole variety of administrative or coaching tasks. It would be very easy for an assistant who is assigned and responsible for interpretation events to feel that administrative tasks were "not their job," or that hearing extemporaneous speeches "isn't my area." In a collaborative team approach staff members do not dismiss responsibilities. The director of forensics directs staff to accomplish tasks or asks them to see what needs to be done. No task is out of bounds, although staff members have preferred tasks, and anyone can do whatever is needed. We believe that the collaborative administration model serves to relieve the pressures of the director of forensics as well as allow the team to properly function even when the director is on sabbatical or not on a tournament.

There are several distinct advantages associated with this collaborative approach to forensic administration and education. This collaboration can be extended to whatever extent the director is comfortable. The important caution for directors of forensics seeking to employ the model is to take into account the culture and structure of the program and institution (Corrie, 1995). Factors unique to particular schools such as course loads or limits on administrative responsibilities for certain faculty ranks can significantly impact the success of collaboration. In our case, all aspects of the program are shared with and taught to the assistants including but not limited to event preparation and coaching, planning the travel and event schedule, budgeting the season, arranging the travel, discerning and filling out the correct paperwork, and obtaining travel advances.

The clearest advantage of this procedure to the director is the ability to delegate at any time any of the various and sundry tasks associated with running a program. At the extreme, fully qualifying a staff makes possible even a semester long sabbatical for the director of forensics without the program missing a beat, or at least not many. The staff benefits through the opportunity to see the whole process and therefore become knowledgeable, if not prepared to take on program administration or any part thereof, with little adjustment anxiety. Assistants in a program like this will have skills above and beyond most other assistants with whom they will compete for positions. Job satisfaction should also be maximized with staff as they are intimately "in the loop" and share equal responsibilities. The "fair" workplace can induce "high involvement and a willingness to collaborate with the organization's goals, despite low salaries"(Borzaga & Tortia 2006). Open discussions and clear explanations by the director when there are questions make the learning experience of the assistants worth any extra work which might result from a highly involved programs. The director of forensics is essentially mentoring the staff on an on-going basis and this may or may not suit other programs. By building the skill set and confidence of the staff, and treating all the assistants fairly the director is helping to increase their job satisfaction while at the same time creating more flexibility for herself/himself. The staff can take on whatever pressing tasks appear or are delegated.

In our case the program in which we collaborate is widely comprehensive, including at least one and sometimes two forms of debate, any number of the 11 AFA individual events, reader's theatre, experimental events when offered, hosting of a small and large tournament, audience programs, and community outreach projects. The program's mission is for the students to gain insight into themselves and understanding about their place in the world through learning and performing in the various genres of individual events and debate. Students are required to participate at some level, even if minimal, in both debate and individual events. Learning and improving are stressed above competitive success although competition is appreciated and efforts to win are certainly present in interactions with students. The program articulates the motto "learning is winning." The program travels to tournaments offering both debate and individual events (with extremely rare exceptions), representing approximately eight invitational tournament weekends, a state tournament, and at least two national tournaments. The Pi Kappa Delta tournament is always the top priority for the program; it is coupled with, when resources and tournament schedule allow, AFA-NIET and NPDA tournaments.

In keeping with the comprehensive program approach, all staff members are expected to develop adequate levels of expertise to teach and coach each of the individual events and debate. The director is sensitive to initial deficiencies among new staff; they are encouraged to enhance their knowledge base through other staff, and/or more traditional sources such as publications and videos. Students are mandated to practice with each of the staff for each event. This provides a wider perspective for the performer, getting a variety of opinions at each stage of preparation. Any conflicting advice requires a per-

formance choice and a defensible rationale from the student, thereby enhancing the student's preparation and introspection. This practice also increases the meta-communication among staff with regard to performances and preparation, and increases the staff's accountability with each other in terms of providing the most thorough, thoughtful commentary possible. All the comments of all staff may come up in meetings, be solicited by the director or other staff members, and be subject to group scrutiny. There is no pressure to conform to certain views or ideas, simply the expectation that you be willing and able to explain and defend your viewpoint. Clearly, setting a tone of openness and respect for divergent views is a key responsibility of the director for the model to function smoothly. On the positive side, this can provide an educational opportunity for staff to learn from each other. The model works best when staff keeps a positive, open minded and respectful attitude toward each other.

Responding to Challenges of the Model

With any model or situation come challenges. Many people have set up a system which they believe will work for them, but unforeseen situations sometimes arise, and the system can be challenged. Knowing what challenges to expect and appropriate responses to the challenges ahead of time help a forensic educator keep the model in working order.

One challenge directors face is the resistance of staff members (often new) to accept the role of collaborator. Many times if a new assistant is unaware of the collaborative role of the staff they may not be as adaptive as the director would like. Further, a new assistant may feel they either have a lot to prove, or that they know more than the existing staff. This can lead to a resistance to collaborate, and/or a goal of being seen as highly important in the eyes of students. In order for our model to work, all staff members must be willing to set aside their egos and be open to compromise, criticism, and rejection of ideas. By collaborating, compromise is often put into play in order to reach a decision that is best for all.

Another challenge to the model is when an assistant fails to adapt to the norms of the program. Again, some assistants want to "rescue" a program, change its direction, or simply refuse to adapt to the norms that the director has established. These norms can include abiding by particular rules, procedures for having events approved for travel, or knowing how hard to motivate a reticent novice. New assistants are usually the ones guilty of this challenge because they have not always been in the activity long enough to know how to best manage these challenges.

A third challenge facing programs wanting to utilize a collaborative approach to program administration is the natural tendency for students to gravitate to particular staff members. In the collaborative model, each staff member needs to interact with each student, preferably for about the same amount of time. Whether the reason is as mundane as schedule compatibility or as complex as personality conflicts, reliance on any specific member of the staff can undermine the effectiveness of the coaching by committee process. The answer to this challenge is simply to codify that students must practice for each staff member for each event before they can see any coach a second time (for an approved practice). Additional consecutive practices with one staff member may occasionally be desirable even though it may temporarily skew the ratio of practices to staff members per event, but making those imbalances temporary is necessary. The staff member seeking or accommodating the extra practices should defend those variances to the director and staff . The student benefits from having a number of opinions about the evolution of a piece. If the views are conflicting, the student needs to consider the input and make carefully considered and defensible choices, thereby improving the amount of thought going into preparation before any ballots are ever written in a tournament context. This codified variance in staff/student collaboration for each event conforms to the educational position that the performance needs to address a wide audience, and helps make the students more mature advocates for their ideas.

The value placed on specialization is education is illustrated by the importance of the PhD degree. Following the logic that intensive focused study in a particular area contributes to more effective teaching, it is certainly possible that highly skilled individuals in one event or area might not wish to engage in the collaborative process and or be bothered by program details not falling within their area of specialization. It can be argued that having a staff of generalists might be less effective than a group of selected experts. There are several reasons our model actually contributes to better teaching and student success. In our case, being broadly engaged in our program's events is performatively consistent with an educationally driven comprehensive program in which each educator is responsible for understanding and working with any of our students' events. This breadth mirrors the expectations we have for the student performers and produces an authentic performance which reflects the input of the entire staff. The entire staff was responsible for providing helpful commentary which was discussed with the performer and within the staff. An additional reason our approach does not suffer from an apparent lack of specialization is that such expertise is not abandoned, nor discouraged. While all staff members work with all events, it is natural that some staff will prefer one event over another, or be more confident or capable in teaching/coaching one event over

another. When working within one's area of specialty it stands to reason that those staff/student sessions will reflect the expertise the educator is able to bring to that student.

Two real world challenges are inherent in this model. The collaborative model requires a great deal of time from staff members. In order to make available all necessary training for various aspects of education and administration, share results of teaching/coaching sessions, and monitor program development, time must be shared by staff members. Regular meetings and periods of meta-communication regarding the collaborative process itself are necessary for each element. Staff members, particularly graduate assistants and volunteer coaches, may not have the time to follow this path, despite the pay off in experience at the end. The further danger is that a collaborative program might lose a talented specialist who is unwilling to learn about the other events. To a lesser extent, there could be a difficult transition for a new staff member lacking experience in several areas. Collaborating to help the colleague is the best way to maintain the effectiveness of the model.

We are convinced the rewards for the staff and program justify the extra effort that may be required for the successful execution of the collaborative hierarchical model for forensic program administration. The broad preparation makes the staff better teachers and mentors to the team members. The synergy among events is clear to anyone involved in several of them. The better the appreciation for how the events go together and are distinct, the more effectively one can teach any of them. The staff members have accountability to each other as well as to the student for their teaching and coaching. There is nowhere to hide if one fudges a coaching session. This transparency produces better results for the students and helps the staff improve their teaching skills as well. These collaborative efforts reinforce a shared ownership of the program which helps morale for everyone involved. The process also creates a transparent and hopefully more organized administration. The constant need communication among the staff creates sharedness in mission and bonds between people form or strengthen.

There is a small risk of group think and pressure to conform to the director's point of view. Some might argue this model could become oppressive. This danger is inherent in any situation where one person wields ultimate authority. The tone set by the director and their encouragement of independent thought and even respectful dissent are needed to make all staff members feel safe enough to be honest. The regard for each teacher's lens of experience and philosophy of forensics allows for sometimes animated discussions which we believe ultimately enhance the intellectual environment, the student's ownership of their material and the vibrancy of the program.

We begin with a set of shared goals and policies, teach to the best of our abilities, work together to get things done and help the students find their own voices, while we try to learn from each other how to understand forensics, communicate with each other and our students and help the performers offer their best efforts to the activity.

Conclusion

There is little than can relieve the pressures associated with forensic program administration. For most who have selected to become forensic educators, they are engaged in a labor of love. At the same time, having a forensic staff can ease pressures that, if left unchecked, can spiral to lack of job satisfaction on the part of the forensic educator and minimal effectiveness and satisfaction on the part of the forensic student. We propose a model of forensic administration that codifies collaboration among staff members. At its most basic level this model provided much needed support for educators seeking to teach and coach to their fullest potential. At its most ideal level, this collaborative approach to forensic administration and teaching can result in an interdependent program that celebrates sharedness in purpose, effort, and accomplishments.

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The Peoria Recommendations
Suggestions on Promotion, Tenure and Evaluation for Directors of Forensics

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Introduction and Background

The reality of forensics education in the early 21st century is that there are a variety of models in terms of designing programs. A simple list of configurations can include:

- Single tenure-track director of forensics
- Tenure-track director of forensics with one or more tenure-track assistants
- Tenure-track director of forensics with one or more part-time assistants
- Single continuing-appointment director of forensics
- Single term-appointment director of forensics
- Single staff member director of forensics
- Staff director of forensics with one or more full-time staff assistants
- Staff director of forensics with one or more part-time staff assistants
- Adjunct director of forensics

All of these configurations occur within the basis of a variety of different types of institutions, including research institutions, regional comprehensive institutions, liberal arts institutions, community colleges, and other types of institutions such as for-profit institutions[1]. Clearly, the Quail Roost committee was correct in calling for a document that served all of these different constituencies. This paper must do the same. However, Quail Roost was written from a policy debate paradigm. While many forensic educators have borrowed from Quail Roost in the preparation of promotion and tenure documents, it is time to reconsider Quail Roost from the perspective for directors who are part of individual events only or are part of comprehensive programs.

There are three basic reasons Quail Roost must be updated for current forensic practice: Quail Roost is designed primarily for tenure-track, Ph.D. DOFs, Quail Roost presumes a service model that may not be appropriate for IE or other types of programs, and Quail Roost was written before some major reconceptions of theories of scholarship.

Since Quail Roost, the background of forensic educators has changed significantly. Rogers notes that the percentage of PhD and tenured DOF's has decreased, while the number of non-tenure track and staff DOF's has increased. In 2000, 20% of forensic educators had the PhD, 57% were faculty status, 26% were staff status, 17% were graduate assistants, and 44% were on the tenure track ("Forensics in the New Millennium" 7-8). Evaluation instruments designed on the traditional models of teaching, research, and service may not be appropriate for those of staff and non-tenure status.

Second, one of the presuppositions of the Quail Roost document is of a "reverse presumption" about service – that in the realm of policy debate, service often happens earlier rather than later in one's professional career (7-8). That is certainly not always true within the variety of different forensic organizations, although it can be. Instead, a conception of service that is broader-based is necessary to consider the different kinds of service that take place within the forensics community.

Finally, as this paper will later argue, Boyer's Scholarship Reconsidered has had a significant impact on promotion and tenure practices at a variety of institutions. Any guidelines or suggestions for evaluation of forensic professionals must take into account how Boyer's practices have influenced higher education.

This document, therefore, seeks to strike a balance between prescriptive and descriptive. While departments and institutions vary as far as standards of evaluation, tenure, and promotion are concerned, this document seeks to advance the work of former and current forensic educators such as Ann Burnett, MaryAnn Danielson, Tom Workman, David Williams and Joe Gantt to raise the kinds of questions that directors (and assistant directors) should ask of themselves and their programs, and to suggest questions that should be asked of forensics professionals[2] when it comes to their evaluation. In that light, these recommendations serve both to further the professionalism of the activity as well as to align forensics with the growing movement toward assessment (Bartanen "Rigorous Program Assessment," Kerber and Cronn-Mills).

[1] Earlier in the decade DeVry had several students competing in parliamentary debate.

[2] The term "forensics professional" shall be used throughout this paper to indicate someone who fits within any of the conceptions mentioned at the very beginning of the recommendations.

While doing so, however, it is important to recognize the caveats noted several years ago by Ed Hinck:

> Comparing the work of one director with another is often more difficult than comparing the more traditional work of faculty members who teach and write in their field of expertise. However, just as we recognize the varied contributions of faculty members within the four major categories of teaching, scholarly activity, service, and professional activity, it seems important enough to describe the variations in programs and explain the educational value of those emphases. Failing to address those issues leaves directors vulnerable to the misapplication of a very limited set of standards for evaluating their work. (11-12)

To Hinck's qualifications, the author would add one additional item: without research that includes forensics research, as well as research by and about the academy, these recommendations would be meaningless.

Thus, the recommendations that will be offered seek to address several questions:

1. How do we define when a director/assistant director is an effective part of the forensics community, which is by definition educational, co-curricular, and also competitive?
2. How do we help to define how forensics uniquely impacts the areas of teaching, scholarship and service?
3. How do we account for the variations in program types when determining what makes an effective ADOF/DOF?

One other observation needs to be made before continuing. This document draws upon two decades of forensics and higher education research. In some cases, the points being made here will be familiar to long-term members of the forensic community. In many of those cases, the points made were prescient long before they were recognized in the larger community. In other cases, good ideas that simply were forgotten are being advanced again because of their intrinsic value.

The Professionalism of Directors: Bridging the Pedagogical and the Competitive

One of the unique challenges that a director of forensics faces is that she or he has the ability to offer educational philosophies that guide an entire program. Assistant directors, particularly those who have oversight for a particular portion of a program (for example, individual events or a particular type of debate) also have this same ability. While this ability to set the educational philosophy is often ground in negotiations with both the host department (as applicable) and/or the larger institution as a whole, it is clear that the director should be able to offer justifications as to the existence and the educational viability of forensics. Along those lines, and of those suggested by Keefe, we should consider the following questions to be essential to ask forensic educators (49-50).

1. What is your coaching philosophy?

While this question sounds fairly straightforward at first, most forensics professionals recognize that this can easily become a fairly complex question. In the forensics community, we have developed a variety of attitudes and perspectives about how forensics should operate, both on a team (micro) and community (macro) level. A successful coaching philosophy should recognize both the micro and macro level.

On the micro level, forensics professionals should be able to answer at least three different questions: how do we expect students to generate speeches[3], what role should we as coaches play in the development of our students[4], and what kind of squad we should develop.[5] We should, as forensics educators, be able to clearly delineate and identify the kind of role we want to play in the development of our students as forensics team members, both in micro and macro contexts.

On the macro level, we have a variety of good illustrations from the realm of policy debate. Dr. Ede Warner's Louisville project and Towson State University's 2008 CEDA National Championship team are two examples of programs that have successfully raised questions of how debate should function. Warner has posted extensively on Edebate as well as published an article examining the philosophical assumptions under which his program operates.[6]

2. What is your judging philosophy?

The question is familiar to those who coach debate, as several organizations such as CEDA, NCCFA, NPDA, NPTE and the NDT already explicitly require written philosophies as a part of the tournament entry. However, several members of our community, including at the 3rd developmental conference, have made the calls for individual events

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3 Among other places, the issue is raised in Daniel J. O'Rourke, "Criticizing the Critic: The Value of Questions in Rhetorical Criticism." *National Forensic Journal* 3.2 (Fall 1985): 163-166.

4 See Leah White, "The Coach as Mentor." *National Forensic Journal* 23.1 (Spring 2005): 89-94

5 Carolyn Keefe, "Developing and Managing a Peer Forensics Program." *National Forensic Journal* 9.1 (Spring 1991): 65-75; Sheryl A. Friedley and Bruce B. Manchester, "Building Team Cohesion: Becoming 'We' Instead of 'Me.'" *National Forensic Journal* 23.1 (Spring 2005): 95-100.

6 Ede Warner & Jon Brushke, "'Gone on Debating:' Competitive Academic Debate as a Tool of Empowerment." *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate* 22 (2001): 1-21.

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coaches to do the same. As Przybylo argued, "A judging philosophy is dynamic or ever changing. Our views and criteria should develop as one grows as a judge and educator" (20). Przybylo argues for, at the minimum, the following areas to be covered:

- A General Philosophy Statement (overall view of your positions)
- "Overdone" material/topics
- Different rules (NFA, AFA, Phi Rho Pi, etc.)
- Listening behavior of students in the round
- Language (dirty words, sexist language, etc.)
- Movement and Book-as-Prop
- Use of script
- Current sources
- Types of comments written on the ballot
- Use of speaker points
- Organization of ballot
- Appearance of student
- Time violations
- Statements for each event

Pryzbylo's series of questions are a good start toward establishing a personal philosophy. One might expect, when it comes to questions of tenure, promotion and retention, that members of the community should recognize awareness of some of the critical issues within various events[7].

3. What is your teaching philosophy? How do you demonstrate effective teaching?

Whether we are full-time tenured DOF's or staff members who coach, this question is essential to answer. Even though teaching may be only a part of our responsibilities, given that forensics is at its core an educational activity[8], we must still be able to articulate two different aspects of teaching:

1. What is our own pedagogy, and how have we derived it?
2. How do we understand our role as teachers within forensics?[9]

Both of these are covered elsewhere within this document.

4. How do you see your program within the context of various forensic organizations? Do you know what the various organizations stand for?

Although in an ideal world, directors and other professionals should first determine their philosophy and then decide what organizations their teams should be members of, the fact of the matter is that most programs tend to decide what organizations they are part of based on what kinds of forensics they want to do. To that end, then, I would contend that the program should be able to articulate where it fits in. For example, in the realm of parliamentary and Lincoln-Douglas debate, programs often confront the question of whether they are traditional or more policy-based[10]. Such considerations are also critical for programs at faith-based institutions. To what extent should the forensic team uphold elements of the university's faith tradition?[11]

Additionally, care must be taken to consider whether a program can successfully be part of multiple organizations, and when such things as tournaments conflict, which organizations will a program more closely identify with? In recent years, NPDA has conflicted with CEDA; directors of programs that do both (such as the University of Wyoming, University of Puget Sound, Whitman College, etc.) have to make decisions as to which organization's tournament to support. Such decisions should be made in the context of the goals and the pedagogy present within each program.

5. How do you see forensics as an educational opportunity?

The goal behind this particular objective is to have directors and other professionals articulate what kinds of students they draw into the forensics experience. In the realm of policy debate, for example, some programs (such as Vermont, Louisiana-Lafayette, and others) are known for drawing novices into the activity. In individual events, several colleges universities (Bethel University, Normandale Community College, Southwest Minnesota State, etc.) require some of their students to participate in

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[7] This has long been a strand of forensic research. See Brian Ott, "Bridging Theory and Practice: Toward a More Pedagogical Model of Rhetorical Criticism," *National Forensic Journal* 16 (1998): 53-74; Stephen M. Croucher, "Like, You Know, What I'm Saying: A Study of Discourse Marker Frequency in Extemporaneous and Impromptu Speaking," *National Forensic Journal* 22.2 (Fall 2004): 38-47; Leah White and Lucas Messmer, "An Analysis of Interstate Speeches: Are They Structurally Different?" *National Forensic Journal* 21.2 (Fall 2003): 2-19, among others.

[8] See Russell Church, "The Educational Value of Oral Communication Courses and Intercollegiate Forensics: An Opinion Survey of College Prelegal Advisors and Law School Deans," *Argumentation and Advocacy* 12.1 (Summer 1975): 49-50; K.M. Bartanen, "The Place of the Forensics Program in the Liberal Arts College of the Twenty-first Century: An Essay in Honor of Larry E. Norton," *The Forensic* 84.1 (1998): 1-16; K. Stenger, "Forensics as Preparation for Participation in the Academic World," *The Forensic* 84.4 (1999): 13-23; Susan Millsap, "The Benefits of Forensics Across the Curriculum: An Opportunity to Expand the Visibility of College Forensics," *The Forensic* 84.1 (1998): 17-26.

[9] Leah White, "The Coach as Mentor." *National Forensic Journal* 23.1 (Spring 2005): 89-94.

[10] I recognize this is a simplification; however, it illustrates the general principle of identifying one's own program in the light of other peers. This is more a function of the "Here's what my program is like" approach.

[11] For example, many evangelical schools do attend the National Christian College Forensics Invitational, but not all do. Questions of whether or not a program should separate itself from others are perfectly fair and appropriate questions to raise.

forensics in order to graduate.[12] Since we clearly do not serve all of our student populations, it is important for us as forensics professionals to more clearly articulate the kinds of students we attract to our teams, as well as how those students fit within the educational mission of our respective colleges and universities.[13]

6. How would you define your program? If someone were to ask you what makes your program unique, how would you answer?

I mention this particular question last because in some ways, it is the summary of the previous five questions. Most of the previous questions are designed to be affirmative answers (i.e., "I seek to engage students in critical thinking"). However, we often answer the last question in the negative ("My program isn't like program X, Y or Z.") .

Part of defining the philosophy of the program is to make a decision of whether or not the program should be specialized or broad-based. Rogers makes the case for the broad-based program, contending, "If we give up and compartmentalize our programs doesn't that make them all the more vulnerable to external critics who argue that we are educating within only a narrow band of experience?" (Forensics in the New Millennium 8). McGee and Simerly advanced the argument that "In an era of forensics specialization, no program or program director can do all things well" (282). They also advanced arguments about resource allocation and experience of the director to make this case.

Forensic educators should be able to articulate why they have chosen the course they have through pedagogical rather than pragmatic lenses. If a program chooses to only offer individual events, then the director should be able to make that case. If the program tends to focus in particular areas, such as Lincoln-Douglas debate, limited preparation debate, and so forth, the program should be able to provide a justification. In short, the test of a director should be as Joseph Cardot once argued: "The director or coach of today must help decision-makers see the educational, social, and personal relevance of forensics" (81).

7. How do you know that your program is effectively meeting its goals?

Bartanen ("Rigorous Program Assessment") notes the problem with much current assessment of programs: it tends to be process rather than outcome-based (37). While studies have been done concerning the role of forensics within the university as a whole[14], most programs tend not to ask questions about what kind of outcomes the program desires, and whether or not those outcomes have actually been implemented.

One of the means of assessment should be to include students who are part of the program. The Denver conference on individual events recommended that "forensic coaches have the duty to articulate to students their program's philosophy, goals, rules and expectations" (Karns and Schnoor 7). Part of an assessment instrument should be to find out how students perceive the goals of the program, and to see whether those goals are actually being achieved.[15] In addition, we can profitably include peer evaluations (such as those already required as external referees/reviewers), reviews from former coaches and DOF's, and so on.

Directors and Teaching

Clearly, the expectation is that as instructors in a college classroom, forensics professionals are expected to be effective teachers. The question of whether or not teaching also applies to forensics has been long debated in a variety of tenure and promotion committees. Because of the kind of coaching that we often do, which can be one-to-one, one-to-a few, it is often not recognized in the same way as teaching a normal course. However, there are at least two reasons to consider forensics as teaching.

First, to be an effective coach requires the recognition of learning styles. Bartl notes that a learning styles approach to coaching can be extremely effective. Since this approach borrows from what has already been established within educational pedagogy, its applicability is readily apparent.

Second, within forensics, we have the unique ability to see a student's performance multiple times and to give it far more feedback than we are typically able to do in our courses. In addition, in our role as judges, we are asked to provide feedback to students from other institutions, and in that sense, confirm whether students have sufficiently mastered the competencies expected within forensic events, and

[12] This is covered more fully in Michael Dreher, "Component-Based Forensic Participation: Using Components to Build a Traditional Team." *Southern Journal of Forensics* 2.3 (Fall 1997): 236-243.

[13] An often cited justification is that forensics students tend to be brighter than the typical college student, thus, raising the academic profile of the institution. Additionally, this is the justification offered by Urban Debate Leagues (UDL) for their existence. The Rogers *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate* article cited in the bibliography provides a research-based substantiation for this argument.

[14] Mike Allen, Sandra Berkowitz, Steve Hunt, and Allan Louden. "A Meta-Analysis of the Impact of Forensics and Communication Education on Critical Thinking." *Communication Education* 48 (1999): 18-30; Joe Bellon, "A Research-Based Justification for Debate Across the Curriculum." *Argumentation and Advocacy* 36.3 (Winter 2000): 161-175.

[15] Such an approach can be found in Janet Kay McMillian and William R. Todd-Mancillas. "An Assessment of the Value of Individual Events in Forensics Competition from Students' Perspectives." *National Forensic Journal* 9.1 (1991): 1-17.

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indeed, whether or not they are effective in the realm of public speaking. As such, we not only teach our students, we teach the students of our colleagues as well.

Directors and Service

Different institutions have different levels of expectation as far as service is concerned. This document will consider that service can happen both within the forensics community and externally, such as in service-learning.

Within the forensics community, the common assumption is to think primarily in terms of the national organizations. There are ways in which forensics professionals can engage in service, however. The first is the tournament itself. Not every school is able to host; not every professional is able to direct. Those who do are indeed the lifeblood of the activity. What is needed, however, is more of an assessment tool by which we can establish the effectiveness of the hosting experience. Numbers of schools are a poor indicator; given the nature of the tournament calendar, tournament attendance will vary. However, as a community, we should encourage tournaments that offer variations in different events[16], as well as to provide standards by which we know that hosts and tournament directors have been successful. This paper will not list such standards, as they are best left to regional and local communities. The 3-round Tuesday afternoon tournaments in Minnesota, for example, serve a much different audience than the national draw of the Sunset Cliffs, for example.

Service also happens within regional and local associations. Recognition should be given to those who do such tasks as write topics for tournaments, serve in tabulation rooms, on executive boards and councils of regional forensics organizations, and so on.

In short, we should ask the question of how the professional is engaging the larger forensics community, and what role that person has in serving the community. We should recognize that service happens in a variety of different ways.

Directors and Scholarship

This paper will argue, as others, that scholarship should not be confined to traditional views of scholarship as being simply conference presentations, refereed journals and/or books. Indeed, many in the academic community has come around to the idea that scholarship should be more broadly grounded along the lines of Ernest Boyer's Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate. The idea of utilizing Boyer's framework is not new; a variety of coaches have successfully used these arguments in promotion and tenure cases[17]. In expanding on Boyer's notion and how it could be helpful for evaluation purposes, one important caveat must be emphasized: Boyer's conceptions do not in any way suggest that such research is easier or less rigorous as compared to traditional research; indeed, in many ways, such research is harder to do and harder to explain. The four elements of research Boyer considers are: the scholarship of discovery, the scholarship of integration, the scholarship of application, and the scholarship of teaching (16). These four types of scholarship will be explained in terms of the forensics community, as well as how they can be conceived of in various stages of a forensics professional's career.

Boyer suggests that the scholarship of discovery is most similar to traditional research and is based on the notion of a commitment to knowledge for its own sake. This kind of scholarship, in Boyer's view, often includes the creation of original work.

In our forensics community, we have heard the calls for additional research, and those won't be repeated here. However, it is also the case that creative activities, such as directing a Readers' Theater, involves the creation of original work as well. To make the case for Readers' Theater, the following is an example of the kind of argumentation Boyer suggests:

Is the scholarship presented publicly or published? Yes.

Is it peer-evaluated. Certainly. We often tend to choose judges in events such as RT that show unique understanding of the event.

Does it have an impact on the field? Good Readers' Theaters force us to reconsider what the event should be, and indeed, what should be discussed within RT. ARTa is an excellent illustration of this principle.

Boyer's second type of scholarship, the scholarship of integration, refers to where disciplinary boundaries come together. This is often seen in, for example, in the integration of oral interpretation and performance studies literature.

The third type of scholarship, the scholarship of application, is phrased by Boyer in terms of "How can knowledge be responsibly applied to consequential problems? How can it be helpful to individuals as well as institutions? And further, can social problems themselves define an agenda for scholarly investigation?" (21). Boyer then argues, "New intellec-

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[16] See David E. Williams, Christopher T. Carver and Russell D. Hart "Is It Time for a Change in Impromptu Speaking?" *National Forensic Journal* 11.1 (Summer 1993): 29-40; Scott Jensen, "Equal Opportunity?: The Impact of Specialized Tournaments on Forensics Pedagogy, Forensics Professionals, and the Forensic Laboratory," *Proceedings of the 3rd National Developmental Conference on Individual Events*. Ed. Shawnalee Whitney. Houston: Rice University, August 1997, 66-72.

[17] The author used it for promotion to full professor in 2004; he is indebted to Bob Groven of Augsburg College, who also used the idea. This idea is also discussed in Todd Holm and Jerry Miller's "Working in Forensics Systems," *National Forensic Journal* 22.2 (Fall 2004): 23-37.

tual understandings can arise out of the very act of application" and that in several disciplines, "theory and practice vitally interact, and one renews the other" (23).

Typically, when we consider the kind of research presented at our national conventions, it often falls into this scholarship of application. We also see it in review pieces at developmental conferences[18], specialized conferences such as ARTa[19] and PKD, and in our journals[20]. This kind of scholarship is common within the realm of interpretation, as forensic educators examine the interaction between oral interpretation, theater, performance studies, narrative theory, and in some cases, musical forms such as hip-hop[21] and so forth.

Practical Applications of Directors of Scholarship: To Publish in Forensics or Not?

This question is one of great concern to the forensics community, for as Kay pointed out nearly 20 years ago, a bias does exist against forensics research. Kay, a former DOF and then chair of the Department of Speech Communication at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, saw the purpose of his paper "is to plead with members of the forensic community to ground their research interests in matters which simultaneously serve the community of forensics and the community of scholars who are dedicated to the understanding of human communication" (61). While this paper doesn't disagree with Kay's perspective, it instead argues for a broadening of the perspective, to contend that what we do does interact with the communication discipline.

Evaluation of Forensic Educators: Can One Size Fit All?

The beginning of this paper argued that there were at least nine different categories of educators. Clearly, the standards for promotion to full professor at a Research Extensive universities should look different than the standards at community colleges. In a parallel way, standards for staff members are likely to be (radically) different than for faculty members. This portion of the paper will present several different ways we can evaluate forensic educators that can work across a variety of different kinds of settings.

1. Does the forensic professional understand the key issues of the field?

One aspect of Boyer's work that has been relatively unexplained is his third chapter in *Scholarship Reconsidered* on the faculty. Boyer argues the following:

> "...it is unrealistic, we believe, to expect *all* faculty members, regardless of their interests, to engage in research and to publish on a regular timetable. For most scholars, creativity simply doesn't work that way. We propose an alternative approach. Why not assume that staying in touch with one's field means just that – reading the literature and keeping well informed about consequential trends and patterns? Why not ask professors periodically to select the two or three most important new developments or significant new articles in their fields, and then present, in writing, the reasons for their choices? Such a paper, one that could be peer reviewed, surely would help reveal the extent to which a faculty member is conversant with developments in his or her discipline, and is in fact, remaining intellectually alive (27-28).

Such an approach could easily be incorporated into a teaching portfolio. This would allow forensic professionals to take a broad approach that considers the entirety of forensics within communication, political science or other disciplines, or focuses more narrowly on particular events.

Diamond's criteria for considering an activity also provides some means by which we can assess whether the reflection we as forensics professionals are doing meets scholarly criteria:

1. The activity of work requires a high level of discipline-related expertise.
2. The activity or work is conducted in a scholarly manner with clear goals, adequate preparation and appropriate methodology.
3. The activity or work and its results are appropriately and effectively documented and disseminated. This reporting should include a reflective critique that addresses the significance of the work, the process that was used, and what was learned.
4. The activity or work has significance beyond the individual context.
5. The activity or work, both process and product or result, is reviewed and judged to be meritorious and significant by a panel of one's peers (78).

2. Does the forensic professional show mastery of

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[18] See Trischa Knapp, "Returning to Our Roots: A New Direction for Oral Interpretation." *Proceedings of the 3rd National Developmental Conference on Individual Events*. Ed. Shawnalee Whitney. Houston: Rice University, August 1997, 29-34.

[19] For example, one panel at the 2008 ARTa conference by Amy Andrews and Crystal Lane Swift concerned "Argumentation/Interpretation: Do Performances Have to Argue?"

[20] Among many different possibilities, see Todd V. Lewis, David A. Williams, Madeline M. Keaveney, Michael G. Leigh"Evaluating Oral Interpretation Events: A Contest and Festival Perspectives Symposium." *National Forensic Journal* 2.1 (Spring 1984): 19-32.

[21] See Theresa Sotto, "The Poetics of Hip Hop," ArtsEdge/Kennedy Center series, http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/3656/

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key competencies?

Previous research by Workman, Williams and Gantt, and Danielson and Hollwitz have tried to focus on key competencies of the director of forensics. Workman suggests that there are six critical competencies: instructional, financial management, leadership and responsibility, administrative, interpersonal, and professional (84-85). Williams and Gantt's survey identified the administrative as being the most frequently mentioned cluster of DOF duties, followed by team management and coaching (61).

Danielson and Hollwitz's survey of DOF's identified four essential components and four relevant components of the DOF's position. In their study, the essential components included: arranging students' participation in off-campus tournaments, administering the speech and debate program, coaching speech and debate participants, and accounting and bookkeeping. The four relevant components of the DOF position were: recruiting students for speech and debate programs, teaching speech and debate classes, directing on-campus tournaments, and counseling and advising speech and debate students. They then went on to suggest that two other components may possibly be included: college and community service involvement, and moderating speech and debate student groups (13-14).

Clearly, previous studies have suggested that there are a variety of competencies that surround the forensics professional. This paper would contend that the professional, in conjunction with her or his supervisor (dean, department chair, etc.), mutually agree on the important competencies and then demonstrate how those competencies are to be measured.

3. When appropriate, has the forensic professional established her/himself as an effective teacher in her/his field of study?

Because of the nature of some forensic positions being primarily staff positions and/or adjunct positions, those professionals may not necessarily be teaching traditional undergraduate or graduate courses. However, in the sense that forensics coaching can be considered a form of teaching, then in a way, all who coach are teachers.[22]

I label this in a strategically ambiguous way because I mean it in three contexts: teaching within one's discipline, coaching and teaching students, and teaching future forensics professionals.

Teaching in one's discipline has certainly gained a great deal of importance over the past several decades, and it is not the primary focus of this particular paper. I would suggest, clearly, that those who are effective teachers in their courses should be rewarded and recognized. As we evaluate colleagues from other institutions, we should not be afraid to ask about their teaching in other courses.

This paper has already discussed the notion of coaching and teaching students, so I won't elaborate on that here. I will focus on the final element: teaching future forensics professionals. Many in the forensics community have lamented the decrease in terms of doctoral-level programs that educate forensics professionals; at the same time, MSU-Mankato has developed an MFA program for forensics professionals. But the impact of the trend is that much of what passes as teaching today takes place informally.[23]

4. Has the program clearly identified its mission, and has the forensics professional successfully operated within its mission?

Mission statements, for example, can help to both shape the professional's thinking as well as to serve as a reminder of the focus of the program. An example of part of the mission from the author's program serves as an illustrative example:

- Our program serves the needs of the Department of Communication Studies, our sponsoring department. Forensics serves as a laboratory for students who take our courses, and it serves as a cocurricular way of giving students the opportunity to teach and be taught by others outside of our own institution.
- Our program serves the needs of students of all majors. It is a way for students to learn more about communication as well as the world around us, and gives students opportunities to practice what they have learned.
- We seek to serve the forensics community through our commitment to first-time forensics students. We are the sponsoring school for Novice Nationals, a tournament for first-year intercollegiate competitors. Also, we encourage students with no previous experience to compete either as part of our courses or as part of our team.
- We believe that each student who is on our team is on the team for a reason. Our role is to help the student identify the reason, and find the ways in

[22] Clearly, our literature has suggested that ballots, and indeed events, perform an educational function. Additionally, the Spring 2005 (volume 23, no. 1) focus issue of the *National Forensic Journal* included a variety of articles based on the educational focus of various genres and events. As just one example, see George LaMaster's "Understanding Public Address Events" (32-36); also in that issue were Brendan Kelly's "Basic Training: An Assertion of Principles for Coaching Oral Interpretation for Intercollegiate Forensics Competition" (25-31), Ian Turnipseed's "Understanding Limited Preparation Events" (37-44) and Audra Diers' "Understanding Lincoln-Douglas Debate" (45-54).

[23] See Thomas Workman, "Solving for a Healthy Future: Creating National Standards for Training Future Directors of Forensics." *Proceedings of the 3rd National Developmental Conference on Individual Events*. Ed. Shawnalee Whitney. Houston: Rice University, August 1997, 83-86.

which we can minister to and through each student.[24]

Conclusion

The Peoria Recommendations are meant to be a starting point for both further discussion within the forensics community as well as for individual forensics professionals to consider the key questions of how professionals function within the community, and how professionals should be evaluated within the community. Without clearer standards, the role of the forensics professional will continue to be marginalized as committees who do not understand forensics are asked to evaluate forensics professionals.

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Helping Programs Survive Utilizing the Concepts of Sustainability as Viable Means of Program Growth

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Abstract

One of the many responsibilities and duties of a forensics coach is conducting long range planning for their respective program. Recruiting students and retaining them is paramount to surviving. When numerous programs across the country have ceased to exist, examining this issue takes on paramount important. In the past, the forensic community has engaged into important discussion about the growth of programs within our activity. However, I adamantly believe directors at smaller programs need to shift their focus from growth to developing a philosophy of sustainability. This paper will defend this position by describing the concept of sustainability as it relates to the practices of recruitment and retention of students. Specific attention will focus on the concept of "best practice" in helping establish suggestions for the survival of forensic programs.

Introduction

Recently, I had the opportunity to chat with Mike Wartman director of the Twin Cities Forensics League. Anyone in district four who has ever attended a TCFL (Twin Cities Forensics League) is very familiar with the crazy antics of Mike and his rapid award ceremony procedures. In conversing with Mike we begin discussing the upcoming state tournament in Minnesota. Mike began to reminisce about his days of being Director of Forensics at Normandale Community College. One story in particular stuck with me and has become the primary motivation and direction for this paper.

Mike was telling me about the 1981 or 1982 Minnesota State Tournament (let's be honest, after awhile students and tournaments all tend to blend together). I was prepared to hear about a routine state tournament but there was nothing routine about his story. The particular year in question had a remarkable 17 two year or community college programs in attendance at that tournament. In fact, Mike told me that there use to be a separate state tournament in the two year division based on the sheer number of schools and entries.

Many of us in the forensics community become attached to a particular school, state or district. I competed for two years in Illinois and also did some volunteer coaching. I also did two years of student coaching in Michigan. Both of these states are truly remarkable and hold special memories. But, I will always have a special connection with forensics in the state of Minnesota. I competed two years as an undergraduate in this state. I completed my graduate degrees in Minnesota. I was an assistant director of forensics for three years at Minnesota State University, Mankato. Finally, I have started a small program at South Central College which is located in Mankato, Minnesota. I consider myself fortunate to say that my small program is entering into its third year of existence.

I had difficultly fathoming the story being told to me. In the eleven years that I have been affiliated with Minnesota forensics I have never seen the state tournament attended by any more than fifteen schools. To consider that a separate state tournament was held on the two year level literally blows my mind, so to speak.

However, the story takes an all too familiar turn. Out of those seventeen teams which attended the two year Minnesota state tournament, only one of those programs still exists today. Sixteen viable and active forensic programs on the two year level have disappeared. Sadly, some four programs in the state have also disappeared during my years of coaching involvement in Minnesota. While this is disheartening, I know Minnesota is not the only state which has experienced the loss of programs.

As coaches, directors and scholars in the forensics community we must be compelled to address this trend. The elimination of programs is not a new issue. While no exact statistics have been collected, if the forensics community would put their respective collective memories and experiences together, I would have to imagine the number of programs which have disappeared would be staggering.

As we approach the gathering of forensics colleagues at this 2008 Developmental Conference, I am compelled to ask this question which will drive the focus of this paper. What can the forensics community do to stave off the elimination of programs? I believe one answer is directors utilizing approaches which reinforce the concept of sustainability.

This paper will first discuss the general nature of growth in programs. Then I will lay out the concepts of sustainability. Critical attention will focus on the concept of best practice as it relates to sustainability. Practical suggestions for best practice will then be

explained to help coaches and directors comprehend how adopting a sustainable mindset could help save forensics programs.

Growth in Forensics

The idea of growth within in the forensics community centers around two general avenues of discussion. First, growth is applied to individual programs. This involves strategies, techniques and practices programs use to recruit and retain students for their respective programs. The second element of growth typically discussed by the forensics community is the creation of new programs and providing steps for new directors to help them start a program from "scratch." Both of these general concepts are extremely important and more research, discussion and implementation of these ideas needs to occur.

The forensics community has engaged into some very thoughtful and critical research in regards into the numerous issues which threaten the survival of a program. Predominantly, these factors include coach burnout and attempting to juggle the numerous demands and roles a director of forensics has to juggle.

First, Being a director of a forensics program can be a stressful juggling act. The demands of academic teaching, course preparation work, research projects, and committee or department meetings are difficult to balance by themselves. Workman

(1997) identifies six areas of competency that forensics directors must possess in order to succeed in their role of leading their forensics program. Workman notes that a director must be competent in the instruction of events, financial management, all areas of leadership, being an administrator, professionalism and as an interpersonal mentor for students.

The idea that coaches experience "burnout" from the excessive demands of collegiate forensics has received a fair share of critical attention. (Billings, 2002; Burnett, 2002; Holm & Miller, 2004). The majority of forensics teams do not have internal institutional assistance with department faculty or graduate students aiding in the running of their programs. The director is the sole individual responsible for all aspects of team management. This task can be extremely overwhelming, especially for the newly hired director of forensics.

However, I firmly believe an essential element of growth has been omitted from this discussion. Discussion needs to start about how forensic programs can simply survive. In my opinion, this is not a conscious negative choice by the forensics community. I believe the idea of programs surviving is inherently implied in the discussion of growth. But more research and discussion needs to happen about the issues directly related to program survival. Sustainability is one such approach.

Sustainability

The concept of sustainability originally stems from ecological thinking. At the core of sustainability is creating a set of values which will reinforce care and respect for both the ecosystem and for the people living within that ecosystem. This concept suggests that a sense of well being can be established for both the system and its people.

A primary tenet of sustainability is the concept of best practice. Best practice can be defined as the idea that there is a technique, method, process, activity, incentive or reward that is more effective at delivering a particular outcome than any other technique, method, process, etc. (Hargroves & Smith, 2005).

The possibility does exist for the concept of best practice to become skewed. People may utilize the least amount of resources for ultimate outcome or achievement, which does follow the concept of best practice. However, if this approach is constantly followed, then the development of a norm is established. This norm then automatically is assumed to be the "best practice" to accomplish a particular task. People will then naturally not seek out future or other possible "best practice" elements to constantly improve.

Application of Best Practice to Forensics Growth

There are numerous aspects or ideas which could be discussed about the nature of "best practice" in forensics. I will focus only two areas. The first will be the aspect of recruiting as it relates to growth issues. The second area will focus on coaching aspects and growth.

Since I have become Director of Forensics at South Central College I have purposely elected to NOT actively recruit students to my program. For instance, after two years, I have not put recruitment posters or flyers around my campus. I do not attend our freshman orientation sessions. While this may change in the near future, I haven't worked with area high school programs to spread the word about my small program. This is not to say I do not recruit students. I would have to recruit some students or I simply would not have a team. My recruitment strategies are focused to very specific components of which I will expand upon later in the paper.

I know there are numerous programs which have very active recruitment strategies in place. These programs may offer summer camps, high school workshops, attend freshman orientation, offer high school tournaments, provide scholarships and a litany of other recruiting strategies. I simply do not have the time, energy or resources available to conduct recruiting on this level. I envy large programs which have these resources. Clearly, to maintain their large team identity and sweepstakes posi-

tion(s) at national tournaments, the "best practice" for these teams is to actively seek numerous recruits.

This minimal approach to recruitment and team growth is clearly not applicable to every program. However, to small programs or single coach programs, this approach is appropriate. I will lay out some "best practice" suggestions which will help a program sustain itself within the realm of recruiting students and overall team size. These suggestions can help ensure the sustainability of these types of programs.

Best Practice Recruitment Strategies

My sustainable "best practice" is to essentially minimize my recruiting strategies and attempts. These strategies include targeting other student organizations for finding speech students. If applicable by location, another strategy is asking for graduate coaching help from another program. Limiting the size of one's team is another "best practice suggestion. Finally, making students very aware of their practical and fiscal responsibilities and converting to a philosophical difference of what growth actually entails are all viable suggestions for team sustainability.

First, I believe director of forensics should locate and target other on campus organizations for recruitment possibilities. I believe this has two major advantages. First the type of student recruited will be the type of student directors would want for their team. Second, this will be more conductive than large scale "cattle call" recruitment strategies.

Focus should be directed towards finding students in organizations which have a presentation or speaking component already intrinsically specific to their respective organization or competition(s). On my particular campus there are student groups like Business Professionals of America, DEX (an organization composed of marketing students) and Skills USA (an organization of students presenting their work in the technical arts) all offer regional and national speaking meets/competitions. All of these groups present their respective projects, ideas and research in oral competitions.

If a student is involved in other student organizations, this particular student has the likelihood they would adapt well to the demands of forensics competition. First, these students are clearly committed and understand the demands of getting ready for a competition. The fear of public speaking and presentation is not nearly as difficult to overcome for these students who have presentation experience. While all students (and their coaches) are all super busy, it is not a difficult leap of logic to think these students would not commit to another organization/team. A smart forensics coach simply has to find the connection and appeal of what the student is doing in their first student organization and translate that to the appropriate individual event. Additionally, many of these organizations are semester based groups. All of their meetings and competitions tend to end within a short period of time thus allowing time to commit to forensics.

Second, by focusing on specific student organizations, this helps the director avoid "cattle call" recruitment ideas. The director does not have to post posters or flyers all over campus. The director does not to attend freshman orientation sessions. The director does have to wait and simply see who walks through their door The director saves time by giving the "spiel" of the benefits of doing to forensics to very interested students. Granted, not all of these students will join, but targeting a specific group helps the director plan in a timelier manner.

Coaching Help and Growth

To combat the lack of coaching help often associated with directors of small programs or single coach run programs, I suggest seeking out the help of graduate students. If there is a university in the immediate area, contacting the department chair or director of forensics might prove to be a valuable asset. A graduate student might be convinced to help assist with coaching.

The benefits of this graduate student coaching idea are numerous. This student could earn internship or individual study credit by providing some coaching assistance. This graduate student would establish professional network connections outside of their own graduate program which could be beneficial for reference or recommendation letter purposes in the graduate student's future. If the graduate student is already coaching at their respective program, a conflict of interest can be avoided by merely limiting coaching exposure to one or two students at the volunteer program and coding them against each other at tournaments. Finally, programs sharing graduate students/coaches would help foster an overall friendlier atmosphere in collegiate competition.

Third, a very tough love best practice move, in regards to recruitment and team size, is to simply limit the size of a team. I fully recognize many programs may already adopt this particular measure especially in regards to travel to specific tournaments. However, I am referring to overall team size. A director simply needs to recognize their limitations in time, financial resources and travel. This goes against the open door policy and friendly nature of our activity. We encourage all students to participate in our activity. However, limitations do exist. Many sports teams enforce a strict team size. For program sustainability directors need to discover how many students they can truly accommodate within their resources and stick to that number. I understand opponents may suggest peer coaching, student fundraising and resource saving ideas, but the bottom

line is a cap on team size is the "best practice" idea a coach can utilize for their program.

As part of this tough love approach, the fourth "best practice" suggestion is to ensure that students are always aware of their responsibilities. Once again, I am confident most programs clearly lay out all guidelines, rules and team policies to students. But directors must make sure these are carried through and practice tough love when needed in order for a team to sustain itself.

Finally, directors looking to sustain their programs need to shift their thinking away from growth issues and into sustainable methods. Many coaches dream of having big teams, arriving to tournaments in two or three vans and competing for the national title. While these dreams are fun, they are not very realistic for all programs. There are simply smaller programs in our community which need to set realistic goals for themselves. While this is not an earth shattering suggestion, how directors think about their program clearly sets the tone and direction for their program.

Actual growth is a tangential concept. All programs experience both boom and lean years in regards to the actual number of students competing. While directors certainly would like to control every variable affecting their program, the inevitable truth is we cannot control everything.

Conclusion

My personal approach to recruiting and building my program may not be a popular one. I have had to switch focus from concentrating on growth to one of sustainability. By incorporating some "best practice" suggestions, I hope to keep my program afloat.

Quite simply, I am more concerned with survival. When my small program was started two years ago, people were convinced both in my school and by some within the forensics community that South Central would never be able to field an active forensics program. I would be lying if I were to say this process has been easy. I came from a very large and respectable program where I was simply another coach among many. To make the transition into starting a program has been difficult but extremely rewarding. I need to take certain measure to ensure my program survives and can sustain itself now and in the future. I do not want to become one of those programs that are talked about in fond memory by "old timers" in the community

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Constructing a Vision in a Small Group
A Narrative Analysis of a Forensics Team

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Abstract

In an effort to replace many of the forensics programs that are lost every year to budget cuts and coaching changes, many in the forensics community are making an effort to build new teams. Through the observation of team meetings and interactions I have used small group theory to analyze the vision the new team at Miami University has constructed. Hopefully, other coaches can use this information to develop a unifying vision that can foster team growth.

Despite the long and impressive competitive success at Miami University, the turnover in the coaching staff has also resulted in a high turnover on the team. When I arrived two years ago we had three returning members on a fifteen member squad. Only one of those three lasted throughout the entire year, leaving the team with a national tournament group of ten with only one member with more than that year's experience. She was in her second year of competition. At the next years national tournament we again had ten members; however, four of them were returning members.

In an effort to motivate members to return and to create a more cohesive unit I decided to observe the team during our regular team meetings and at tournaments with small group theory in mind. What I discovered is that the team lacked a driving vision because the narratives being told were keeping a cohesive vision from developing. This observation has been vital in developing a new vision for the team and can probably be developed at other programs as well. Therefore, a simple explanation of narrative theory and group vision will be given. Next, I will further explain the narratives at Miami University in order to show the cyclical nature of narrative and vision and to show how vision can be constructed so that other programs can use this evidence to foster their own growth.

Narrative

The most common elements taken from Fisher's narrative paradigm in order to find out if a story is of good reason are coherence (probability) and fidelity (Fisher, 1984). Coherence refers to the internal structure and validity of a story or narrative. Essentially, to find out if a story has good reason it should be turned in on itself to see if it would actually be possible. Fidelity can be determined by evaluating the story based on how it rings true. Simply put, the narrative passes the skeptical view of a listener because the listener simply believes it. For example, the story of King Kong has coherence because it makes sense based on its internal storyline; however, it does not have the ring of truth because the existence of a monstrous giant gorilla does not sound believable.

It is quite easy for a narrative to carry with it the weight of good reasons and because of this, the narratives told in a small group can quickly reshape the overall group climate. I found this to be the case with the team at Miami and unfortunately this often led to the destruction of the team vision I wanted to create. However, it also allowed the coaching staff to tell our own stories that eventually contributed to a new team vision.

A Unifying Vision

A forensics team like any other small group needs a vision for the future to foster team commitment and growth. In his book *Visionary Leadership* Burt Nanus appropriately writes, "There is no more powerful engine driving an organization toward long range success than an attractive, worthwhile, and achievable vision that is widely shared" (Nanus, 1995). This vision dictates not only the goal of a group but also the key for strategy. A vision that is capable of driving a forensics team or any other small group must effectively meet five criteria. The vision must be attractive, credible, achievable, worthwhile, and widely shared.

In order to be attractive the vision must appeal to the members of the group. For example, to many forensics programs a national championship would be attractive and to others consistently winning the small school division at a regional tournament would be attractive.

The vision must also be credible. If the vision is constantly established by a member of the group who lacks ethos, the vision likely will not be shared. A new novice would likely be unable to convince a team with established seniors and juniors that the team can win a national championship if any of the established members disagree.

It is also important that the vision is achievable. A small budget team that wants to win the NFA open division will soon have to face the mathematical reality of their situation, causing the team vision to collapse. In order to be a strong driving force a group must have a vision of the future that is possible.

The vision of the future must also be worthwhile. For many teams a top ten placing in the open division of NFA is possible. However, it may not be worthwhile for some students if they feel like their grades will suffer as a result. The vision must result in an outcome that is worth the cost that will be put in to achieving it.

Finally, the vision must be widely shared. The vision must be clear enough that each individual in the group has nearly the same expectations for the group as each other member. If certain members of the group do not share the vision the system will not be able to function as a whole and the vision will not come to fruition.

An Analysis of the Miami University Team

The narratives told by members in a small group shape the vision that is developed by the group. For example, if one member of an office group tells a story about how pointless group meetings are, the group will not share a vision that group meetings will help in the pursuit of their goals, thereby shaping the group vision in a negative way. In the same regards a forensics team tells stories that shape the vision of the team.

Finding an effective team vision was difficult at Miami because so many students were new to the activity. At the team meeting following her first trip to Bradley one student told the team a narrative about how everyone in finals was so good that she could never get to that level without hurting her grades. She is an incredibly talented student so the vision was credible to the rest of the team but the vision she set forth was unattractive and her narrative clearly indicated that the pursuit of excellence in the activity would not be a worthwhile goal. She was simply so new to the activity that she did not realize how talented she actually was. Later after a lot of convincing she put in a little work and broke at NFA.

Another story that was told by returnees on the team to new members was one from the previous semester about one of our more competitively successful students. The story points out how the entire team had to sit at awards for over an hour just so one member of the team could receive a bunch of awards. This story perpetuated a vision of the team where excellence can only come to a select few who have extensive high school experience and the rest of the students are wasting their time. This story was detrimental to the team because it kept them from putting in the work that would get them to the next level competitively. Unfortunately, this resulted in less success and more frustration, further solidifying the idea that success is limited to only a select few. A few members of the team quit when they decided that they would never be able to be competitive enough. It may be a stretch to say that all of these stem from one narrative; however, that one narrative was matched with many others just like it. Because the individual students did not see their own success as a possibility they did not accept that vision for themselves. They also assumed that the only way to be nationally competitive as a team was to rely on the one or two members of the team who were competitively successful.

Fortunately, another narrative was told that helped to counter the previous one. Two students who were new to the team and never competed in high school began to work hard at the beginning of the year before they heard all of the stories about how they would not be good enough. They began to find competitive success and started telling stories in meetings about how the coaching they received and the hard work they did equaled results at tournaments. This new narrative helped to foster a more positive vision. Other members of the team began to see their work as being more worthwhile after that and they began to work harder. The results added credibility to the narrative and to the advice given by the coaches. The team also began to see how, with hard work, they could each be successful. They signed up for more coaching times, redrafted speeches, and attended more tournaments.

The new vision began to shape the way stories were told on the team as well. After the team began to buy into the vision, the stories about how the team had to wait around at awards began to die off because those were seen as the days before hard work. One specific narrative that was told over and over was about an awards ceremony where one student was filling in for another girl who had to leave early. The replacement girl at the awards ceremony was in three finals herself and was the top novice four times resulting in seven awards. The girl she stepped in for to receive her awards was in five finals and won pentathlon. She was running back and forth for the entire awards ceremony and accumulated tons of awards at her seat, never really sitting down because she always had to run back up for another award. The best part was that this was at the awards for a swing tournament where they did both awards ceremonies back to back so in the matter of an hour she received over twenty awards. This narrative has been excellent in dispelling the myth that only a select few can be successful. It also brings to light the idea that competitive success can be fun and that enjoyment makes the hard work worthwhile.

One student on the team who had won a ton the year before constantly downplayed his enjoyment of winning awards because he did not want the team to feel left out. He told stories about how he did not even want to get his awards and this kept the team from seeing the value in winning. Because he held so much credibility with the team his vision of the future seemed dark for everyone else. The new stories from the next year were incredibly helpful at fighting

against the perceived notion that only one person can win.

One other story told on the team was about how much fun one student had developing a poetry program. The piece was not very successful competitively however, it was fun to put together and to perform. The student helped to create a vision of a team that can be successful but doesn't have to be to have fun. This story impacted the developing vision for the team because it meant that hard work did not always equal competitive success but it showed that the hard work was still worthwhile.

The narratives told to one another shaped the group's vision and that vision eventually changed the narratives. This process is important to consider because a vision can change if enough reasonable stories contradict it. Coaches need to listen to the stories being told so that they can foster a positive learning environment.

Implications for coaches

Because of the fluid nature of narratives and team vision a coach must make structural choices to shape the narratives and can use narratives of his or her own to adapt the vision of the team.

Structurally, coaches must make choices that are based on narratives that they have heard and on the vision they want to create. One time to utilize this line of thinking is when scheduling tournaments. If the team seems to be overly confident and they think that they do not need to work hard it might be a good idea to schedule hard tournaments so students can tell stories about how much better everyone else was. Similarly, if a team is telling stories about how silly the activity is because people only follow certain formulas and no one is very good, it might be a good time to take them to a big tournament with amazing competitors. On the other hand, if the team is young or struggling to find confidence it would probably be good to take them to easier tournaments. This is what Miami University did in order to reinstate the idea that everyone can be successful. The story about the girl with so many trophies came from the choice to send the team to a small tournament where the students had better chances to break.

In a more fluid sense, it is also vital to keep listening to the stories being told because if one student is the common source of harmful stories that one student should be spoken to about it. Similarly, if the entire team is developing a vision that is not conducive to the educational goals of the activity it may be helpful to hold fewer meetings or to control the dialogue at meetings so that the sentiment does not grow. In the same way, when certain students seem to have the right vision more team events should be created to help communicate that vision to everyone on the team. The stories that happen through team bonding can be some of the most powerful, however, they can also be damaging if the entire team follows a negative trend or one bad apple.

It is also possible to add stories to the group to help foster the best climate for an effective vision. I found that it was helpful to tell stories of my past experiences at group meetings so that the team who had very little experience could hear from someone with a great deal more. For example, when some students exclaimed that the team could not win Division One with a team as young as they are I told them about how my team did just that with a team that was less talented as a whole than they were at that moment. This likely had less of an impact than if a senior on the team would have said it but it did help to lessen the stories about how it could not be done. More importantly it gave those students who wanted to reach higher the thought that their vision is actually reachable.

Perhaps the best use of narrative from the coaching staff did not come from us but from the alumni we brought in to talk to the team. Two of our previous alums from a few years ago came to a meeting and told stories about what things were like when they were on the team. This was incredibly helpful. The stories that had been told about how no one could find success without previous experience were dispelled because two national champions with no high school experience were telling them stories. The narrative that competitive success had to hurt grades was countered because a Rhodes Scholar and pentathlon national champion was telling stories about how she used to work on speeches, have fun with her friends, and she still uses the skills today. Obviously, not every school has alumni like those just sitting around but most have someone who can come in who is not a coach. Having alumni come in will add to the credibility of the narrative and the vision for the future.

There are many ways in which the vision of a group can influence its actions and likewise the narratives told shape the vision. It is vital for forensics programs to establish a vision that can be shared by the team and just as importantly the narratives told by the team should be carefully monitored. Of course the team will tell stories when coaches are not around; however, by closely observing a team coaches can adapt to the stories they do hear and hopefully foster a climate that can bring a beneficial vision to fruition.

Ways the Forensics Community Can Change To Help New Team Growth

1. A ratings system for tournaments could help new coaches to develop a vision for their team. A new coach with new students or with second year students with little experience might benefit by knowing what tournaments will be the most competitive. It seems as though this type of knowledge is only gained by word of mouth and specu-

lation. It can be damaging to a team vision if a coach sends a team to a tournament that he or she expects will offer quals only to have the team crushed. Similarly, if students can see that they did well at a medium level tournament they could better judge their own development. One proposition for this system could be a one through five ratings system that is simply another number on the calendar of events. A five could represent a very difficult tournament like a Norton or HFO type of tournament. A three could be a medium difficulty tournament like the Ball State Aquarius tournament and a one could represent one of the less competitive small tournaments. This type of system would of course only represent the anticipated level of difficulty but could help coaches to plan their season. I see it as being most helpful for newly developing programs.

2. An award could be given at NFA or AFA to the team(s) that score the most points and are from a program in either its first or second year of existence. (or is back after a two or more year break in competition) This could help teams to see that a vision of excellence can become reality. It could also help programs when they need to show administrators that the team is growing.
3. We can have important Forensics alumni talk to students at tournaments to describe how worthwhile the activity is. We hear about successful alumni all the time but few of us ever seem to see them again. It would be good for students, especially at new programs, to hear about how the tools from this activity can be utilized in all walks of life.

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Maintaining and Enhancing Institutional Relevance Long-term Program Sustainability in an Era of Increased Intra-Institutional Competition for Resources

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Abstract

The preservation and growth of intercollegiate forensic programs does not, and should not, depend on the singular factor of competitive results. The value of a program is rooted, in great part, in intra-institutional factors. This paper puts forth an assertion related to increasing the institutional value of forensics programs. Emphasis is placed on expanding the scope of the program goals and framing the success of a program on a non-competitive basis. The intra-institutional framing of program identity as "centers of excellence" functions as a central tenet.

Introduction

The National Development Conference on Individual Events is an excellent opportunity for our community to discuss a variety of issues related to "what we teach." Yet, none are more central to our cause than the sustainability of forensics programs within the college and university curriculums nationally. We cannot nurture a discussion about growth unless we, first, tackle the issue of sustainability. This essay seeks to frame the collection of voices presented in this session on the "growth of forensics programs." The full measure of the papers presented in this panel focus on achieving intra-institutional goals. While forensic program administrators are often pre-occupied with expectations and identities that exist outside of the institution that their program represents, there is no more important task than to illustrate the scope and value of a program on an intra-institutional basis. The papers in this panel feed this ongoing conversation with considerations of the extending our reach to non-competitive, civic minded objectives; re-envisioning the nature and composition of a competitive team; recruitment of students with the central goal of sustainability; and confronting the next 40 years with the rise of new media. Each of these is an important matter for the discussion of sustainability. Additionally, when taken as a collective the papers clearly illustrate the diverse set of issues that our community faces with regard to growth and program maintenance. This brief essay seeks to make an additional contribution to the discussion by highlighting the common threads that unify this set of papers.

Forensics program administrators must maintain a consistent appreciation of the perception intra-institutional value of forensics programs. As several papers in this session highlight, forensics programs accomplish much more than competitive experiences and products. As a group of scholars and scholar-students, forensics program are uniquely positioned for academic and civic engagement. Megan Hogue (Forensics as a tool for political engagement: Fostering advocacy outside the activity) smartly attended to the concept to civic engagement. This example emphasizes the fact the program goals that reach beyond competitive products quickly translate into increased value for the institution at large. Hollihan (1990) notes that, "most [higher education] administrators compute costs by calculating the cost per student served" (p. 439). By demonstrating that a forensics program serves multiple elements of the mission of the university, programs are enhanced at a local level.

An additional example can be indentified in academic engagement. Many colleges and universities host regional or national conferences on their campuses. Themed conferences focused on subjects such a the annual women's conference at the University of West Florida or social justice conference at Central Michigan University are prime examples of academic contexts in which forensics students and administrators can extend their reach into a non-competitive environment. Conferences such as these do not require significant funding, but rather the reconfiguration of program goals in order to place a high value on engaging these experiences as a presenter or participant.

Expanding the scope of forensics program goals to include localized engagement only works to enhance the value of a program to an institution. More importantly, it offers students a more inclusive, diverse and rich experience during their participation in the activity. It is unreasonable to assume that long-term sustainability for forensics programs can be purely based on competitive results. While a competitive result model may serve the needs and expectations of a handful of programs nationally, a large collection of programs must work to create intra-institutional value on the basis of a more broad scope of interests.

The importance of framing the institutional identity of a forensics program is a key concern to sustainability. The term "center of excellence" has become a central phrase in the identification of particularly productive sectors of colleges and universities. Since a majority of intercollegiate forensics programs accomplish a variety programmatic goals each year, significant effort should be made to frame these entities accordingly. A forensics program does not require a national competitive prominence to be considered a "center of excellence" within an institution. Indeed, the goals of most institutions of higher education are largely pedagogical. The intensive and personalized training, personal and professional mentoring, training in ambassadorship, and concentrated academic study that is featured in forensics pedagogy serves such institutional goals in a uniquely fitting fashion. Since many executive administrators are largely unfamiliar with the nuances of forensics practice (i.e. still relaying phone calls to Directors of Forensics from students interested in investigative medicine), then the framing of a programs identity should begin with the substance of the experience. As a secondary matter, competitive products will act as a support for the accomplishment of the pedagogical goals. A variety of different means would serve to operationalize this approach.

Nurturing a more intricate intra-institutional program identity will assist in emphasizing that forensics is, most often, appropriately labeled as a "center of excellence." More importantly, ensuring that a program maintains a vibrant and diverse set of goals and objectives will continue to breathe life into the endeavor.

An intercollegiate forensics program presents an exciting set of teaching challenges and opportunities. Yet, to grow and nourish this brand of pedagogy, forensics administrators must maintain a keen focus on issues related to sustainability. While a handful issues were addressed in this paper and the corresponding panel, the need to place long-term sustainability on a local level and at the top of the list of priorities for forensics educators is undeniable.

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Gasp! Faint! Cry!
Making Dramatic Interpretation a Book Optional Event or Not

Amber Kuipers

Imagine yourself, for a moment, in a classroom where six other competitors are talking and eagerly waiting for their next Dramatic Interpretation (D.I.) round to begin. The judge surfaces from the depths of the judging room, coffee in one hand, ballots in the back pocket, pen stuck behind his ear appearing as though he has not slept since the tournament began, and takes a seat back row center. The room is silenced as the authority settles in and then calls the first competitor's name. She stands and walks to the front of the room. The metaphorical lights dim as she commands the absolute attention of her surroundings. It appears as though a spotlight suddenly clicked on; shining gloriously upon her as she begins to open her book ... which ... is not ... there. She continues on in her teaser still holding an invisible book while you, the judge, and all the other competitors are becoming increasingly more confused at this random act. She finishes her teaser, closes her "book," and launches into a delectable introduction about how individuals are being hidden behind the works of others, forcing everyone to fit into molds, and everyone copes by inventing phrases like "I am unique!" then adding, "just like everyone else." Her argument: resistance is futile and change is inevitable. She completes her cutting without a hitch, without a book, and without even acknowledging that this act probably rubbed a lot of people the wrong way. She is disqualified for not having a manuscript.

The rationale behind this fictional narrative and this paper is to point out several things. First is to address the recent request making Dramatic Interpretation (D.I.) a book optional event and what the reasons are on both sides of this debate. Second, relating this issue and its arguments to aspects of creativity and the official rules of unlimited preparation events. Third is the attempt to propose a new viewpoint for this issue and to encourage our community not to concentrate as hard on the actual presence of a book, but the reasoning behind it as to why it is there and whether or not we can do without it. Finally, I will attend to the pedagogical goal for this issue of controversy and display my outlook on this ordeal.

The Competitor Stands ...

The proposal to making D.I. as a book optional event would best be described as competitors participating in Dramatic Interpretation having the option of a book (a binder, folder, something that holds the manuscript of what they are interpreting) with their person and/or using it during their performance time. This idea was brought to the attention of each district which voted either for or against it, and each district's majority vote in turn was brought to the 2008 AF A meeting, was voted upon there and by call of question was vastly shut down by the populace.

The reasons this issue appears in the first place are rather intriguing when the concept is applied to the event. It began as a thought to turn D.I. into more of a performance event with less emphasis on argument. By making the book an optional thing, it would free up the competitor to move about more fluidly within their time (Cronn-Mills and Cook 9). Making movement an issue of Dramatic Interpretation is not a new concept. Because competitors have to hold a book during their performance, it limits movement and therefore stifles areas of creativity such as blocking, teclmical movements, and it forces a person to gesture entirely with one hand. By removing this burden, that barrier would no longer be there and the competitor could submerse themselves more into their piece(s) and give off a richer, more complete feel for the performance since they would no longer be constricted by their motions and movements.

A second reason for wanting the D.I. to be a book optional event pertains to clearly divide D.I. from Prose. There are some who believe that these two events are too similar and they want to physically see a difference between Prose and D.I. Not having the book appeared to be the best option since no props, costumes, or settings are allowed. This would subconsciously help judges who critique many of these pieces. In both events, many of the pieces sound very similar. Making D.I. book optional would help everyone: judges, competitors, and audience members remember what event this was and put all viewers in the correct mindset for what they were watching.

Third, there is a concern that the script is turning obsolete. An unwritten rule requires contestants to have their piece memorized (Verlinden 9) and having the script in hand hinders the competitor since it could be considered as a crutch. It appears pointless to have a manuscript that is not being used since it is only really there to get in the way.

On the other hand, the arguments for keeping the book in D.I. are also valid.

Leading this side of the spectrum is the argument that not having the book would direct the competitors into the realm of acting. Forensics is not

acting~ forensics is interpretation (Holloway et aI., 44). Having that book in hand gives a consistent reminder to all present that the competitor is interpreting, not acting. When that consistent reminder is taken away, competitors forget that they are supposed to be interpreting and then the experience looses the educational value.

Along side acting versus interpreting, having the book in hand pays physical homage to the authors of the pieces the participant chose. In addition to the verbal verification in their introduction, having the words with them is a constant reminder that they are giving credit where credit is due; even if the entrant wrote the piece themselves. Relating this back to interpretation, the presence of the book is like the competitor silently admitting that they are interpreting what they think the author's intent is for this particular piece and they are not just shooting from the hip or making their piece up.

A quieter argument is from the more traditional side of forensics and that is that this event has never been done this way before; change is bad, our way is best. By suddenly changing the rules, it shakes up what many have found to be a "winning formula" for this event. Not only that, but only changing one unlimited prep event to book optional does not appear to be logical or fair for all involved in the patterns that coincide with D.I. There is a need to keep everything as is for fairness, equality, and consistency; and not changing the rules does just that.

The Lights Dim ...

While both sides of this argument have important, compelling, and legitimate concerns, they are not entirely without blemishes. Removing the book would give more freedom in movement but would take away credit from authors. It would clearly differentiate two events from each other, but that is only if all competitors chose not to use their book in D.I. Keeping the book would let everyone know that this is interpretation, but would constrict movement. And while this is the way it has always been done, it does not mean that it is the right way for this event to be done. So which side is correct? To answer this, I will address the two items that directly affect this controversy: creativity and the official rules.

Creativity is a main issue because the presence or absence of a book is part of the creative process. Choices are made with how the entire piece is presented in competition because of this manuscript and there are those who believe that since this is a part of creativity, competitors should have the option of doing away with it.

But where does the forensics community draw the line? There are numerous works supporting creativity in forensics and has a sort of "call to arms" per se for creativity, to embrace originality, engage imagination, and encourage ingenuity. There are some who encourage competitors to stretch the limits of "the line," to see just how much they can get away with, but stay within at least the mandated rules of the community. Dave Gaer states that, "we have a tendency to want everything to be in a little box" (Gaer, 1) and encourages students, coaches and directors to break free of it. Creativity and the open expression of ideas are the foundations of what creates new and innovative theory and advances our disciplines. Our society should integrate and encourage creativity in all the events forensics has to offer. The events are ever changing and by supporting new vision, it helps the community to change and keep up with the times.

At the same time there are just as many works written praising the stability of tradition; persuading others to be more conservative so as to not offend anyone. They do not want to rock the boat and instead wish to keep tradition strong. There is no complete answer of where the creative lines should be drawn; however there is a consensus that unrestrained creativity is not a notion of this community. Keith Green depicts his dislike about competitors using original work, claiming that, "the purpose of competitive oral interpretation is twofold: to teach students how to analyze a piece of literature for theme, mood, images, emotion, plot and other factors; and to learn how to control and utilize nonverbal communication behaviors in the suggestion of these underlying factors. Using original material does not require the student to undertake the first of the two processes" (Green, 70) and to an extent, that is true. Having the ability to write your own unpublished piece is a choice in the creative process, but to some that choice is too far over the line.

Creativity is one of the many rules and/or guidelines for success in intercollegiate forensics, but since 1976 for AF A and since 1967 at NF A, the rules for all unlimited prep events specifically depict that, "a manuscript is required" (http://www.mnsu.edu/spcommlniet/niet.html). And that is a good thing. That means, that no matter what, a student must have what they are going to say with them in their round. It helps all people involved having the exact words written down. For competitors, it gives them a fall back if they were to forget a line during their performance and for the judges; it provides a sense of security that the piece that the competitor is performing is not an impromptu.

Also, within the AFA-NIET use of literature policy, there are rules against plagiarism, changing the text and rewriting scripts to change it to the contestant's liking.

These are important to point out because these rules relate back to giving credit where credit is due and keeps us from potentially plagiarizing someone else's work or changing an ending to force the piece into something that the author had no intention of saying.

The Spotlight Clicks On ...

The rules, creativity, and this book optional controversy, all combined, create interesting questions and "what ifs." For example, how do you put into manuscript a play that does not have words? If D.I. becomes a book optional event what will happen to the interpretation aspect of it all and giving credit to the authors? Should the book be considered in the creative process? Is the book a prop and if so, then should it be done away with since there are no props allowed?

My friends, collogues, esteemed professors, and directors: This is the wrong way to look at this issue. Every district, every school, every team, coach, competitor and administration will have a different answer for each of these questions with different rationales that, for some, will be incredibly difficult to overturn. To argue over these questions would be like arguing over an abortion debate; everyone has their own set values and beliefs and no one would be willing to listen to the opinion of the other side. Instead, I call to attention the words everyone is throwing about without a second thought.

They ask about a manuscript, what is a manuscript? According to www.dictionary.net. a manuscript is one of five things:

> The original text of an author's work, handwritten or now usually typed, that is submitted to a publisher. Any text not printed. A book or document written before the invention of printing. Writing, as distinguished from print. Handwritten or typed, not professionally printed. (www.dictionary.net/manuscript)

No matter what the context is about, it must be in written fonn to be a manuscript. A manuscript has immense value to forensics. Without it the entire community would cease to exist since we base all of our events from the written word. In addition to that, the lack of a manuscript within an event would change the pedagogical assumptions to the event in its entirety. To not have this visual aid of proof that what is being said is not made up on the fly would de devastating to D.I. and all unlimited preparation events. It would change from an event that would intelligently use literature to argue a theory to something that would turn argument into acting. Since they are classified in a category of their own, proof is needed that what the individual is depicting has had at some point in time, pre-determined thought; much like how a persuasive or informative speech requires sources. Cronn-Mills and Cook define the common use for the term manuscript in the forensics community. A manuscript refers "to any book, script, or papers the student holds during performance of prose, drama, programmed oral interpretation, poetry or dramatic duo" (Cronn-Mills and Cook 2-3). If the forensics community agrees that the book, script, or papers that the student uses during a performance as a manuscript; and according to AF A rules a manuscript is required, then the book must be a mandated thing as well since that is what is commonly accepted as a manuscript.

Coinciding with a manuscript, literary merit is to be defined as "quality of written work, generally applied to the genre of literary fiction. The reason the forensics society has a need to define literary merit is to be more precise about original works, unpublished material, and other gray areas concerning creativity and the contexts of a manuscript. When this term is defined within AF A rules, then questions about such things will be eliminated. A work is said to have literary merit (to be a work of art) if it is a work of quality, that is if it has some aesthetic value"

(http://en.wikipedia.orglwikilliterary_merit). It has long been noted that the concept of "literary merit" is practically impossible to consistently define in our community, and that it is hard to see how such an idea can be used with any precision or consistency by competitors or judges. A common response to this criticism is that, while the process of establishing literary merit is difficult and often subjective, it is the only method currently available to separate work that has significant cultural value from work that is ephemeral.

Coaches and competitors will fight for what they believe is to be their right for where the limits of creativity lie, but what does that consist of? Creativity can be defined as, "the ability to transcend traditional ideas, rules, patterns, relationships, or the like, and to create meaningful new ideas, forms, methods, interpretations, etc.; originality, progressiveness, or imagination" (http://dictionary.reference.comlbrowse/ creativity). Where the line is drawn is constantly argued. Oftentimes the forensics faction argues over the limits of creativity because, simply put, it affects change and not everyone likes change. Gaer said it, we want our box. "It is how we process and remember information. We utilize what we know, attaching things to those notions, and develop our brains accordingly" (Gaer, 1). As previously stated, there is a consensus that unlimited creativity is not a thing we condone in the forensics population; however, this group does not define where the limits lie and because of that, this is why controversy grows.

To classify more obvious boundaries for creativity, look at both the official and unwritten rules for D.I. AF A rules require a manuscript; however the unwritten rules in the forensics community requires it to be in a little black book. A plan to resolve this confusion would be to write them out and make them official. The problem with that is that once those unofficial rules are made official, more unwritten rules will simply take their place. The answer is not creating more rules. Leave the unwritten rules

alone and concentrate on a more productive approach. Look at the event description and create a universal agreement on what that description depicts. Leave the unwritten rules as such and let them be considered guidelines for the community. The more resources or rules this community can lean on, official or not, the more proof the competitor needs to come up with to have their performance be considered a legitimate one.

A second viewpoint for creativity in D.I. is to have the speech and debate community recognize that D.I. is simultaneously used as an analytical and interpretive event. This is done by using an interpretive piece as an argument that is stated by the competitor in their introduction. When an argument is presented in this manner it satisfies both areas of analysis and interpretation. To put this in perspective, every judge in the forensics community has seen both really good, and really bad arguments in this event. The really bad ones are usually created by a competitor first choosing how to interpret their piece then finding an argument for it when it should be the other way around.

Competitors should recognize that this creative process of how to properly create an argument is a part of the so called "formula of success" within this operation and when that is encouraged and commonly absorbed into the community, this event will be recognized that it has educational and entertainment value and the interweaving of the two are unique to it.

Finally, in regards to acting and interpreting; what do these words mean and how do they differentiate? A well known concern, controversy and constant debate in our group is the difference between acting and interpreting. There are multiple views on this item with the gap between the two ranging from something as great as; one is for drama, the other is for forensics; to an ideal as small as merely holding the book in your hands makes the acting into interpreting. I am exaggerating of course, but not by much. Holloway et al. claims that the difference between acting and interpreting is that "an actor represents, an interpreter presents. The consequence of this distinction, in performance, is essentially one of relative distance. The actor is viewed by the audience as a person to be watched, observed from the distance. The actor shows. In contrast, the interpreter is close to the audience, one of them actually. By remaining part of the audience the interpreter shares with the audience the experience of the literature. Rather than show, the interpreter suggests. The visions, the things to be seen, are all in the imaginations of the audience (Holloway et ai, 44). Instead of worrying about the audience, acting and interpreting has to be an internal value. Most other definitions to be had are helpful and informational, but they are based on the audience perspective. That leaves the presenter on the short end of the stick since this is now all about the audience instead of making it for themselves and creating their piece for their own edification as opposed to merely entertainment.

In my graduate class, I think I heard the best definition between acting and interpreting for forensics: when you are acting, you are the words, you become the words. But when you are interpreting, you become the words, but there is a conscious barrier of an argument present. Using this as a competitor's foundation leaves room for creativity when presenting in an event and it further supports the two tiered facility of D.I. being both analytical and entertaining because of the argument their piece is constructing, making this classification more meaningful to the competitor.

These are the questions we should be asking, not arguing whether or not a book helps or hinders the event. When these words are more universally defined is when this community can finally move forward in their own way to better themselves.

Am I Disqualified?

To answer the question of whether or not the forensics community can do without "the book," I tum to Cronn-Mills and Cook. Their research indicated that the community from both students and judges vastly agreed that a manuscript should be required and helps in a wide variety of areas including, but not limited to, technique, authors' intent, interpretation versus acting and helps focus on literature. In the same project, the research shows those against the manuscript believe that the script is irrelevant, that it detracts from the performance, and that it mandates students to be dependent on their script. (Cronn-Mills and Cook, 7-13). Cronn-Mills and Cook argue that the mandated rule of a manuscript would induce the students into the objectivist philosophy while the other side of the spectrum would become alienated by its own community because if s "against social norms." Another reason the group will not change their minds about this issue is because it is change. Having D.I. as a book optional event has never been done before in intercollegiate forensics and by attempting change could, for students, possibly affect their overall ranking during that tournament and, for coaches it could possibly make them loose face with their peers. So no one rocks the boat. Students like their shiny paperweights they compete for and judges want to continue on with a long-lived tradition.

This turns out to be a very long analytical process for a simple "yes" or "no" answer. I decree that because the official rules, the unofficial rules, and the community's overall expectations all agree that a manuscript is required and that "the book" is the manuscript; D.I. or any other unlimited prep event cannot be book optional. It bends too many rules, upsets too many expectations, and it crosses over the line of creative freedom into rule breaking.

The actual presence of that little black book (the manuscript) in itself sets up an entire mindset to everyone in that room during rounds. For the entrant, it starts them off in the correct mindset for what this competition is all about; education, competition, and interpretation. The book in hand lets that student know for themselves just how ready they truly are for this tournament; how well they know their pieces, if their argument fits with their program, and so on. Students learn how well they depicted their interpretation to the audience and how that compared to what they have in their book. It becomes learned to see that difference and then improve it.

The instant they open their script, a switch is thrown stating to the competitor and everyone else in the room that the contestant is here to perform to the best of their ability and that they will compete for every second of their allotted ten minutes. When the book is closed, they are themselves. When that book is opened, however, a new person, character, physique has been borne that is here to win, to dominate.

On top of this, the book assists everyone visually see where the competitor ends and the character begins. Time starts when the entrant opens their book and when that happens they are expected to be in the piece and not themselves. This is where the fine line of acting and interpreting are in a constant balance. Judges do not want students to act, but they do not want them to be deadpan either. The presence of the book can assist in the precise moments of who is who and when.

For the audience, the manuscript has several factors. It tells them that this event has, to some extent, been prepared and that this is a narrative of interpretation that has an angle of the author's intent. It also assists with transitions between settings, times, characters, and instances where merely a pop or voice fluctuation would not be sufficient. Most importantly, to the audience, it is giving credit where credit is due in saying that while this is someone's work (possibly their own), it is an opinion of argument that is meant to be controversial and discussed.

The girl in the fictional narrative at the beginning of this paper in my tournament would be disqualified. If she wanted to give a speech and not give some form of proof of where she got her information, there is an event called impromptu, have at it. Unlimited preparation events are classified as such for a reason: there is an expectation that a competitor participating in these events prepare. As proof of that preparation, the manuscript is particularly required to visually show to the audience and subconsciously prove to the participant themselves that they have something ready and they have thought about how they are to present their argument with their piece(s). To lack something so visually required would throw off everyone into an unknown variety of reactions. Judges might think the competitor came unprepared, the participants' challengers may consider them easy prey since they did not follow social nonns and expectations. Exact reactions are unsure and somewhat unsettling since they are unknown. But be reassured, they would most likely be negative reactions. The book should remain. Cry, scream and knash your teeth all you want, I predict that this notion will not change because there are too many factors from too many angles supporting the need for a book.

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So Much Drama
In Support of a Shift from Dramatic Duo to Duo Interpretation

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Abstract

Dramatic Duo has become a poster child for the forensics world, appealing to crowds both in and out of the community, while providing its participants with challenges and opportunities not found in other interpretive events. However, the current event description contains ideas that might be viewed as contradictory, valuing interpretation over acting, yet limiting students to dramatic sources of literature (stage, screen, and radio). This paper proposes a change from Dramatic Duo to Duo Interpretation, allowing material of any genre to be used in competition. Implications of both a pedagogical and competitive nature will be explored. This paper does not criticize current performance-based duo trends; rather, it seeks to build on them by providing a broader range of texts for duo competitors.

Introduction

In 2006, the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) changed one of its competitive speaking categories from Dramatic Duo to Duo Interpretation. A petty amendment to the casual observer, this shift in semantics highlights a major modification to the event as a whole, a transformation which removes the obligatory "drama" from duo and replaces it with a more encompassing, less theatrical focus on interpretation. More specifically, the former event description limited competitors to published plays, whereas the current MSHSL Speech Rules & Policies Manual defines Duo Interpretation as "two students interpreting together one or more selections from a single published source or a single anthology of prose, poetry, and/or dramatic literature serious and/or humorous, with literary merit and appropriate to the readers." As one might expect, this change did not come without opposition; however, it quickly became evident that those who embraced the new possibilities of the category enjoyed creative freedoms that had previously been stifled by a lack of access to suitable literature. The shift opened an entire library of fresh literature for duo teams, allowing competitors and coaches to focus on the interpretation of quality material not limited by the narrow production of workable play scripts.

The MSHSL's decision falls in line with the National Forensic League's (NFL) event description for Duo Interpretation which allows cuttings from novels, short stories, plays, poetry, and any other printed-published materials. Despite this, Dramatic Duo at the college level remains limited to cuttings "from a play or plays of literary merit." This comparison demands our careful consideration as we seek to answer the following question: is duo ready for a similar facelift on the college speech circuit?

This paper proposes that the American Forensic Association and National Forensic Association follow in the footsteps of the MSHSL and NFL by changing Dramatic Duo to Duo Interpretation to allow material of any genre to be used in competition. I will seek to justify this modification by looking at the broader construct of oral interpretation and how it relates specifically to duo, before covering three general areas of concern: goal of performer, role of coach, and task of judge. In other words, the subject will be examined in terms of personal, educational, and competitive growth—three values at the heart of forensic involvement. This paper will draw from available literature in order to explore the implications this change would most likely have at each respective level. It is worth noting in advance that this paper does not want to criticize current performance-based duo trends; rather, it seeks to build on this progress by providing a broader range of vehicles for competitors to take on the road to the same destination.

Related Literature

Before opening new libraries of literature to duo competitors, it is important to better understand the principles behind this push. The simple fact that Duo Interpretation is not limited to a single genre on the national high school circuit is noteworthy, but inadequate as justification for a change at the college level. Therefore, we must explore some of the theoretical building blocks which form the foundation for this argument.

Oral Interpretation

At its core, this issue comes down to oral interpretation and the goals of the discipline. Rossi and Goodnow (2006) explain that "as one of the largest venues for the performance of oral interpretation, forensics competition has a huge influence on how oral interpretation is defined and perceived as an art form" (p. 57). Thus, it is with great care that we must approach this subject because the paths we choose as forensic scholars go well beyond our field of study. There is considerable concern, both in and out of

forensics (VerLinden, 1987), about the current state of oral interpretation as an art form. Some argue that the demands of competitive forensics are beginning to value performance over text, a practice that takes away from the uniqueness of oral interpretation while potentially limiting the educational value of the activity as a whole (Rossi & Goodnow, 2006). Endres (1988) observes that "the quality of the literature itself is a consideration, [but] the primary focus is not on 'what the literature is,' but rather, 'how well is that literature conveyed'" (p. 106).

Yet, the everybody's doing it approach falls flat when looking to even earlier research expressing the true essence of oral interpretation. Geisler (1985) explains that the primary focus should be on the literature being performed since it is through an interpreter's performance that a text is brought to life for others. The text, then, exists first and must be recreated through interpretation. In this way, discourse is established from the inside-out, with the chosen literature serving as the respective core. "The text is significant—not the interpreter—since text is both sender and message/meaning" (Geisler, p. 8).

Swarts (1988) argues that the true value of interpretation rests on its ability to communicate an idea, to share meaning or provide insight. Rossi and Goodnow (2006) emphasize the need for interpreters to be aware of the form and content of the literature they are performing. We must not neglect the rhetorical aspect of interpretation because it is essential to both the pedagogical experience and the basic nature of the art. Swarts (1988) offers the following insight on the subject:

> There is much to be gained from the oral interpretation experience when the goals are substantively oriented, and the components of the performance reflect that substantive orientation. When a total communication experience is the goal of the interpretation, then such concerns as why *this* literature has been chosen, why it is worth sharing, and what the interpreter hopes to accomplish by the presentation of the literature, can be established in the minds of the audience. (p. 41)

The ability to analyze literature is one of the key skills offered by traditional oral interpretation, and serves as an example of what Rossi and Goodnow (2006) would describe as the pedagogical goals of teaching interpretation. Interpreters should understand the value of text, what they bring to the text, and how their performance relates that text to an audience. They believe the current focus on technical elements of performance goes beyond simple artistic evolution, arguing that while art can be appreciated in many forms, traditional oral interpretation offers performers unique opportunities to share their own voices. There are a number of communicative venues in which individuals would find performance opportunities, and while oral interpretation should not completely discount its performative nature, it should strive to hold on to the qualities that make it a one of a kind activity. "The opportunity to combine those performance skills with literary analysis, personal reflection, artistic creation, and public speaking is almost solely the realm of traditional oral interpretation" (Rossi & Goodnow, 2006, p. 56).

Duo

Little pedagogical justification exists in support of duo as its own interpretive category; at best, it seems to lie somewhere on a spectrum between readers theatre and solo interpretation (Klope, 1986). While duo is unique on the competitive forensic circuit in that it is the only event requiring more than one performer, the fact remains that presently, as in the past, "duo is an art form without an explanation" (Klope, p. 1). This lack of definition has allowed duo competitors to use their imaginations in creating powerful, unique, and memorable performances of great range. One cannot watch a final round at a national tournament without noticing the wide variety of pieces present, all of which have been deemed "good enough" to reach the pinnacle of forensic accomplishment. In fact, without knowledge of the current regulations, many may find it difficult to identify which genre of literature is even being performed at a given time.

One need look no further than the AFA individual event descriptions, all 11 of which fit conveniently on one sheet of paper, to see that the guidelines offered for college forensic competitors are intentionally vague. For the category of Dramatic Duo, the following description appears:

> A cutting from a play or plays of literary merit, humorous or serious, involving the portrayal of two or more characters presented by two individuals. The material may be drawn from stage, screen, or radio. This is not an acting event; thus, no costumes, props, lighting, etc., are to be used. Presentation is from the manuscript and the focus should be off-stage and not to each other. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction. (AFA-NIET 2006-2007 Description of Events)

Despite the previously discussed focus on text in oral interpretation, the above event description offers only two sentences regarding literature selection. The same amount of writing is dedicated to reminding competitors that this is strictly an oral interpretation event, as opposed to staged acting. A fair question one might ask at this point is, "Why does the event only permit the use of scripts written for stage, screen, and radio (the first two being strict examples of acting) in seeking to promote the ideals

of oral interpretation?" This question lies at the heart of the issue, and will leak through nearly every page of this paper.

Klope (1986) speaks of virtual space in interpretation, noting that in duo, the creation of such space is based on language action rather than description. In other words, the context of the performance is based upon interaction, which typically comes through dialogue and character relations. Since most plays and films consist almost exclusively of such interaction, the demand for dialogue would seem to provide one possible answer to the question posed in the preceding paragraph. We must note, however, that dialogue is not exclusive to works of a dramatic nature. Furthermore, despite the implied necessity of dialogue in duo interpretation, research also seeks to remind us that "precise boundaries cannot and should not be formed if artistic independence is to be maintained" (Klope, p. 11).

Artistic independence seems to be a key issue in forensic pedagogy, as it demands an originality that can only be accomplished through critical thinking. This ideal seems to be in line with what many forensic educators are striving for (Rice, 1991), a system in which the performer supports critical claims through performance and in doing so, demonstrates a process in which text is of primary importance (VerLinden, 1987).

Reflection

Since so little has been written about the current state of Dramatic Duo on the college circuit, the most relevant assessment we have to work with must come from personal accounts. My experiences are by no means exhaustive; in fact, they are relatively limited as I have only been involved with college forensics for five years. However, I feel my observations offer a fair amount of insight relevant to the subject at hand, and currently unavailable in scholarly form.

Dramatic Duo

In my four years of undergraduate eligibility, I competed with five different duo partners, experiencing varying levels of success. Moreover, I have been privileged to watch numerous out-rounds of Dramatic Duo at the national level, including three AFA-NIET final rounds. This is significant because from a pedagogical standpoint, one would like to believe that these performances would best represent the ideals established for the specific category. Yet, rather than noticing concrete standards that are valued across the board, I have been most struck by the diversity of duo performances found at this highest level of competition.

Recent trends have seemed to favor performances that "step out of the box," leading to pieces and programs of literature that include narration, voiceover, poetic device, and even third-person point of view. All of these qualities have been evident in each of the three final rounds I have experienced, leading me to believe that Dramatic Duo either a) does not yet know what it wants to be, or b) truly values diversity among performances, appreciating quality communication in a multitude of forms. As a forensic educator, I would prefer to believe the latter.

The fact remains that each of these scripts have presumably come from dramatic sources—namely, they were written for radio, film, or stage. Despite this commonality, however, the performances in these final rounds had very little in common. Currently, this appears to be the trend in Dramatic Duo, where a majority of judges seem to reward competitors who take advantage of the creative liberties offered by the very nature of this partnered event. Nevertheless, the rules still limit duo interpreters to a single genre of literature. The bounds of this interpretive outlet are being pushed, and if we as audience members are unable to tell that a particular script is clearly from a play, then whether it is or not becomes irrelevant.

Literature Demands

In striving to incorporate both the traditional expectation of a script from a dramatic source and the more modern demand for unique and stylized performance, many competitors find themselves at a loss. Finding scripts for any category is rarely easy. In my experience as both a competitor and coach, as well as through my interactions with others on the circuit, I have come to the conclusion that typically, the search for quality performable literature is even more daunting when it comes to duo. Finding new play scripts that are suitable for two performers can be a tedious and often disappointing process, as such resources are expensive or difficult to come by.

Furthermore, unwritten rules on the college circuit prevent pieces from being reused, as many judges seem to discourage this form of recycling. On one hand, we are told that judges value performance over text. While this is a novel concept, many would disagree; the simple mention of Poe or Durang in a judges' lounge will likely prove this point. Even with less familiar authors and pieces, the "sorry, but I've seen this before" judging mentality is prevalent and does not seem to be disappearing any time soon (Billings, 2002).

From a judging perspective, Skinner (1986) explains that it is difficult to evaluate a performance if you have already seen the piece done exceptionally well by someone else. He continues by suggesting that "coaches have an obligation to expand materials in their files and to force students to select their material by themselves" (Skinner, p. 56). While it is easy to nod along with these ideals, experience offers us two separate critiques of this advice. First, while coaches should always be on the lookout for good

literature, it can be frustrating in an environment where everyone is searching for material published within the past several months. There is bound to be overlap, and the race to "stake claim" to a particular piece before someone else does can create unnecessary conflict. Second, many would argue that finding pieces for competition should be primarily up to the student. The "sorry, but I've seen this before" issue is complicated when coupled with the expectation that students find their own material. Since a college competitor has been competing on the circuit for a maximum of three years when looking for material, how are they to know which pieces have and have not been performed outside of that time frame?

The fear of performing a piece that has already been done is amplified in categories which rely solely on literature from the stage, screen, or radio; the less material available for exploration, the greater the odds of accidental reuse. Most libraries have a relatively limited number of "new" plays on the shelves, which is appropriate since very few venues outside of forensics place much importance on how recently a script was published. In the classroom setting, for instance, emphasis is typically placed on "standards"—pieces that have stood the test of time (i.e. Chekhov's The Cherry Orchard) or been lauded for social impact (i.e. Kushner's Angels in America).

While the advent of inter-library loan (ILL) has given an edge to the true library searchers, the quantity of available literature still struggles to meet demands. Guessing which scripts to request from ILL or order from popular online sources based on brief synopses demands large amounts of both time and money, two of the most precious resources allotted to forensic teams. More alarming from a pedagogical standpoint is that these factors often take the search out of student hands, wasting a valuable portion of the learning process associated with interpretation events and disadvantaging those students with limited resources at either a team or personal level. While the search for new literature can be an exciting and valuable part of oral interpretation, it can also lead to excessive out-of-pocket expenses, burnout, or "settling" on pieces that the performers themselves do not even enjoy. It puts the focus on the piece, rather than on the text and subtext conveyed through an individual's interpretation.

At this rate, it is not difficult to see why so many competitors choose to run original material, another point of consideration resulting from the current norms and event description for duo at the college level. Billings (2003) found the most common reason students write their own pieces is to avoid the complaint that it has been done before. While the event guidelines do not explicitly prohibit the use of "home writes"—scripts written by coaches, friends, alumni, or the competitors themselves—or other unpublished materials, general consensus on the circuit seems to disapprove of such scripts, as evidenced by the common use of pen names and the occasional "tanking" of students who admittedly write one or more of the pieces for their performance. The resulting "don't ask, don't tell" approach makes it difficult to estimate the number of competitors running literature that would fall under this heading; however, it seems likely that a majority of coaches and competitors have seen such pieces at one time or another, even at the highest levels of competition.

While some would argue that the performance of home written material in competition is unethical, the unspoken demand for fresh scripts makes it easy to see why so many competitors choose to take matters into their own hands by writing pieces that not only fit their particular abilities and recent competitive trends, but that have most certainly never been seen in competition. Endres (1988) presents a growing concern that the use of original literature is damaging to the integrity of oral interpretation because it shifts the focus from student growth to competition, valuing intrinsic over extrinsic goals. It causes students to "write 'pieces for interpretation' as compared to writing 'pieces of literature'" (Endres, p. 106). While this automatically places the focus on winning, Billings (2003) reminds us that our real concern with unpublished literature should not involve competitive success; rather, we should ask what impact it may have on the learning process. When students feel pushed to write their own material for competitive reasons, they miss out on the educational opportunities granted through research and interpretation of another's work.

Clearly, these issues reflect a need for more fresh, quality literature that is accessible and suitable for performance. The question remains: where is all this brand new material supposed to come from? The problem is not exclusive to any particular event or even interpretation as a whole; however, it is amplified when the search for quality literature is further limited to that of a dramatic nature which is suitable for two performers. Such is the struggle facing duo competitors.

Discussion and Suggestions for the Future

As coaches, mentors, and educators, we must ask ourselves what we want our students to gain from their participation and how we can best help them achieve this. In the realm of competitive forensics, we set guidelines and restrictions in order to create a forum for oral interpretation as a unified—though still diverse—performance opportunity. We view the rules as building blocks rather than barriers. Without some set of written regulations to follow, it would be difficult to know where to begin, much less observe or measure a performer's growth. In this way, event descriptions make forensics more accessible and enjoyable. However, it is even more important that these event descriptions operate from a pedagogical perspective and can justify themselves.

My proposal is a shift from Dramatic Duo to Duo Interpretation at the college level. Since the activity is rooted in oral interpretation ideologies, the semantic shift seems appropriate. Behind the term "dramatic" is the implied sense of drama found in a theatrical setting. The current event guidelines for duo at the college level seek to directly block this association in stating that "this is not an acting event." Therefore, this change would not be "taking duo off the stage."

Opening up the duo event description to include other genres of literature would not diminish our appreciation for a beautiful play or screenplay; rather, the change would simply create more resources for a category that already values diversity in performance. The current restrictions are far too limiting and fail to recognize the full value and uniqueness of duo as an interpretive outlet. If there is to be no eye contact and no use of props or costumes, then the event is essentially reduced to the interpretation of words on a page. Whether those words come from a play, a novel, a poem, a news article, an online literary journal, or a short story; whether they come from one source or many, is insignificant. Limiting duo teams to a single vein in this body of literature does nothing to advance the event, but much to halt it. More options for scripts will open new doors without diminishing the quality or appreciation of traditional dramatic texts.

In combating the inequality created by the use of unpublished material and the disproportionate dispersal of literary resources, it is important to keep in mind that this shift would help "level the field," so to speak. More literature means more accessibility; more accessibility means greater creative opportunities and new challenges; and it is these challenges which offer interpreters the best chance for both learning and growth. Changing Dramatic Duo to Duo Interpretation would not put an end to home writes; however, it would open up a new world of literature for competitors who choose to find the material they perform. This expansion of available resources would increase the pedagogical benefits by providing an even broader array of material to choose from. Students would be more likely to select and consider the text they interpret, rather than simply finding a piece that "will work."

Programs of literature would still be allowed, and even encouraged. If we are to believe that the goal of oral interpretation is to communicate a message through text, and we agree that much of the pedagogical experience comes from the finding, cutting, and preparation of that text for performance, then it is illogical to impose regulations that would say otherwise. The basic goals of literature selection are to find material that is suitable, original, and offers "performance opportunities." The genre and number of pieces used should be a non-issue, provided ethical codes are not violated (e.g., author's intent should still be respected).

If two competitors want to run overlapping prose monologues or alternate lines of slam poetry, who are we to say that it is a waste of time? They deserve the opportunity to experience their vision, without worrying about standards or where the words they are performing came from. They deserve our thoughtful attention because whether or not we like their approach to the event, they are communicating a message and fulfilling the only requirement of oral interpretation—giving a voice to text.

If we hear out a performance and then decide that we did not like it, we should be able to offer helpful suggestions for improvement with their message, rather than trying to make it our message. Judges and coaches should under no circumstances feel obligated to like a performance; however, justification should be offered either way, just as it should be offered in all events. I am not promoting "art for art's sake," but simply asking us to consider the purpose of limiting duo to dramatic texts. If we cannot find ample justification, if it does not align with our pedagogical ideals for oral interpretation, then it is time to broaden the range of acceptable practices. Only then can the true value of an engaged communicative activity come to fruition, as it is experimentation and subsequent rationalization of our art which lead to deeper understanding and enhanced critical thinking.

Conclusion

It is true that dramatic scripts come in all styles and forms. Why, then, in a category where nontraditional pieces have become as valued as ten minutes of traditional dialogue, are we still choosing to limit students to such a narrow selection of performance material? Play scripts offer an incredible variety for performers to interpret, but the availability of these sources is limited. Other types of literature—such as novels, poetry, and short stories—offer the same variety at a much greater quantity and availability. A change in the duo event description would make available not only the most recently published material, but all published material. The learning process and pedagogical experience associated with interpretation (searching for, analyzing, cutting, and performing literature) would remain, as would the option of using dramatic scripts. This change would not impose on current norms or standards for the event; rather, it would provide competitors with a wealth of new literature for exploration, development, and growth.

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The Day the Music Died
Encouraging Prosodic and Emotional Analysis in the Oral Interpretation of Poetry

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Abstract

This paper examines issues unique to the coaching and oral interpretation of poetry, focusing on the role of prosodic analysis in creating a meaningful interpretation. Contending that current forensic practice produces interpretations that do not value the uniqueness of poetry as a literary genre, this paper proposes a coaching method that encourages the student to examine both prosodic and emotional elements within the selection. A review of literature of oral interpretation textbooks from a variety of time periods is provided, examining the prominence placed on different styles of poetic analysis, and comparing these advocated techniques to current forensic practice. This paper argues that by approaching the performance of poetry in a manner fundamentally different from prose or drama, coaches and students will succeed in meeting a key goal of oral interpretation in forensics: the greater understanding of literature as an art form.

Introduction

Two years ago, the Sundance Channel, a cable channel devoted to the works of independent filmmakers, commissioned animators from around the country to create short films based on the poetry of Billy Collins. Each animator was to take one Collins poem and use a recording of Collins's reading of the poem as the audio track for a short film. The goal of the animators was to bring the images of the poem to life, their visual creativity accompanying Collins's interpretation of his own verses. The resulting shorts were eventually posted to their own website – bcactionpoet.org – and to the popular video upload site YouTube. The short videos proved very popular, garnering many comments. While most praised the hard work of the animators and their visual innovations, many comments were critical of Collins's skills as an interpreter of his own poetry. One user praised the animators, but advised the poet "dont read you poetry on a monaton voice because then it really messes up the meaning of the poem [sic]." Others commented on what they perceived to be Collins's flat delivery: "oh goodness! the voice! can you be more make-me-wanna-sleep-ish! goodness!" and "why does he have to talk like hes about to die."

Though many might point out the silliness of critiquing a former poet laureate's performance of his own work, the comments of these users touch on a major issue of poetry performance. It is doubtful that anyone would describe a national final round of poetry in forensic competition as "make-me-wanna-sleep-ish." The kinds of poetry performance that receive high ranks in forensic competition usually have vibrant, dynamic narrators whose emotions run as wide a gamut as possible. In the final round of Poetry Interpretation at the 2007 NFA National Tournament, competitors smacked the ground with their hands, spoke barely above a whisper, screamed obscenities at the top of their lungs, and several wept when they finished their performance. The air in the room was electric, and I heard several people remark as they were leaving that it was the best round of oral interpretation in any category they had ever seen. Expansive gestures, highly variegated emotional levels, and a sense of dramatic build that includes rising action and a climax all make for an engaging performance that, in general, does well in competition.

Contrast this with an average poetry reading sponsored by a university English department. A published poet is invited to read from their own collection of works, often accompanied by a talk on their craft, meant to aid students of creative writing in their own pursuits. The poet's reading of their work (excepting slam poets) is most often muted and understated. No characterization, no dramatically constructed narrators, no gestures, and quite little vocal variety. In a round of forensic competition, some of the most lauded poets currently writing would almost certainly receive a 5. Reason for decision: not enough expression, did not engage audience.

So, what criteria are we in the forensics community using to evaluate poetry if poets' own interpretations of their poems would fail in competition? Judges often approach poetry performance looking for the same kinds of things one would expect from a round of prose or drama: clearly defined and well-characterized narrators, and a sense of dramatic progression. However, in using non-poetic criteria to evaluate performances of poetry, judges force students to approach poetry as something that it is not.

Geisler (1985) noted this same tendency in the forensic approach to poetry. She observed in "non-competitive settings, special pains are taken to protect the character of the poetic genre: the understanding and evocation of cadence, rhythm, linguistic complexity and device" (p. 76). She went on to

note that all of these aspects of poetry are categorically ignored in favor of a more prose-like interpretation. By letting the literary aspects that make poetry what it is fall by the wayside, we are doing a disservice to our students if the goal of oral interpretation is the deeper understanding of literature. Geisler continued that Ricoeur would call an interpretation that ignores these concepts "less valid."

Consequently, we are working in direct contradiction of what some authors view as the goal of poetry interpretation. A review of oral interpretation textbooks reveals a host of coaching techniques that concentrate on more "literary" aspects of oral interpretation. For example, Lewis (2001) advocated using what many would consider a very traditional literary approach to performing poetry. Delving into such terms as anapest, dactyl, and caesura, he advised poetry interpreters to examine closely the musical side of language. He mirrors Geisler's (1985) caution that a poem like Poe's "The Bells" with its overt, sing-songy rhythm would lull the audience into a torpor. However, he gives the role of meter and rhythm such high importance that he advises interpreters to mark which syllables should be properly accented in a poetry selection. Such minute attention to the rhythm of poetic language would most likely seem a silly, time-consuming, and ultimately pointless task to many competitors in poetry. Lee and Gura (2001) encouraged a similarly literary approach to performing poetry, and addressed students who balk at such close analysis of poetry: "In order to share the poem, you first must 'own' it—that is, you must understand the words and respond to the poem's rhythm and sound…how they cast their spell over us and achieve their extraordinary power and beauty" (p. 375). They went on to discuss many of the other literary components that Geisler mentioned are ignored in forensic competition: cadence, rhythm, and other devices used to construct images in poetry. They argued that both knowledge and execution of these aspects are absolutely essential in creating a valid oral interpretation.

I am not advocating that competitors start competing in exclusively classical literature, trotting out iambic pentameters at every tournament. Nor am I contending that the literary value of poetry is only found in its prosody or musical features. Certainly the image-laden nature of modern prose poetry has tremendous literary value, and makes fine material for oral interpretation. However, I am often reminded of an experience I had during my competitive career. A teammate and I entered into an experimental event called Extemporaneous Interpretation. In the second round of competition, each competitor was given a series of poems that had to be cut and programmed in half an hour. Half of the poems had a marked rhythmic bent or a very evident rhyme scheme; the poems were clearly written with attention to prosody. During our prep time for the event, my teammate systematically cut out every rhyme, every pair of accented syllables that could have contributed to a musical rhythm. When I asked what she was doing, she responded, "I'm making it more like a prose…I'm making it better. This way, the judges will like it." When poetry performance is praised for ignoring the very aspects that make it poetry, something must be changed. As forensic educators, we are clearly not doing enough to ensure that our students understand the unique literary structure of poetry. I propose a method of coaching poetry interpretation for forensic performance that respects the structural elements of poetry and maximizes student learning about the literary elements of poetry as a genre.

Review of Literature

A review of relevant literature illuminates several issues concerning the oral interpretation of poetry, and the role of literary analysis therein. Gernant (1991) claimed that the pedagogical value of oral interpretation is the growth of the student's understanding of literature as an art form. Such an understanding comes through "literary analysis" of the selection, but what does this term mean exactly? I examine literature that focuses on two kinds of analysis, prosodic and emotional, as well as forensic research that shows how, and to what extent, forensic competitors perform these sorts of analysis.

Prosodic Analysis

A review of oral interpretation textbooks reveals a variety of different approaches to the interpretation of poetry. As mentioned above, Lewis (2001) put forward a technique familiar to many English teachers. Through careful study of the "architecture" of the poem, a valid interpretation can be found. Lewis proposed that students must have under their belts a basic understanding of the structural elements of poetry in order to perform it. An effective interpreter of poetry should be able to scan a selection for accent and meter, and show evidence of such analysis in their interpretation. Through careful analysis of the linguistic elements of the piece, a true and valid interpretation is found.

Certainly this emphasis on the prosodic elements of poetry is mirrored in several other guides to oral interpretation of poetry. Texts from the '60s and '70s encourage a more structure-oriented approach to poetry. Mouat (1962) noted that studying the rhythmic elements of a poem is vital to a valid interpretation: "Probably the main reason poetry is often read so poorly is that the reader does not recognize the rhythmic movement" (p. 118). Like Lewis, Mouat recommended marking a poem for accented syllables and stress to better understand the "rhythmic movement of the piece." Bacon (1966) also devoted a great deal of his discussion of poetic interpretation to the dissection of rhyme and structure, and how these elements bring out the inherent mu-

sic within a poem. He notes that all literature is likely to have its own sense of melody. Any carefully written piece of literature has a "tune" inside of it, and this music is even more explicitly poured into a work of poetry. Any valid interpretation of a poem, then, must examine the musical aspect of the work to bring out what the author originally intended. Similar to Mouat's approach, Bacon put the musical elements of poetry on center stage.

This attitude towards poetry is anything but antiquated. Modern oral interpretation texts also emphasize a strong knowledge of structural elements in poetry and its key role in creating an effective oral performance. Lee and Gura (2001) devoted time to minute, prosodic analysis of poetry, but also emphasized more broad structural concepts such as pattern and repetition, arguing "the total impact of the poem is achieved only when content and structure are perfectly coordinated" (p. 336). This sentiment does not differ in the least from the core arguments found in the oral interpretation textbooks that are currently decades old. O'Connor (2004) offered a perspective more grounded in the English tradition when discussing the role of poetry performance in a classroom. He echoes Adams's (1956) assertion that the oral interpretation of poetry is a crucial component of any poetry unit for an English classroom. He offers suggestions to English teachers of poetry for "punching" and "painting" lines of poetry, and all of these suggestions revolve around analyzing a poem for structural elements and figuring out which segments of verses deserve to be emphasized.

A fastidious, metrical scanning of poetic verse seems like a relevant exercise when dealing with older poetry that has a much heavier bent towards a formulaic meter. The poetry of Donne and Shakespeare comes to mind, complete with iambic pentameter and slant rhymes. However, is such close structural analysis of poetry a relevant exercise for modern free verse poetry? Slam poetry? Certainly, not all English scholars agree that close, structural scanning of a poem is beneficial to a student's understanding of a poem. Burk (1992) cautioned that one of the most dangerous things a coach or teacher of poetry can do is inundate a student with lists of technical terms that ultimately bear little significance in the overall understanding of the poem. However, Mouat (1962) and Bacon (1966) both emphasized that even within the looser framework of modern free verse poetry, attention to structure and musical aspects of poetry must be paid. Armstrong and Brandes (1963), in particular, note that even with a concept like "prose poetry," the performance of such a text must still sound fundamentally different from the performance of prose.

Emotional Analysis

Not all oral interpretation texts focus so primarily on the prosodic or musical elements of poetry, however. The bulk of Mattingly and Grimes's (1970) work on oral interpretation of poetry is devoted to issues of situation and message, concepts much more familiar to the modern forensic coaching of poetry. Though some mention is made of the role of phonetics in creating an image, Mattingly and Grimes were primarily concerned with the following questions, which they claim every effective interpreter of poetry must answer:

1. What is the essence of the poetic experience with which we are here concerned?
2. What situational aspects affect the attitude of the interpreter?
3. What physical responses does the poem require?
4. What vocal responses does the poem require? (p. 192)

Attention must be given to music and structure, but paramount in this approach is the more nebulous "poetic experience" that the interpreter communicates. This holistic approach to poetry is mirrored in Armstrong and Brandes (1963), who put forward that "...it is not easy to distinguish between [prose and poetry]. The difference is only one of degree. In the broader sense, poetry makes its appeal to emotion and thus to the imagination. Prose has an emotional element, but such an element is often subordinate to reason" (p. 251). Though they contend the line between prose and poetry is blurry, these scholars outline an approach to oral interpretation of poetry that ensures that the performance stays distinctly poetic. Instead of relying on such traditional tools as scansion and metrical analysis (though these attacks are given a fair amount of weight), they focus on musical aspects such as tone, sound, and onomatopoeia, and how these structural elements relate to the emotions the poet is trying to create through their writing. They argue that cognizance of these elements is the key to crafting the performance that communicate Mattingly and Grimes's idea of "poetic essence": "We may enjoy musical sound in poetry for its own sake, but we must remember that our enjoyment will be intensified if we enjoy the rhythm as it supports the emotionalized idea" (p. 264). It is this emphasis on the "emotionalized idea" that separates prosodic analysis from this broader form of what I term "emotional" analysis. This form of analysis ferrets out the emotional content of the poem, and then examines how textual elements serve to communicate that emotion. Prosodic analysis analyzes the text itself; emotional analysis looks at the emotions behind the words. However, either kind of analysis still uses textual elements to reinforce the communication of the poetic message. Both approaches argue that knowledge of poetry's unique structure is vital to creating a valid and true oral interpretation.

Literary Analysis in Current Forensic Practice

The question of what kind of analysis must be performed on an oral interpretation selection is an issue that appears in several places in the forensic literature on oral interpretation. Gernant (1991) furthered the notion that the role of oral interpretation is to increase a student's understanding of literature as a whole. As such, a successful oral interpretation performance should showcase the student's analysis of the script and demonstrate evidence that the student has "done their homework" and analyzed the script outside of rehearsal. To test this, she surveyed a number of oral interpretation competitors at a forensics tournament, asking them questions about the kind of literary analysis they perform outside of a coaching appointment to become more familiar with the literary aspects of the selection. Her results were disheartening: many of her responses included phrases that interpreters either had no idea how to do literary analysis, or that close scrutiny of the text was not necessary to a quality interpretation. Responses like "My coach did all the analytical stuff and marked my script up for me" and "I really have no idea what to do" led Gernant to conclude that literary analysis is currently being cast along the side of the road: "While a student may validly argue that their text can stand alone, responses indicated an ignorance and a misunderstanding of the goal and justification for interpretation in forensics" (p. 46).

Keefe (1986) tape recorded a number of coaching sessions at schools that regularly placed in team sweepstakes at national tournaments. She transcribed the conversations and analyzed the interaction that occurred in the coaching session. She divided the interactions between the coach and the students into categories such as "agreement," "questioning," and "demonstrating." In her analysis, she also examined how much time was devoted to exploration of the script. She found that the bulk of the coaching time in the sessions was devoted to exploration of the script and to literary analysis, which directly rebuffs Gernant's claim that literary analysis is not a priority when preparing an oral interpretation performance.

While Keefe's (1986) claim that literary analysis still forms the crux of poetry coaching sessions is certainly encouraging, she doesn't elucidate what kind of analysis is going on in these sessions. Certainly the same techniques that interpreters of prose and drama use to generate character and find meaning within a text are certainly valid in analyzing a selection of poetry. However, are coaches helping students strive to understand what makes poetry a unique literary genre, and not just another first person monologue? The prosodic analysis that Mouat, Bacon, and Lewis all championed is certainly one method students can use to approach poetry differently than prose or drama, but such techniques seem ill-advised for the kind of spoken word poetry that is prevalent on today's circuit. It is true that slam poetry is not only easier to approach from an oral perspective than highly structured verse, but it also contains the social relevance that is highly valued on the circuit (Bruce & Davis, 2000). However, the sort of structural analysis that many scholars trumpet as necessary to a justified oral performance of poetry is still possible with modern spoken word verse. O'Connor (2004) demonstrated how his strategy of punching and painting words can be done with any free-verse poem through the conscious selection of which words to emphasize sharply, and which words to smooth over. It is this kind of structural analysis that I contend is starkly absent from many poetry performances on the forensic circuit. Surely Gernant's assertion that the goal of oral interpretation is to familiarize students with the ins and outs of literary analysis is one that few would disagree with. Keefe's findings that literary analysis is regularly occurring in poetry coaching are also encouraging. I maintain, however, that we must find a method for analyzing poetry and creating poetry performances that is amenable to all kinds of poetic literature, and that creates performances that respect the uniqueness of poetry as a literary genre.

Discussion

I admit my own views on poetry interpretation spring from my previous experience as both a student of linguistics and teacher of English. I don't see these previous experiences as biases, per se; rather, they afford me a unique perspective on the coaching of poetry performance, having previously taught the subject in a classroom. The forensic tournament as laboratory for the communication classroom is an often repeated metaphor in the literature of forensic research (Aden, 1991; Harris, Kropp, & Rosenthal, 1986; Swanson, 1992). For me personally, given my experience as an English instructor, the competitive round of poetry interpretation becomes an extension of the English classroom. A sound coaching method should satisfy Gernant's (1991) claim that the pedagogical value of performing poetry is to increase the student's understanding of poetry as a literary genre. Poetry, more than any other interpretive event, offers the opportunity for the kind of literary understanding that Gernant is calling for. By casting proses and DIs as first-person monologues, coaches encourage interpretations of this kind of literature to become more "performance" based experiences. This leads the coach to ask questions about the character being portrayed ("what is the character thinking here? Why are they reacting this way? How can you best portray this?, etc.) and not necessarily about the text. Poetry on the other hand, comes with its own sets of interpretation issues that are more grounded in "literature" in a sense more familiar to English teachers. Yes, students must dig to find and identify

a narrator that they will later internalize, but along the way they encounter a host of non-intuitive word choices and linguistic structures unique to poetry. With a few exceptions, the point of poetry is that no one actually talks like how a poem sounds. The level of imagery and tone of the language elevate it away from every-day common speech. Therefore, a solid interpretive performance must first look at the language on the page to find a true interpretation. Of course, interpreters of prose and DI must also look at the words on the page, but poetry is words that are expressly meant to be musical to a degree that prose and drama simply are not. This musicality is a feature of poetry performance that must be maintained, and this is where prosodic analysis must come into play.

Of course, it is possible to be too over-the-top with musical language. Hitting each "s" sharply in alliteration is certainly a distraction, but this is something that an effective coach of poetic interpretation must work with the student on to find a balance. As mentioned above, this sort of prosodic concentration on the musical facets of poetry is equally valid, I feel, in older texts as well as newer ones. Whether metered verse, modern free verse, or contemporary slam poetry, the text must be looked at for musical traits that must come out. This is the value of prosodic analysis of the text. It gets poetry performance to stop sounding like prose and more like a form of literature that is meant to have musical qualities to it.

Emotional analysis of the piece, however, is equally valid. A surgical scansion of the piece is still necessary, I maintain, to bring certain musical qualities to life, but a student must understand the complex interplay between these musical qualities and the emotional content of the piece. This is where emotional analysis comes in. Mattingly and Grimes (1970) put forth a series of questions that is still valid today. In addition to analyzing the music of a poetic selection, students must examine the connotations of the words within the piece to tease out the emotional message behind the words.

I do not sense a sore lack in this area of forensic competition. We have trained our interpreters to become powerful communicators of emotion, and performances that end up in national out-rounds (and these are the performances we must examine the closest, since this is what judges are rewarding and what future competitors will emulate) certainly display clear narrators that emote very believably. However, while vivid imagery certainly appears in high quality literature for poetry interpretation, I still find myself thinking, even while this image-laden text is performed, "It all still sounds like a prose monologue."

Students must see how form and content interrelate; focusing too much on one at the expense of the other is not pedagogically sound coaching. Coaching towards internalization in poetry is clearly a worthy goal, and it leads to the kind of vibrant performances that made the final round of poetry at NFA such an electric experience. However, too much concentration on the emotional content of the piece makes a poetic performance indistinguishable on a literary level from a performance of prose or DI. A musical performance of poetry combined with emotional content is truly what the forensics world should encourage, if oral interpretation is to remain an activity that encourages a profound understanding of literature as an art form.

Coaching Method

I propose a method for coaching poetry interpretation that combines the benefits of both prosodic and emotional analysis. This method will hopefully generate a performance that Geisler (1985) would call the "creation and re-creation of an art form" (p. 77). A performance born out of this coaching method would ideally communicate the musical and poetic elements of the poetry while also creating a performance that is, in and of itself, a work of art.

As with any performance, we must first start with the text. On the first coaching session of any poetry piece, I would not see the piece on its feet. Rather, I would talk with the student on why they are drawn to this particular poem or group of poems (assuming, of course, they found the poems on their own). If the student first encountered the poem through a coach or teammate, I would discuss why they wish to perform these selections. Very simply, why do they like it? Once a personal stake with the piece is established, I would encourage a more minute analysis of the text by asking "What makes this piece poetic to you?" Discussion would be encouraged on the nature of poetry (Does it have to rhyme to be poetry? Does it have to be "pretty"? If it's written by someone who is a famous poet, what makes this person a different writer than, say, a prose writer?), and why this selection is poetic. Before the next coaching session, I would assign the student to look up in the dictionary any words that they do not know the definition of. Beyond this, though, the student should double-check the definition of any other unfamiliar words in the piece in either a dictionary or a thesaurus. The word may have some connotation that the student is unaware of that may change or enhance the meaning of a given verse.

In the next coaching session, I would have the student run through the piece all the way through for the first time. I here heed Burk's (1992) advice that jumping immediately into high-flown poetic terms of prosody can kill off a student's interest in poetry immediately. I would instead start with a more emotional analysis of the piece. When the student was done performing, I would ask them to name which points in the piece were the emotional high points of

intensity. These can be either moments of quiet power, or loud, bombastic energy. We would then go back to the text and identify which words and verses most served to bring out this intensity. Once these words were identified, we would examine what exactly to do with those words. Should "stab" be said surprisingly loud to jolt the audience? I would turn the discussion here to what the audience will be feeling at this point – the "poetic experience" that Mattingly and Grimes concern themselves with – and how the delivery style of certain lines and phrases would enhance that experience. This session would again come with homework: the student must identify the three most "challenging" sections in the selection from a linguistic point of view. These are the selections that would most easily prompt a reader or listener to say "I'm not quite sure what the poet is saying here." The student must then re-write the poem or selection in their own words, free of any poetic language or device. This way, the student understands not only the subtext of the pieces, but how the poet dressed up an idea in poetic language. I would work together with the student on "de-coding" part of the first selection before sending them off to do it on their own before the next session.

In the next coaching session, we would talk about the student's homework assignment. Was the student able to glean the core message from the poetic devices on the surface? Whether or not the student encountered troubles, we would talk about what the student discovered. If the student encountered difficulty, I would work together with them on this coaching session to complete the assignment, even if it meant not seeing the piece standing up that day. If the student did complete the assignment, I would discuss the student's findings.

Now, a shift of gears would take place. Since we've done primarily emotional analysis up to this point, I would encourage more prosodic analysis. I would have the student perform, but before beginning the interpretation, I would encourage the student to be listening to themselves speak, and notice if there are any instances of "musical" elements of the language that come out. Does one letter appear more often in one part of the selection? Are words repeated at all? Do you find yourself slipping into a rhythm at all? If so, this rhythm should be encouraged! I would talk with the student after the performance to see if they noted any musical elements of the language. If not, we would sit with the text and look for instances of prosody as they appear on the page. Discussion would be stemmed towards what exactly this musical language accomplishes. As a final homework assignment, I would ask the student to simply examine the text for any instances of alliteration, assonance, or anything else that the student notes as "musical." We would look to bring these out in future coaching sessions.

I realize this is an ambitious approach, and it must be tailored based on each individual student. Some will have more of a "musical" ear and will pick out the more prosodic elements of the selection easier, others will have a harder time. As with any coaching technique, the coach must work with the student to develop attainable goals based on each student's individual strengths and weaknesses, keeping education as the primary goal.

Conclusion

The goals of a poetry reading and a forensic poetry performance are undeniably different. A creative reading of poetry serves to highlight only the words of the poetry itself, whereas a forensic poetry performance is an art form unto itself. Its twin goals are to showcase the poetic value of the selection, just as a poetry reading does, but also to display the dynamic performance ability of the interpreter. Unfortunately, much of forensic poetry performance values this second criterion at the expense of the first. By incorporating sound prosodic analysis into the coaching of the oral interpretation of poetry, we increase not only the legitimacy of the performance, but student understanding of poetry as a whole. I propose a coaching method that respects both the musicality and the emotional impact of the poetic genre of literature. In addition to incorporating elements of the above coaching method into their own pedagogy, coaches can also work together with their English departments and creative writing faculty members to help students craft sound performances. Such inter-departmental cooperation would not only be a performance benefit to the students, but it would increase awareness of the forensic program on campus. Any chance a coach or DOF has to generate good will on campus should be taken advantage of, and this would be one way to get the name of the forensic program out on campus. Students should also be encouraged to draw off what they learn in their literature classes and apply it to forensic performance. In this way, forensics remains a truly co-curricular activity and not just one that exists in its own vacuum in the competitive world.

Oral interpretation of poetry presents unique challenges to both the forensic interpreter and the forensic coach. When these challenges are met, however, poetry has the potential to be the most powerful of linguistic performances, distilled language that communicates the most profound emotions with the greatest economy of words. It is this linguistic harmony that we must encourage our students to seek out, cultivate, and perform.

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After Dinner Speaking
Problems, Causes, and Still No Solutions

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Introduction

I was judging a round of After Dinner Speaking last weekend, hoping for a laugh. Some competitors were successful through their use of wit, others used cheesy lines, and the last student was probably supposed to be entered in Persuasion. It was extremely difficult and frustrating to fill out the ballots. Should I have voted for the funniest person, the funniest looking person, or the most significant topic with some jokes thrown in at the end like laws on a California proposition? This is a question facing many individual events judges today, while the students competing in this event are equally confused. Although many forensics judges maintain that whoever can entertain them the most will take "the one" in an ADS round, AFA-NIET final rounds are consistently full of speeches jam packed with importance. This is just one example of how the waters of ADS have become murky. Since its inception, the After Dinner Speech has changed more than Hillary Clinton's stance on the war in Iraq. Therefore, it is important to analyze the communicative evolution of this event and the controversies that have arisen since its incarnation. In order to do so, we must first, peek into the past of After Dinner Speaking, ponder the present status of the event, and finally, have a premonition of how to pursue progression.

A (Very) Short History of After Dinner Speaking

Like Al Gore and the Internet, forensics members did not invent the ADS. I didn't invent it either. I like to refer to that as more of a re-invention. After dinner speeches, also referred to as "evening illustrated lectures," date back hundreds of years where they are assumed to originate in Britain. Yes, we can thank the Brits for something other than Harry Potter and colonialism. Today, there are still quite a few agencies in Britain and Scotland that offer the services of several famous after dinner speakers; their topics ranging from marketing to cricket. The name of the event is quite literal, as these speakers address the guests after dinner.

Though the forensic event of After Dinner Speaking does not take place after a meal (unless the judge ate a meatball sandwich during the first speech), the forensics community thought it would be a good addition to the family of events. Despite popular opinion, its induction was based on more than keeping the judges awake. Mills (1984) argued, "Speech communication texts have emphasized the use of humor in speech development for decades. Because of this philosophical stance that forensics should be an extension of what is taught in classrooms, After Dinner Speaking as a competitive event has emerged" (p. 11). This, however, does not account for why the popular classroom act of "lecture" is not an event (I <3 Paulo). So, in 1973 the National Forensics Association added After Dinner Speaking as an event.

Controversy in After Dinner Speaking

A number of points of controversy surrounding the After Dinner Speech have surfaced since its appearance in the forensics community. Preston (1997) states, "the controversy surrounding after dinner speaking traditionally revolve[s] around three issues: 1) the purpose of the event in terms of the role of humor and the serious point, 2) the extent to which sources should be used, 3) what, if anything, should be the real-world master analog for the event" (p. 99). While Preston points out key areas of controversy, problems in this event span beyond three components. Like the number of brain cells in George W. Bush's head, there are four areas of controversy I will to discuss: defining the event, differentiating After Dinner Speaking from Speech to Entertain, differentiating After Dinner Speaking from Informative and Persuasive events, and the necessity for judging standards.

Defining After Dinner Speaking

When tournament invitations, AFA rules, Phi Rho Pi rules, and individual directors all have a different notion of what the After Dinner Speech is, confusion arises. While each of these places might wield a few similarities, the differences are often plentiful…like the number of brain cells in my head. For example, Mills (1984) examined descriptions of After-Dinner Speaking listed on several tournament invitations. He found several criteria for this event including: time limits, originality, the ability to produce more than a string of one-liners, wit, creativity, humor that is in good taste, and that the speech should make a serious point (p. 12). Dreibelbis and Redmon (1987) note that many invitations characterize the ADS as being either persuasive or informative, further noting, "a number of tournaments are specifying in their event descriptions that the ADS

should not be a 'funny informative'" but rather, persuasive in nature (p. 97).

Today, invitations might also include something about the number of sources recommended, plagiarism of famous comics' bits, and the inclusion of a dinosaur joke. Mills further notes that many of the words used in these invitations (such as "good taste") are ambiguous and raise several questions for judges and competitors alike. Some of this ambiguity is almost certainly derived from the multiple organizations within the forensics community.

After Dinner Speaking vs. Speaking to Entertain

One strong area of contestation arises when critics question the significance of academic content and development in this event. Without a strong thesis, some ADS's are cast off as the red headed step-child of forensics. Questions surrounding the content of the ADS marked an early area of controversy involved with After Dinner Speaking, causing us to ask, 'Is the event about being funny with a bit of significance or significant with a bit of funny?' Klopf (1982) wrote:

> An after-dinner speech does not have to convert an audience into a howling mob convulsed with laughter; a speech that is brightened with humor and that offers a good natured approach to a worthwhile subject usually is more appropriate. A speaker achieves his or her purpose through the use of anecdotes, illustrations, and humorous stories, if these are appropriate to the audience and the occasion and are related to the subject. Many beginning speakers fail because their material is not in harmony with the mood of the listeners and the occasion. (cited in Hanson p. 28)

Furthermore, Mills (1984) explains a connection between entertainment and significance through the difference between wit and humor. He says both of these types of language "play an integral part in the development of the serious point of the speech" (Mills, p. 14). However, he finds these two laughing matters may be connected, but are distinct entities. Whereas wit springs from a "serious motive" and has an overall purpose, humor can "just be" and does not need a point to work (Gruner as cited in Mills, p. 14). Even with such definitions, the emphasis on humor versus persuasiveness varies based on the organization hosting the event. Driebelbis and Redmon (1987) differentiated After Dinner Speaking from the commonly substituted Speech to Entertain, determining that Phi Rho Pi's definition of Speech to Entertain focuses on entertainment. They state, "the rules for STE differ from those of ADS in that there is no mention of the 'serious point' (p. 101). This potentially leads to confusion among those students who attend both the Phi Rho Pi National tournament and the AFA-NIET, or for those of us without a big budget, students who attend the Santa Rosa tournament and the California opener in the same year.

Differentiating After Dinner Speaking From Other Platform Events

As noted above, the After Dinner Speech often adopts the qualities of a persuasive or informative speech. I speak from experience when I say that some students find it easy to have jokes in their speech when they are signed up for informative, and embarrassingly enough, no jokes at all when they are competing in After Dinner Speaking. The standards become unclear when a students' speech can fit into more than one category. Part of the confusion may stem from the universal platform standards enacted by the forensics community. In 1984 at the 2nd National Conference on Forensics, Resolution 45 was enacted, which created standards for judging platform events or public address events as they were commonly referred to at that time. The resolution included the following standards:

1. the speaker's presentation should identify a thesis or claim from which the speech is developed;
2. the speaker's presentation should provide a motivational link (relevance factor) between the topic and the audience;
3. the speaker's presentation should develop a substantive analysis of the thesis using appropriate supporting materials;
4. the speaker's presentation should be organized in a coherent manner;
5. the speaker's presentation should use language which is appropriate for the topic and the audience;
6. the speaker's presentation should be delivered using appropriate vocal and physical presentation skills (cited in Hanson, 1998, p. 25).

Hanson addresses the concern of whether or not such standards are applicable to the After Dinner Speech. While it may be easy to see similarities and differences amongst all platform speeches, there is indeed something that sets the after dinner speech apart from its siblings: entertainment. This element can vary through the use of props, facial expressions, and the various types of humor that exist. Miller (1974) noted, "Some speakers use various forms of humor better than others. How effective are you, for example, in using exaggeration? understatement? puns? irony? Can you talk entertainingly about the peculiar traits of people? Are you effective in treating serious ideas lightly or light subjects seriously?" (cited in Hanson, p. 27).

The Necessity for Judging Standards

With judging standards unclear, boundaries enacted what I like to call the invisible electric doggy

fence theory. If a student went too far, they often didn't know it and got zapped back into their place when they got their ballots. The smoking of the six really hurt some students. Thus, local tournaments began to suffer with enrollment rates. Holm (1996) noticed what many of us have seen in our districts: that ADS is a favorite room packed event at nationals, but entries at the local level seems to have dwindled. He lists several reasons for this decline. The winner: judges. He cites complaints from several open competitors such as "judges with hangovers" and "judges who try not to laugh" (p. 1). More specifically, Holm returns to the idea that a tailored set of standards for judging the after dinner speech is nonexistent; leading to confusion, frustration, and murder. No murders have occurred to date, but it's possible. Students are prompted to then ask, "Why do speeches which aren't funny make it into the finals?" "Why are my rankings so inconsistent?" and "Why do they teach us about audience analysis in public speaking classes and say we should modify our speeches to meet the demographics of the group and then turn around and say "Never use forensics humor" in [ADS] Forensics is the one thing we all have in common" (p. 1).

In response to these questions, and just out of sheer nosiness, Edwards and Thompson (2001) conducted a content analysis of ADS ballots. During the 2000-2001 Forensics season, these authors collected ADS ballots from several tournaments in the upper Midwest. Due to the region they collected the ballots from, I found it appropriate to leave out the categories of analysis on farming, incest, and bestiality. The Midwest's humor seriously skews the study. Edwards and Thompson found that most of the comments on the ADS ballot fit into two headings: content and humor. To give you an idea of which category weighed heavier in the minds of the judges, they stated, "Content had two hundred and twenty-one related comments while humor had one hundred eight-nine. The following is a breakdown of each general area" (p. 1).

Billings (2003) further examines judges' tolerance of topics and specific language in this event. He points out that After-dinner speeches aren't as funny as they used to be and the primary reason appears to be the fear of potentially intolerable or offensive humor (p. 2). Because of this problem, Billings studied focus groups comprised of forensics judges in which he asked them to define "the line" and identify their tolerance of different types of humor. Those topics that were generally not tolerated included humor regarding: handicaps, homophobia, violence, disorders, and sexism (p. 6). This means that I won't be able to talk about my paraplegic, gay, wife-beating, narcoleptic, bigot of an uncle, and that's some funny stuff. Billings claims that this intolerability to many of the topics that are prevalent in our society only works to stifle creativity in this event.

Each of these studies reiterates the same theme: there is a seriously large grey area for criteria and standards in After-Dinner Speaking. Each of these controversies needs to be addressed and analyzed for further development and improvement not only within this event, but also our community.

Suggestions and Future Directions

I have elaborated upon four major areas of controversy within After Dinner Speaking that need our attention. While I would like to say that God helps those who help themselves, I know that will not get me published, which is why I will offer some suggestions; both on a broad scale and more specific to each issue.

First, many of the controversies discussed here could be solved by the implementation of humor curriculums in our education systems. While there is little research done on the actual teaching of humor to students, several scholars do note that humor is a valuable teaching tool (Ruggieri, 1999; Johnson, 1990; Bryant & Zillman, 1989; Kher et. al., 1999; Baym, 2005). Forensic students are teachers in their own right. If you dig through the informative speeches on bees and motorcycles, there are a few speeches that you might find intriguing and fascinating. Often times it is the lack of excitement or entertainment, however, that often prevents people from listening to these speeches, let alone learning from them. The After Dinner Speech should serve as a remedy for this due to its use of humor as a pedagogical tool.

Take for example late night comedy shows. The 2004 Pew Survey found that 13% of people ages 18-29 "report learning from late-night talk shows such as NBC's Tonight Show with Jay Leno and CBS's Late Show with David Letterman" and The Daily Show is a rising source of political information" (cited in Baym, 2005, p. 260). Baym continues, the "unique blending of comedy, late-night entertainment, news, and public affairs discussion has resonated with a substantial audience" (p. 260). This blending of significance with entertainment sounds familiar. If we recognize that forensics students are educators, then the need for humor as a teaching tool becomes more apparent. However, if one does not know how to use humor effectively, the value of comedy and the After Dinner Speech is unapparent. By developing a humor curriculum, we would be giving our students a tool that they can utilize throughout their forensics career and throughout a lifetime of communication and education. If you don't believe me, go back and review some of my jokes. If you didn't laugh, it wasn't my fault. I wasn't taught how to be funny.

In regards to defining the event, Preston (1997) believes that there should be improvements made to this event and suggests that we "provide a thorough event description for all events, including after din-

ner speaking, to assist critics" (p. 97). Not only should there be thorough event descriptions, but I would also advocate for a universal description used by both AFA and Phi Rho Pi. Currently, the event description for After Dinner Speaking listed for the NIET reads:

> An original, humorous speech by the student, designed to exhibit sound speech composition, thematic coherence, direct communicative public speaking skills, and good taste. The speech should not resemble a night club act, an impersonation, or comic dialogue. Audio-visual aids may or may not be used to supplement and reinforce the message. Minimal notes are permitted. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes (AFA-NIET).

Aside from the four typos that I had to fix when transcribing this passage, there are a few words I would like to point out. This list of what not to do is often echoed in tournament invitations across the country. This might include "not a string of one liners," or "not stand up comedy." Kay and Borchers (1992) believe that event descriptions should not limit the student as much as they do. They state, "Students in after dinner speaking are doubly penalized—not only do the event rules fail to prescribe a public arena model, but the rules actually take away the most popular and appropriate public arena models (stand up)" (p. 168). Holm (1988) concurs with their statement as he says, "to the new competitor A.D.S. is unlike anything they may have seen in the past. For many the only thing they can compare it to mentally is a stand-up comedy routine" (p. 7). These limitations do not help a student to understand what the event is. Instead of telling students what not to do, the event description should focus on what the event should look like. It's like abstinence only education. If you don't teach them how to use a condom, the itch gets worse. Speaking of which, the idea of "good taste" is quite vague and subjective. While most of what we do in forensics is subjective, having a term like this in a paragraph that is supposed to break down rules and standards is not helpful, but instead confusing. A description that may be useful looks like this:

> An 8-10 minute speech that uses several types of humor as a vehicle to persuade, inform, or otherwise show analysis of a significant topic. Entertainment should be balanced with the significance of the topic at hand through the use of sources and effective delivery skills. Participants should be less concerned with the quantity of humor and more with the quality of humor. The student should use language appropriate for the audience and topic. Audio-visual aids may or may not be used to supplement and reinforce the message. Random humor is discouraged.

I do not contend that this is a perfect description that should be adopted immediately by all tournaments, the AFA, and/or Phi Rho Pi. However, I do hope that this opens up conversation amongst directors, coaches, and students to change the hundreds of descriptions that exist today and base them on our objectives for this genre.

Next, as the scholars cited here have made clear, we need to differentiate between Speech to Entertain and After Dinner Speaking. By allowing students to qualify for nationals in one event by using their legs from the other, forensics organizations are doing students a great injustice which does not honor the work that they put into this activity. Students who compete in tournaments who offer "Sports impromptu" do not get to take the legs from that swing to go to AFA in regular ole' impromptu. Then again, if you are at a tournament that offers that event, you probably aren't going to qualify anyway. If you do not like my radical third wave forensicism ideals, then Dreibelbis and Redmon (1987) offer three other solutions to this conundrum:

1. Coaches should read the rules listed in the event description when going to a tournament with what appear to be different event categories.
2. Students who transfer from two-year colleges or graduate from high school should familiarize themselves with the rules appropriate for intercollegiate tournaments.
3. Coaches and judges should judge STE's using STE rules and criteria and the same should hold true for ADS. (p. 103).

These suggestions attempt to relieve the confusion students experience in the funny v. serious arguments that make an ongoing appearance on ADS ballots. I know my students don't want to memorize two different speeches for the same event and I certainly don't want to write two speeches for them to memorize. Not that we do that at San Francisco State. Or that any coaches do for that matter. Moving on…

Preston (1997) continues by advocating for clearer distinctions between After-Dinner Speaking and Informative and/or persuasive. Although he vowed to do a content analysis and comparison of Informative and Persuasive ballots against the ADS ballots, eleven years have gone by and we still haven't seen that research (p. 97). Perhaps somebody in the community could take on this task to improve the knowledge we have for differentiating platform event standards.

While some scholars, like Preston, have stated that we need to differentiate After Dinner Speaking from Informative or Persuasive, I disagree. It seems as though there is a battle between the informative ADS and the persuasive ADS. If we can agree that

the primary purpose of this speech is to use humor as a vehicle, then the end result should be left open. Furthermore, I advocate a new direction in After Dinner Speaking. Why not allow your students to use humor to engage the audience in a rhetorical criticism or communication analysis? We should let our students take the tools they learn in these other platform events and apply them to the speech that everyone wants to watch. People got it wrong when they started to call the informative the "speech to bore." While a good CA is interesting, the language and density that most competitors use to construct it prevent them from getting the audience they deserve. The amount of time that goes into a Communication Analysis deserves at least five people in the room to watch it. If we regularly saw humor being used to explain the movements, media, and language that we encounter daily, then we would truly be using the After Dinner Speech to make a serious point worthy of investigation and ultimately we could reinvent this event as we know it.

Finally, although forensics coaches sometimes like to live vicariously through those who they coach, we all must admit that this activity is for the students. If we acknowledge this, then it is of great concern that 35% of students surveyed regarding the ADS stated that a lack of uniform judging criteria is the biggest problem facing ADS competitors today (Billings, 2003, p. 4). With such a variety of outcomes in the data that has been produced, several scholars propose that there should be a new set of standards on which to base our judgments for After-Dinner Speaking (Hanson, 1998; Holm, 1988; Billings, 1997; Jensen 1990; Mills 1983; Dreibelbis and Redmon, 1987; Preston, 1997). However, before we propose judging criteria for this event, there are preliminary steps that we as a community must take.

Before we can create a set of criteria, the forensics community must identify the pedagogical goals of this specific event. Until we agree upon what the educational value of this activity is, then we cannot agree upon a clear set of criteria for judging the ADS. Stimulating this conversation will provide clarity to some of the controversy discussed here. Therefore, I would like to offer a list of goals/objectives that I have identified for this genre:

1. Students should be able to understand and effectively use humor as a vehicle of persuasion, informing, and/or analyzing.
2. Students should learn and be able to use a variety of different types of humor.
3. Students should be able to use humor extemporaneously.
4. Students should demonstrate the ability to create a coherent argument/thesis.

While these are only a few suggestions, they serve as a starting point from which we can develop a fruitful conversation on the pedagogical value of the ADS.

Strengths and Limitations

Despite the fact that many people have been waiting for my generosity in supplying the community with a set of criteria for judging ADS, we have to admit that there are a number of limitations such a set of standards will bring us. When we define the "line" and create a boundary for students to stay within, we may be stifling their creativity. Most of us would agree creativity is the defining feature of an after dinner speech. Forensics encourages students to think outside of the box and challenge the status quo. As more and more standards and rules are introduced and more guidelines become "unwritten" rules, students may be less likely to reach this goal of the activity. Gaer (2002) argues that our need to simplify events into a formulaic list of requirements may promote energy in the activity by way of competition, but certainly does not nourish creativity and the education of our students.

However, I would argue that by creating the "line" we are also creating the space beyond that line where many of us challenge our students to daringly enter. If we did not have criteria for any event, then there would be no uniqueness to stylistic choices. This space beyond the line is like dark matter: we can't see it, but we know it exists and it is really freaking cool. This space is where innovation truly happens. Many coaches urge their students to rub up against the boundaries that are there in order to stand out and make an argument about our system. It's hard to forget the students who put colorful pages in their black binders to emphasize a point, the student who didn't speak throughout his entire piece, or the duo pair that purposefully touched in their conclusion.

Often times, the best speeches and the national champions are the ones who cross this line. Take this year's ADS champion for example. Erin McCarthy, a Senior from Bradley University chose to identify the problems with the formulaic choices that students utilize in ADS. She was able to make fun of those choices, cross several lines, and ultimately challenge our notions of what a good speech is. If we did not have rules, lines, or boundaries in place, this speech would not exist. Furthermore, there would not have been a chance for change to occur. Students like Erin are innovative, not stifled. The very limitations that may stifle creativity, ironically, may also encourage students to reinvent this activity.

At this point, I would like to point out the fact that I am challenging the "unwritten" rules of journal and conference writing. Hopefully, you have noticed the jokes and jabs that I have inserted into this work, ultimately creating an After Dinner Paper about the After Dinner Speech. Even if this paper is

never published (although with my excellent academic skills, that's just not possible) the fact that I crossed the "line" may challenge the readers and proponents of my paper to do the same in other unique ways. Change can be good…and that's why I should be published in every 2009 Communication Journal. I can tailor this. I promise.

When we create standards and criteria, we are not so naïve to think that the ideas we put onto paper now will be the end all, be all of changes to this event. Forensics encourages challenge and changes in its very nature. Forensics means to take a close look at something. We frequently find that when we get close, we find that there is something wrong or insufficient. Rules can be an engine for creativity and innovation and if they weren't in place, we wouldn't live in the world that we do now. Really beautiful things often obtain that aesthetic by getting a face-lift every ten years.

Conclusion

In our trip down memory lane, I identified the history of After Dinner Speaking, the several areas of controversy that remain in this event, and some ways we can channel the challenges for change in this event. While these changes will take time, it is important to carry on the discussion I have started here amongst students, coaches, directors, and anyone else involved in the forensics community. Feel free to elaborate, shift, shape, and even criticize the pedagogical goals and assumptions, definitions, and criteria I have offered you here. I do not claim to be the final producer of knowledge on this topic, but instead a catalyst for change.

If you somehow are involved with forensics but do not like to communicate or start conversations, then please, when you are judging this event, start the conversation with yourself. A little intrapersonal communication never hurt anyone and could be useful to the ballots of the students you are watching. Making yourself conscious of what you consider the goals of this activity to be will better aid your reason for decision and fight confusion amongst ADS participants. Conversations like this keep this event and the activity as a whole healthy. It's like the old saying goes: a convo a day keeps the 4-25's away. So, in the words of one of Britain's most famous after dinner speakers: May the After Dinner Speech live long and prosper.

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But Seriously,
(can we stop saying that)
ADS Should Be Taken More Seriously

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Abstract

After-dinner Speaking is the most unique public speaking event within intercollegiate in that it allows students to present a serious issue to their audience while implementing non-traditional techniques. However, in the present atmosphere of After-dinner Speaking, while we are seeing more and more different topics and structural approaches to the event, there have been more and more instances of students not adhering to public speaking fundamentals. This paper will explore the ways in which ADS can be taken more seriously to be funnier, starting with introductions that are not imaginary and ending with conclusions that are not just jokes, but make the point the speaker hopes to make.

Rationale

There is a magic within an ADS final round. Regardless of room size, tournament size, or audience size, the final round of ADS is a place most people tend to make their way to when it comes time to watch an event. I like that about ADS. I think it takes an event, an event that is often considered the less influential step-child of the public speaking events, into a spotlight within which the other events can not compete. This is a uniqueness that feels taken for granted or not considered at all by speakers. After-dinner speakers are given a responsibility that they seem to shirk, causing the event to deteriorate into the lowest common denominator in terms of humor, topic selection and a lack of professionalism in terms of public speaking fundamentals, specifically in reference to introductions and conclusions. It is the opinion of this author that After-dinner Speaking can and should be taken more seriously on every level in order to make the event a center piece of our activity and one that can be a bridge to outside activities.

Introduction

As a judge and coach within this activity for the past eight years I have had an unhealthy curiosity with ADS. It all started when I first got into coaching. I wanted to judge it, I wanted to coach it, I wanted to keep doing it. Seeing that I could only do two of the three, I wept, but then I decided that that would have to do. I wanted to judge it so I could see what others were doing and start to shape my own ideas of what I wanted my students to do with the event. My earliest memories of forensics at the college level where of ADS rounds, going to watch when teammates where competing, following the hoards at nationals once out-rounds started and generally thinking that this was the coolest event around. I watched David Lindrum from Berry College win the NFA 1997 final round with a speech that just made sense to me and my teammates (side note: My teammate, Arnie Niekamp, who was in Semis with David went up to David after the final round and said, in front of David's parents whom were there to watch, "If you don't win that round I will poke my own eyes out." It was an odd message of support, but a sentiment shared by a lot of people at the tournament.). Lindrum's speech was subtle, smart, well organized and used many different types of humor. The one problem seems to be that no matter whom I ask that was there with me that day; no one can remember the topic of the speech. While I think this is a problem that is more widespread than it should be, I do not think it is a problem from top to bottom of the event. But it is a problem that should be talked about due to the influence and power of the event.

This paper will take the stance that ADS, while a great event and one that more students should be doing on a regular basis, needs to be taken more seriously in order to see it reach the full potential of the event. To do so, we will examine three main issues with ADS in its modern state; topic selection, the over reliance on one type of humor, and the use of fictionalized introductions and conclusions. With these issues addressed, ADS will have the opportunity to be the fundamentally sound public speaking event it could be.

Topic Selection

If I had a dollar for every student that came to my office and said, "I found this great topic but I think it might be more of a persuasion and too much for ADS," I might be able to afford more trips to developmental conferences. That's not funny and neither is the notion that any topic is too serious or too heavy for ADS. The fact of the matter is that ADS is meant to challenge the speaker to help the audience learn something in a new way through the use of humor. While there have been notable exceptions, Jon Meinen in 2004 and Marlita Hill in 1999 come to mind, the current trend seems to be students se-

lecting topics based on ease of humor and little else, just hoping that a judge will not tell him or her that his or her topic is too much for ADS. It is not the students who are to blame in this situation. Judges limiting the scope of the event are doing a disservice to the event. As it was said in the rational, ADS has an audience often doubling any given persuasion or informative round at any given tournament and to have such a great opportunity passed by each week is only going to continue to erode the educational foundation of all of our events, not just ADS.

This is not to say that there is not a time and place for every topic and coaches and students should know their limitations and boundaries. The point here is that students should feel like, and then be challenged to, take genuine persuasion and critical communication analysis into After-dinner Speaking rounds. We should not reserve this event for those topics that are not good enough for the other categories.

Over-Reliance on One Type of Humor

Britney Spears/Paris Hilton/Some other blond jokes aside, speakers in ADS tend to stick to their comfort zone, and for good reason. ADS can be scary, even for the most hardened competitor on the circuit. It is an event where you are being judged on topic selection, structure choice, timing, humor writing, logic, source citation, persuasion, and, if you are lucky, good looks. So it is no wonder that students seem to favor one type of humor over the myriad other types out there in the humor world. For me it was self depreciation, for my students the past couple of years it tended to be political humor. But whatever the type, too much focus on one is a bad thing. The easiest analogy that comes to mind is taking your car to a garage only to watch the mechanic work on your dismantled engine with a mallet. Sure, things are happening, but they aren't good.

Fictionalized Introductions/conclusions

You've all heard it. "So I was walking around (insert random place where this person clearly doesn't belong, ie, gay bar, straight bar, Republican National Convention?) and (insert some person or newspaper that flies out of the air to smack our intrepid narrator in the face with some knowledge). First, if we are to believe this is true, why was this student not in class the week prior to the tournament? Second, what happened and who decided that it would be appropriate for students to just make up an introduction to a speech? This is the question, truth be told, that lead me to this paper. We want our students to be seen as professionals and scholars and we are, in essence, letting them fabricate one of the more important portions of the pubic speech. This leads to three problems.

First, we are encouraging students to focus on a fictional narrative rather than establishing an introduction that helps the audience to understand their topics. Second, we are, through our own accord, establishing ADS as a second tier event in comparison to the other public speaking events where we would never dream of making up any part of the speech, let alone the introduction. And finally, in contradiction to every other area of forensics and college, we are telling students that fabrication is fine and sometimes even preferred.

As fundamental pubic speaking goes, the introduction is of paramount importance. It is the speaker's opportunity to establish credibility and to get the audience ready to listen. Once that opportunity has passed there is no chance to get it back. If the goal is to move the audience to some kind of action based on the topic and its significance, then taking the audience toward something that isn't even real will only serve to distract from the topic.

Second, the fictional narrative usage in ADS inherently makes the speeches in ADS seems less important and less substantive that those in other events. Every year students take a serious topic and hope to use it for ADS. They write their speech, work with coaches, run it at a tournament and because they have not taken the time to write a factual and interesting introduction, they feel as if the topic will not work. This starts a cycle we are seeing perpetuated currently. Student has serious topic, student has factual intro, student receives low rank, student makes up fictional intro, and student receives high rank. Then when compared to other speaking events the After-dinner speech seems less important when it may even have more social significance.

More importantly might be the third issue with the fictionalized introduction and that is the implication that, when writing speeches, it is inconsequential to fabricate information. While it may not sound like an issue with integrity, it leads to a slippery slope that college students often have a hard time dissecting for themselves. It creates a perceived gray area within the rules. We say that the event is a factual speech to be written by the student, so why let them compete with a speech that is anything less.

Conclusion

So what do we do from here? Well, it is all easier said than done. In a perfect world all the judges in rounds would be open minded to things a speaker might do (as long as it is moving the event in the right direction, no matter how open minded I may think I am, I will never pick up a speech about toilet paper.) But I am a realist. I know these things will not happen over night. It takes an effort as coaches, teachers, and students working toward being open to new and more socially conscience topics, the structures, and the types of humor that come with that

openness. We need to encourage students to think a little harder to come up with an introduction that is honest, truthful and helps bring the audience into the speech, even if that means more time in practice and at home rather than taking that speech out early. We need to educate our students to the real solutions they can find and help us understand, with humor, things that could never be brought up in a persuasion round because people's defenses are up and entrenched in a way that does not happen in ADS. We need to help students understand the history of the event and know that just because they think they are really good at sarcasm does not mean that they can not try a little slap stick. (Prate falls are still funny, I don't care who you are.) But in the end, it's about all of us being willing to take a risk and use the platform we've been given. ADS is special and should be treated as such. Students have a room of people waiting, wanting to laugh. They are warm and ready to have their minds changed, played with, and all together enhanced. The crowd in the room wants to be there (those of us who are teachers know the difference between voluntary and captive audiences and how that can make or break your entire day.) and they want to stay. So, engage them with a bit more than you think they can handle. Some days it will work, other days it will not, but you will be helping to make the event all it can be.

Well, I think this is going well, I am made my points and tried to establish arguments that made sense. There are a few feeble attempts at humor, but seriously; can we talk about ADS being more serious? Whoa, wait a minute. What have we been doing up to this point? We aren't here because Peoria smells good in August. We haven't been talking and working on some sort of revenue sharing mechanism to give us more parity in college forensics. No. We have not. I would hope that I wouldn't have to say, but seriously to get you to pay attention. And that is just the point. A wise man once said to me, "The language of ADS is like the language of poetry. You write it a certain way to illicit a certain emotion." It is a beautiful event that should be given more gravity that it is currently receiving. One way to do that is to realize the power it has and use it as the tool it was meant to be used. Make us think, make us laugh, but really, make us think.

A Christian Ethic for Coaches

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Coaching is a calling and ministry. At least for many in the Christian tradition, that's true. Be they little-league coaches, birthing coaches, or executive coaches, coaches often view their work as a sacred vocation. While in seminary, I moonlighted as a speech and debate coach at a state university. I quickly discovered that my so-called secular work transformed lives as surely as youth ministry in the local parish. Whether it occurs in the context of the church or the public sphere, the practice of coaching invites sacramental moments of transformation by grace.

What follows is my attempt to think theologically about coaching in the vocabulary of the Christian tradition. Many coaches, myself included, may possess excellence know-how, but spend comparatively little time reflecting on the "know-why" of day-to-day decisions (Gerdes 4). An orienting philosophy of coaching is certainly important, and I wonder how my faith ought to inform the practice of coaching.

Coaching is an increasingly popular approach to Christian ministry (Hawkins 292-93). Reflecting the explosion of interest in life coaches in the corporate sphere,[1] Christian coaches now offer church leaders a unique combination of consulting and spiritual direction. At first I hoped to articulate an ethic that would speak to all kinds of coaching, from the life coach to the basketball coach. All kinds of coaching, after all, share a common root. The coach, like the horse-drawn vehicle from which the word takes its name, helps people move from point A to point B. Despite the appeal of a universal ethic for coaches, we can name several different kinds of coaching relationships with unique qualities. Life coaches, for example, distinguish their work from mentoring or consulting in this way: the mentor or the consultant holds expertise and provides training; the life coach presumes that the expertise already resides in the person being coached. The life coach is a perceptive guide equipped with good questions who has, nonetheless, not traveled this way before (Creswell 15). In contrast, consider the words of one long-time speech and debate coach. I asked why he had stayed in the activity for so many years. He replied simply, "It's a good way to teach."[2] Teaching, however student-centered, presumes imparting knowledge and skill. (That said, all coaches may find themselves occasionally thrust into the role of life coach with their students – a sacred responsibility that we will return to later.) Two more divisions among coaches make a difference for thinking theologically about ethical obligations. The first is that some coaches prepare people for competition, and competition raises a special set of ethical questions. The second is that some coaches work primarily with youth or young adults.[3] This Christian ethic for coaches will address coaches as teachers of specialized knowledge and skill who work with young adults and prepare them for competition. Though I have in mind the community of inter-collegiate speech and debate coaches, the perspective sketched here should speak equally well to the coach of a high-school volley ball team or the coach of a junior high chess club.

Coaches are managers and motivators, mentors and trainers, supervisors and strategists – not to mention janitors and secretaries. My conviction is that the relationship between a coach and a student is an opportunity for the coach to participate in God's work of grace, transforming the lives of students.[4] The job is full of ethical obligations. Like it or not, the coach is a role model. Nearly everything the coach does, verbally or nonverbally, teaches something (Warren). Moreover, as the team's symbolic head, the coach frames the context for ethical decision making. Students will follow the coach's lead (at least as often as not), and so we who coach ought to know not only where we are going, but why.

This Christian ethic for coaches will not provide an extended list of do's and don't, nor carve out simple rules to govern behavior. Rather, I provide an orienting framework that grounds a few key priorities for coaches in the Christian tradition. My hope is to encourage prayerful reflection on the practice of coaching. As Karl Barth writes, ethical theory is not meant to provide a program for life, or even principles to be put into practice…. but to remind us of our encounter with God, whose light may illuminate our actions (*The Humanity of God* 86). While I have

[1] Fortune magazine has called coaching "the hottest thing in management" today (Morris).

[2] For those who are wondering, the coach is Mark Hickman of West Chester University.

[3] In inter-collegiate activities, non-traditional students may well surpass their coaches in age and maturity. Moreover, we should not assume that coaches of traditional age college students function *in loco parentis*. In the 1960's student activists fought hard to win the right to be recognized as adults. Nevertheless, coaches very often serve as mentors for 18-21 year old students. For a discussion of the coach as an "adult guarantor," see LaMaster.

[4] I will refer to the persons being coached throughout as students rather than "players," as this is the convention in intercollegiate speech and debate. I also prefer the term student to "competitor" for the former term's emphasis on education.

just set aside a deontological tact, we might productively treat any number of Christian ethics: an ethic that springs from natural law or an ethic that values casuistry; an ethic grounded in narrative, feminist, or liberation theology; a virtue ethics or a utilitarian ethics; a central theme of servant leadership, justice and peace, or the kin(g)dom community—the options are plentiful.

Agape love is selfless love. For Christians, it is the love of God for the world, the love revealed in Christ, and the love to which we are called. I have chosen agape love as an ethical framework for the simple reason that I believe it is a perspective that already undergirds the work of many coaches. Coaching is a labor of love, often selfless and self-sacrificing love. Moreover, love is a shorthand mark for the message and the demands of the gospel – and one with widespread, intuitive appeal. As Anders Nygren argued, agape is "the Christian fundamental motif *par excellence*" (48).

In the pages that follow, I first briefly review the tradition of agape love in Christian ethics and outline a perspective tailored to speak to the obligations of a coach. I then discuss three responsibilities of a coach in relation to agape love: honoring boundaries in the coach-student relationship, communicating unconditional acceptance of students in the context of competition, and coaching the whole person, that is, dealing with those times when the coach who prepares students for competition is enlisted as a "life coach."

Agape Love

Agape love is self-less, all-giving love – and central to the Christian worldview. To begin, God creates the world out of love. The doctrine of creation ex-nihilo means that God did not have to make this world. Before the dawn of creation, God is the center of all. In the act of creation, God limits God's self by entering into a relationship with the world. All of creation is a gift offered in freedom, an act of agape (Allen 42-45).

The life, death, and resurrection of Christ all reflect God's love for the world. The doctrine of the incarnation, for example, points to the self-less love of God. In order to communicate the gospel of love, God humbles God's self. Paul reflects on that love as motive for ethics in Philippians.

> Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. (Philippians 2:3-8)

The moral lesson Paul lifts from the incarnation is a call to agape. Moreover, the life and teaching of Jesus is perhaps best summarized as a demonstration of agape love. Solidarity with the poor and the oppressed, welcome for the stranger, the nonviolent resistance articulated in the Sermon on the Mount – a complete review is unnecessary. Recall, though, the words of Jesus about the greatest commandments.[5]

> You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.' (Matthew 22: 37-40).

Agape love is a fine contender for the core of the Christian gospel.

Joseph Fletcher's *Situation Ethics* provides an orienting framework for interpreting the call to agape. Fletcher writes that love is the only categorical good, the only universal law of Christian ethics. All other rules and principles are relative to the law of love (36). Rules and principles are valuable, but not absolute. Love is not one virtue among many, but the "one and only regulatory principle of Christian ethics" (61).[6]

Fletcher's approach is situational in the sense that ethical actions are a function of the individual's judgment, drawing on the wisdom of the community and the culture in order to act in ways that offer a "fitting" or "appropriate" response to specific cases in a particular time and place, addressing all their concrete particularities (27-29). Fletcher's situational ethic is also relational. Love is not a good in itself per se, but a way of relating to people and using things (61). Love is not merely liking and defiantly not sentimental (103-04). It is not a feeling that one gets, but an act of the will and an attitude (79). Love makes judgments and "to love is not necessarily to please." (117). Agape is concerned with the neighbor's well-being for the neighbor's sake, and ultimately, for God's sake (117).

For Fletcher, agape love is a Christian ethic, but not exclusively so. Christians have no monopoly on love; many non-Christians practice love better than many Christians (155). Love is a universal standard. This Christian ethic is different from other traditions

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[5] These words appear just after the parable of the Good Samaritan. For this reason agape love is often described as neighbor love.

[6] Even justice is a function of love. "Justice is Christian love using its head, calculating its duties, obligations, opportunities, resources" (95).

not normatively, but motivationally. The Christian's motivation to love is a grateful response to God, particularly as God has revealed God's own redemptive love in Christ (156).

What are the key features of agape love? Gene Outka describes its essence as equal regard, that is, neighbor-love for all people by virtue of their humanity (9). My neighbor is anyone and everyone. Agape is love that reaches out to the stranger or the enemy at the expense of the self. And agape is unconditional love. As John Calvin put it, agape "does not regard an individual's merits, but pours itself out on the unworthy, the perverse, the ungrateful" (198). As a radical ideal, agape allows for no partiality or favoritism. It calls for selfless, sacrificial giving.

At least as the dominant tradition defines it, agape differs significantly from eros (desire) and philia (friendship). Eros is desire for something or someone, and to some degree always self-serving. Although he offers more charitable readings of eros in other moments, Karl Barth describes this love as a hunger that "demands the food that the other seems to hold out." Eros is the "desire to possess and control and enjoy" (*Church Dogmatics* IV/2, 832-3). Philia is a mutual love, prototypically that shared by friends; but in contrast, agape love is not a two-way street. Agape loves selflessly, perhaps hoping the love will be reciprocated, but always loving regardless.

The stark opposition of agape to eros and philia has received significant critique.[7] Rather than redefining agape to make room for eros or philia, I suggest that most relationships reflect tensions between eros, philia, and agape. As we will discuss when we turn to the relationship between coaches and students, agape provides a guiding norm that limits potentially self-serving eros and philia.

The most significant critique of agape love for our purposes concerns self-sacrifice and self-love. Nygren defines agape as sacrificial love in contrast to eros, which he equates with self-love. As Outka notes, the theme of self-sacrifice may invite self-negation. What are the limits to sacrifice for the other? Outka call this "the blank check problem." Attention to another person's needs may turn into submission to another's exploitation (275). Andolsen adds that making self-sacrifice the quintessential Christian virtue is a cure prescribed by predominantly male theologians for what they take to be the central sin of pride. Many women, however, already live for others to the point of their own detriment. Too often, in practice, "Christian self-sacrifice means the sacrifice of women for the sake of men" (75). Sacrificial love holds the potential to devalue self-care, a theme we will revisit shortly. Framed as self-sacrifice, agape also seems to leave little room for self-love. As Karl Barth writes of self-love, "God will never think of blowing on this fire, which is bright enough already" (*Church Dogmatics* I/2, 388).

One persuasive answer is that self-love is necessary and good as a function of love for God and neighbor. Outka argues that the good of others limits the selfless giving of agape (30-31). Self-love is thus derivative of agape; self-love is instrumental in my ability to love others (69). Similarly, attending to my own needs may help me serve the needs of others. Fletcher adopts this line of thought. The self is considered, secondarily, for the neighbor's sake (110). "The logic of love is that self-concern is obligated to cancel neighbor-good whenever *more* neighbor-good will be served through serving the self" (113). Self love, though, is not only a psychological tool for serving others. Self-love is theologically justified as well (Outka 291). I, too, am created in the image of God. God's providence charts the unique course of my life, and as Christ dwells in my life, I discover my true self. If I am worthy of God's love, I am surely also worthy of my own.

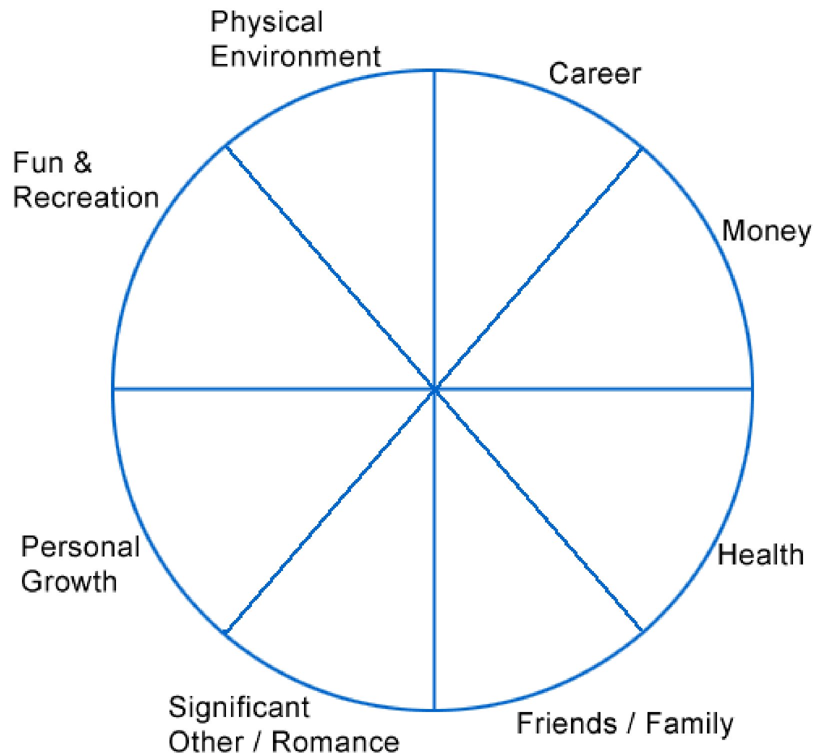
Honoring Boundaries: Self-sacrifice and Self-Care

The problem of agape love and self-sacrifice immediately raises a danger for coaches. Agape love framed as self-sacrifice might justify the very kind of behavior that leads to burnout. Probably many of us know coaches that view their job as a call to self-sacrifice, if not martyrdom. Working long hours in the evening and on weekends for little or no pay, coaching certainly seems to demand giving up my life. Rainer Martens states the problem succinctly. "Coaching is a helping profession. A cardinal principle for all helping professionals is, Take care of yourself first in order to take care of others" (183). Coaching is such hard work that neglecting self-care is all too easy. Leland, for example, suggests that many coaches of intercollegiate speech and debate suffer from a lack of exercise, alcohol abuse, addiction to nicotine, reliance on caffeine, and obesity (14). Lack of sleep and elevated stress levels also contribute to burnout (Littlefield). All of these symptoms are familiar to me. Perhaps the list is no surprise, considering the toll coaching takes on professionals. "Sports pages today are replete with stories about ulcers, early retirement, stress disorders, and divorce because of the overwhelming demands placed on team leadership" (Gerdes 65).

Self-care is essential to caring for others. Counselors should routinely be in therapy. Pastors should seek out a spiritual director. Perhaps coaches can benefit from the advice of a life coach. In the first session with a life coach, that person might well ask you to complete a "life balance wheel" like the one on the next page from Wendy Mackowski of Inner North Coaching. I invite you to complete it before reading further.

[7] For an overview of these critiques see Grant.

Life Balance Wheel



Instructions:

Before you fill in the wheel, you can rename sections to match the important areas of your life. You may also choose to split one or two sections or add one or two sections of your own. For example, many people prefer to divide "Friends & Family" into two wedges.

The center of the wheel is 0, and the outer edge of the wheel as 10. Rank your level of satisfaction with each life area by drawing an arc at the number that represents your level of satisfaction. A 0 means you are not satisfied at all with an area right now; A 10 means everything in that area is absolutely perfect for you right now.

Write the number that the arc represents. For example, if you are 75% satisfied with your career, draw an arc about 3/4 of the way out from the center of the circle in the Career section of the Wheel, and label it 7.5. (Mackowski)

The "Life Balance Wheel" helps me assess how well my needs are being met so that I can meet the needs of others. Of course, my wheel is far from 10's all the way around the circle – I'm no more ready to be a coach than a parent or a teacher – but the exercise helps me attend to my well-being. The danger of coaching others when my life is not in balance is much greater than my own burnout. The danger is that I will use the students I coach to meet my own needs. This danger returns us to the relationship between apage, philia, and eros.

Philia is mutual love, and we all need it. I need the love of family and friends. The team that I coach is "like a family," and in a meaningful sense, the students that I coach are my friends. The primary dimension of the relationship, though, is the coach-student relationship, one characterized by agape. If I rely on the students to meet my needs for mutual love, I cross a boundary – and the results can be harmful. I might favor some students over others, impose on a student's time and energy, convey that personal companionship with me is required, or burden a student with my own cares by treating that student as a confidant. In order to make choices grounded in the best interest of my students, I can not use students to meet my own needs to be loved.

Eros plays a role in my relationship with students as well. Eros is desire (prototypically sexual) for pleasure. As a coach, I exercise a lot of control over students – and control is pleasing. The students perform acts in front of me, and I correct them – tell them how to do it and ask them to do it again. If coaching meets my needs for deriving pleasure from control, I have entered a danger zone. If a student meets my emotional or sexual needs for intimacy, I have crossed a serious boundary. Once again, I must ensure that my needs are met elsewhere so that, in

the spirit of agape, I can focus entirely on meeting the needs of students.

Here's another personal inventory, this one adapted for coaches by Todd Crosset from "Are you in Trouble with a Client?" by Estelle Disch.

A Coach's Self Assessment: Are You Crossing the Line with an Athlete?

The purpose of this questionnaire is to alert coaches to boundary issues which might be interfering with their ability to work effectively with a team or an athlete. Coaching is an emotionally intense profession. Strong bonds and emotions are part of the job. The line between appropriate and inappropriate behavior is often a matter of intent and context. The following list of questions is intended to help coaches know when they may be extending the boundaries of their role as coach and potentially crossing the line with an athlete.

Check any statements which reflect your behavior or attitude toward an athlete:

1. I often tell my personal problems to this athlete.
2. I want to be friends with this athlete when his/her career ends.
3.To be honest, my physical contact with this athlete is motivated by desires that go beyond an attempt to support and motivate the athlete.
4. I find myself thinking of ways to work individually with this athlete and in special practice sessions which run before or after practice.
5. This athlete invites me to social events, and I don't feel comfortable saying either yes or no.
6. There is something I like about being in the office with this athlete when no one else is around.
7. The athlete feels more like a friend than someone I coach.
8. I have invited this athlete to public/social events which were not team functions.
9. I often listen to the personal problems of this athlete.
10. I find myself wanting to coach practices when I know this athlete will be there and unusually disappointed when this person is absent.
11. I find myself cajoling, teasing, joking a lot with this athlete.
12. I find myself talking a lot about this athlete to other people.
13. I find myself saying a lot about myself with this athlete -- telling stories, engaging in peer-like conversation.
14. This athlete has spent time at my home (other than a team function).
15. I am doing so much on this athlete's behalf I feel exhausted.

16a. I agreed to take this athlete on for a very low fee, and now I feel like I need to be paid more for my work. OR

16b. I agreed to take this athlete on for a very low fee, and now I feel like I need to get more out of this athlete.

17. I find myself looking at this athlete's body in a sexual fashion.
18. I make comments to my athletes about bodies which have no relevance to the sport.
19. Sometimes I worry this athlete is going to get so good he/she thinks he/she doesn't need me.
20. Sometimes I resent this athlete's success.
21. To be honest, sometimes I make demands on this athlete with the intention of limiting his/her social life.
22. I find myself making sexual jokes around this athlete.
23. To be honest, I feel jealous when this athlete spends time with other people.
24. Sometimes I check up on this athlete, wanting to know what he/she is doing when he/she is away from practice.

Self-Assessment

Coaching involves intense emotional and complicated relationships with athletes. It is difficult to make blanket statements about what is appropriate and inappropriate behavior. Certain items above might not always reflect poor coaching. This self administered test is offered as a means to locate potential moral and professional dilemmas. If you checked any of the above statements you may be crossing the line between appropriate and inappropriate behavior. (Crosset)

Most of my relationships with students will contain a degree of self-serving desire (eros) and a degree of mutual love (philia). Agape love, though, ought to be the dominate feature of the relationship. Agape disciplines eros and philia, holding the focus of the relationship on the good of the student. Agape thus involves keeping a professional distance from those I'm coaching. The distance does not compromise agape, but enables it. Boundaries create a safe space for agape. Maintaining those boundaries requires self-care.

And self-reflection. I have to take time to listen to my motives and oust my demons. One of the hardest lessons I have learned (and continue to learn) as a coach is that to be good coach I have to stop competing. I cannot use a student to relive my glory days or rely on my team to satisfy my unfulfilled desires for success. I have to learn to be a teacher rather than a competitor, though the whole enterprise of preparing students for competition seems to work against that impulse. No doubt, the context of competition presents a number of ethical challenges.

Communicating Unconditional Acceptance: Self-Confidence and Competition

Whether the competition is a battle of the bands or a chess meet, the culture of sports in America colors the context of preparing students for competition. Competitive contests bear significant symbolic weight, and they impose a lot of pressure to succeed (Thompson 5). We can appreciate the pressure more fully by considering why students choose to compete. Their primary needs, so sport psychologists claim, are two-fold: (1) to have fun, and (2) "to feel worthy, which includes the need to feel competent and successful" (Martens 43). So they need to win? Not quite. Winning and losing both can get in the way of feeling worthy. For many, competition threatens their sense of self-worth. Some students fear failure. Their self worth is so contingent upon accomplishment, defined as winning a trophy, that they will sacrifice everything to avoid losing. Others fear success. The trouble with success is that it raises the bar for future performance. It's much easier to win the approval of others or myself when we all have low expectations (Thompson 248). Either way, the student's identity is on the line.

How can coaches meet students' needs to feel worthy? First and most importantly, we can offer agape love's unconditional acceptance. Recall that agape loves each person as a person, regardless of talent, merit, achievement, or attractiveness (Outka 261-263). When the coach-student relationship is characterized by agape, that relationship provides a liberating environment for the student. Students who know that they are unconditionally valued are free to pursue the highest levels of excellence; and, free to fail because their sense of self-worth is not in jeopardy (Gerdes 19).[8] Unconditional acceptance also builds trust and motivates students to excel (Gerdes 53). Unconditional acceptance stands in contrast to conditional coaching, or giving preferential treatment to those who measure-up to certain criteria, such as winning more often than others (Gerdes 23). Thompson calls conditional coaching a "transaction model" for the coach's relationship with students. Like a transaction at a bank, students must give something to get something. The message – intended or not – is that their value as people depends on how well they perform. Thompson says simply, "This is deadly to the development of strong self-esteem" (89).

How can coaches communicate agape love in ways that build students' sense of self-worth? To begin, we share affirming and constructive feedback. Thompson suggests providing affirmation that is as concrete and specific as possible. Written feedback is especially meaningful (Thompson 99-100). In addition to feedback about the skills and knowledge acquired, words of affirmation about the student as a person emphasize that the student is valued as a person rather than a competitor. In short, tell students you like them as people – and tell them why.

Of course, the coaches unconditional acceptance of the student does not mean that everyone is treated exactly the same way. As Outka writes, equal regard does not mean identical treatment (21). If the little league team values developing all players, then all players should play all positions as much as possible – even if it may mean losing a game. A player who is not ready to play a position such as catcher, though, should obviously not be placed in a position where he or she could be hurt. Similarly, if a student breaks certain rules, that student may not be allowed to play at all. Agape love makes the students' best interest the number one criterion for every decision. Communicating the reason for those choices – upholding the best interests of every student – may build trust with the team, even when students disagree with a coach's judgment.

Perhaps the most challenging demand of agape in the context of competition is this: we must redefine success. Success is not winning in competition. Competition relies on comparing one person to another. Agape love, as equal regard, rejects ranking one person over another. When coaches give a typical pep talk that stresses the importance of wining the game, they may only add to the anxiety of some students who will now worry about how the coach will evaluate them as well as how the competition will evaluate them (Martens 55). Winning may be a priority, but as all good coaches know, it is never the first priority. Agape insists that our firs priority is the well-being of students.

Yet, students need to achieve and accomplish goals. Part of self-worth is self-efficacy, that is, students' beliefs about their "capabilities to exercise control over events that affect their lives" (Bandura). Self-efficacy is a situation-specific form of self-confidence. It requires that I trust my abilities and believe that I am capable (Thompson 249). How can success be redefined so that it does not rely on comparison to others in competition? If not by placing ahead of others competition, how can students develop self-efficacy? The answer is that success is measured in terms of improvement vs. potential as opposed to comparison with an opponent (Gerdes 54). Martens underscores this point: "*Success must be seen in terms of athletes exceeding their own goals rather than surpassing the performance of others*" (51). He suggests that students set specific individual goals such as jumping a few inches further than last week, hitting my backhand deep into the corner 75% of the time, or learning to relax more during a game (51). Setting individual goals based on the student's own performance can enhance motiva-

[8] This presumes, of course, that the coach plays a major role in the student's developing self-confidence. Obviously teammates, parents, and others play a significant role as well.

tion and promote the student's well-being. We can reframe contests, then, as tests along the way to achieving individual performance goals as opposed to the final judgment of the student's efforts (52). The coach helps students set challenging, yet realistic goals so that they stretch for those goals and achieve them. The results? "Realistic goals rob failure of its threat" (Martens 52). Coaches and students can both prioritize the student's development over winning in competition. Martins even suggests that team goals such as winning a certain number of games or claiming a particular championship are counter-productive. Team goals that compare one team to another reinforce the priority of winning. In so far as we need team goals, they ought to focus on sportsmanship, team unity, having fun, and the like (52). If every individual on the team is setting and striving for personal goals, the championships may well follow. More importantly, as coaches, we can redefine success.

Resisting the temptation to make winning the first priority is counter-cultural, and it requires a team effort. Building a community grounded in agape's equal regard for all people is no easy task. Students must learn to affirm each other's progress without measuring themselves against each other. One option for building community is clearly ruled out. Scapegoating an "enemy" team or a particular member of one's own team is an easy way to motivate a team. Agape love proscribes any option that requires putting others down so that we can feel up.

Instead, when we engage students with agape, we value the student's development as an individual over winning in competition. We invite students to value the intrinsic rewards (having fun, feeling worthy) of an activity or sport over the extrinsic rewards (recognition of others, trophies) (Martens 44). By placing intrinsic rewards at the center of their motivation, students think like true champions. Thompson points out that "great athletes are motivated more by their own internal goals than by external rewards such as fame, money, and status. It is internal passion for the sport that unleashes super performance" (235). Coaches cultivate a focus on intrinsic rewards by emphasizing the process of learning over the product. Reframing competition makes clear that our efforts are for the student's own benefit, win or lose.

Coaching the Whole Person

When students trust that their coaches care for them unconditionally, they often turn to us for consolation and advice in other areas of life. Coaches of track and field or speech and debate suddenly find themselves thrust into the role of life coach. Time management, family conflicts, romantic relationships, career plans, faith and doubt, grief and joy – all these topics find their way into significant conversations with coaches. In these talks, the coach is no longer teaching specialized knowledge out of expertise in a particular area. Neither, though, is the coach simply a friend lending an ear. The relationship is not mutual. The student turns to the coach as trusted older adult. These are sacred moments in coaching, and agape love provides some guidance for handling them with care.

To begin, coaching is not therapy. One of our obligations is to recognize when a student needs professional help and suggest it. Moreover, a coach's openness to "life coaching conversations" is a boundary issue that each coach must negotiate. The lacrosse team is not a support group. Finally, when one student is in serious conflict with another member of the team and turns to the coach, the coach should be particularly aware of propping up just one side of a triangular relationship. At times, the most loving response to a question may be, "I care about you, but I don't think I'm the best person to talk with about that." Like a many counselors, though, coaches who occasional play the role of a life coach can listen, ask questions, and help students to understand themselves.

Like a counselor who offers unconditional positive regard, a coach working out of agape love will resist the temptation to guide students to the "right" answers to their problems. One might assume that a Christian ethic would prescribe disciplining students in a particular direction. My own sense is that the unconditional acceptance of agape love rules out pointing students to the star that they should follow. Proselytizing, however subtle, is as an obvious abuse of the position of coach. When the conversation turns from basketball or next week's debate tournament to overprotective parents or an unplanned pregnancy, the student leads the coach out of his or her area of expertise. The coach must stop imparting knowledge and skill, and self-consciously adopt the very different stance of a life coach: letting the student take the lead. Offering an explicitly Christian perspective on life coaching, Miller and Hall suggest that holding back personal biases and beliefs is the responsibility of a Christian coach – and doing so can be hard work. The coach is obligated to own personal judgments. For example, a life coach might say, "I just realized that my last comment is more about me than it is about you. My attitude just got in the way. I'm really sorry. Let's try that again" (Miller 77). Bracketing personal judgments keeps the emphasis on the student.

Empowering the student to find his or her own way expresses the unconditional love of agape. As Robinson writes of pastoral counseling, agape love in the pastoral relationship provides a context for people to articulate the truth in their own narratives (148). Agape love calls for an empowering dynamic rather than moral intervention. Agape grants to others the power – the freedom and responsibility – to chart their own ethical course (155). While coaches

are not pastoral counselors, coaches can offer students the same unconditional acceptance and freedom. Coaches can practice a ministry of presence – bearing the presence of Christ, rather than providing answers.

In so far as a student finds answers, those answers come from within his or her own heart by grace. As Hall puts it, life coaching "assumes that a unique 'solution seed' lies within every challenge. This seed simply needs to be given the right environment in order to germinate and reveal itself" (Hall 62). The coach fosters that environment by listening, asking questions, reflecting the truth as he or she hears it, and affirming the person being coached (64). When coaches serve as life coaches, they can adopt a similar stance out of agape love. The coach as life coach assumes a dialogic orientation: withholding judgment, suspending assumptions, inquiring with open questions, and listening with empathy all facilitate the student's discernment. Out of agape's unconditional acceptance, the coach focuses the conversation on the student's own challenge and journey.

Agape love may even impose an obligation on coaches to open the door to life coaching. I care about the development of students as whole people – mind, body, and spirit. If I am aware that a student is struggling in an area of life other than speech and debate, then I feel obligated to reach out to that student. I ask a question – like "What's really going on?" – and make myself available for conversation. I think most good coaches do the same. Agape's unconditional love for each person as a whole person calls me to awareness of students and availability to students, lest I miss the moment when the Spirit will nudge me to ask that question.

Grace and Agape

Each of the three ethical issues discussed here – self-care, competition, and life coaching – emphasizes the importance of self-giving, unconditional love for students. Agape love provides an orienting ethic for the relationship between students and coaches. One limitation of this discussion is that I have focused almost exclusively on the relationship between one coach and an individual student. Any coach who works with a team builds and nurtures a community. The coach helps name the team's core values and shape the team's mission. The coach makes the rules, and the coach monitors the boundaries of who is on the team and who is not. Coaches decide how much leadership students will exercise on the team, and they mediate conflicts between team members. Coaches also work within larger institutions and represent the team in the public sphere. I wonder how agape love might speak to the obligations of a coach as one who leads a community.

One final thought about agape love returns us from ethics to thinking theologically in the vocabulary of the Christian faith. Agape love is an ideal, and an unattainable one this side of the beatific vision. One might well ask, why aim so high? Surely a more pragmatic ethic would be fair and reasonable, require a less heroic standard. One answer from the Christian tradition is that the way of agape is the way of response. Christian charity is founded in gratitude (Grant 18). God's love for us is revealed in Christ to be complete and unconditional. Our love for God is a response to God's love for us. Love for God motivates striving to live out this demanding, excessive agape love. The second great commandment thus flows out of the first.

Christians look up to the impossibly high standard of agape love because God has loved us that way. The next question is, how? Living for this ideal is likely to produce failure and frustration; thus, agape love exposes the need for a lived religion to undergird the ethic (Grant 17). Agape love in the Christian tradition presumes the renewal of life in Christ through worship (18). In short, don't try this ethic on your own. The rhythm of life in connection with prayer and Christian community sustains striving for agape. Grace is when God does something for us that we can't do on our own. Meekness is dependence on God. The way of agape is meekness seeking grace.

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The Emperor Has No Clothes
Solidifying Inconsistencies in Judges' Preference

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Abstract

Several leaders representing the forensics world were surveyed to examine the role judges preference plays in the outcomes of forensics tournaments. Similarities and differences concerning the definition of judge's preference emerged as dominant themes. Implications of this study offer new questions concerning definitions of judge's preference and the role tabulation should play in the formation of leaders in forensics.

JP and Forensics

Forensic teams from the first competition have operated as a way of artistic expression in a competitive arena among collegiate peers. As a result, much passion is associated with the activity. Dreibelbis (1989) emphasized the individual satisfaction through forensics, stating they:

> Achieve satisfaction from attaining goals, working and socializing with others in an organization, and so one may certainly expect there to be a transfer of this satisfaction to a well-managed forensic program. (p. 69)

Deal and Kennedy list four "features to organizational culture: values, heroes, cultural communication networks, and rites and rituals....An active, functioning, forensic program encompasses each of these features..." (as cited in Swanson, 1992, p. 67-70). With satisfaction and values being listed in the aforementioned citations as tantamount in forensics, ethics and fairness in results therefore play a key supportive role in these values.

Goman (2004) reinforces the idea of surrounding yourself with people you get along with, explaining "we're in a collaborative world, and that's dramatically changed what type of leadership is successful. The boards, shareholders and employees have colluded to agree that leadership has to be steadier, more visionary, more inclusive and more ethical" (p. 2). Ethics are obviously important to forensics as well as other organizations. And Kolb (1996) adds "team leaders appear to do their teams a disservice if they concentrate their energies only on the internal functioning of the team" (p. 173). We therefore must take a step back and examine the the means by which we attain results in an activity we are so passionate about. Perhaps Harris (1986) puts it best when he states:

> as a community we have done relatively little to explicate the criteria for decision making or even determine the criteria which are operative for most judges in a given event. Indeed, individual events has done very little in terms of developing a bare profile of the attitudes, philosophies, or preferences of individual judges or groups of judges.

Research Questions

This study seeks to answer four research questions with one two-part question:

RQ 1: How often is Judges' Preference used?
RQ 2a: Are the interpretations of Judges' Preference the same throughout the forensic community?
RQ2b: Have they been applied as such?
RQ 3: Do current leaders in forensics believe the system is fair?
RQ 4: What does the NFA and AFA constitution say about Judges' Preference?

The purpose of this paper is to examine the definition and use of Judges' Preference while establishing a pattern of common definitions of Judges' Preference and how they play out throughout the forensic community. We will examine implications of the rule, and assess if Judges' Preference has been stable from year to year.

Method

Data Collection

To discover the general thoughts on the Judges' Preference tie-breaking procedure, surveys of former coaches, professional coaches, Directors of Forensics and graduate assistants were asked to fill out a ten question survey on the matter. Before data was collected, Internal Review Board (IRB) approval was obtained from the Human Investigation Committee at Wayne State University, Detroit, MI. This study was approved as a Behavioral Expedited Review. Data was collected using a purposeful sample utilizing the Individual Events list-serv (IE-L). An email was sent to the IE-L asking for volunteers to answer 10 questions about judges' preference. For the version of this paper, 30 respondents responded over a four-month period. Therefore, 30 current and former coaches in intercollegiate forensics make up the sample for this study. This paper is the first part in a retrospective study examining the consistency of

judges' preference over a 5-year period. It is the intention of this study and its supplement to uncover ways in which judges' preference has been defined and implemented in tab rooms throughout the country.

The questionnaire distributed to the volunteers in this study contains the following questions and took approximately 10-15 minutes to complete:

1. What is your occupation?
2. Have you ever worked in a tabulation room for a forensics tournament?
3. IF YOUR ANSWER TO QUESTION 2 WAS NO, PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 4
4. Have you ever been in a situation where you had to break a tie on judge's preference?
5. Please, without any help from anyone else, give your definition of judge's preference. If you don't know exactly what the definition is, please indicate this by saying I don't know.
6. Where did you learn how a tie in forensics is broken?
7. Have you ever taught anyone your definition of judge's preference in forensics?
8. If you answered yes to question 6, approximately how many people have you taught this definition to?
9. 0-5 6-10 11-15 20 or more
10. What percentage of them would you guess have worked in a forensics tabulation room since learning of your definition? (scale the answers).

a. 0%-19% 20%-39% 40%-59% 60% or more

11. Would you view a definition of judge's preference in the AFA and NFA by-laws favorably or unfavorably?
12. Do you have any influence on forensics rules or legislation in your state? Nationally?

The questionnaires were emailed back to a secure email address and the responses were promptly printed out and the emails destroyed. This ensured the participants confidentiality. The printed responses were stored and locked in a file only accessible to the principal investigator. A variety of responses came out of the questionnaires, which will be examined in the analysis section.

Additionally, tab sheets were collected from three Michigan Intercollegiate Speech League State (MISL) Tournaments. In Michigan, the state holds three MISL tournaments each year, one in the fall semester and two in the winter semester. The tournaments are Michigan-only tournaments. All tournaments are open to all Michigan schools. The fall tournament is, technically, just an invitational tournament sponsored by MISL at a different location each year. The winter tournament consists of the MISL Novice State Tournament and the Varsity State Championship Tournament, also located at a different location each year (at least usually). Tab sheets for the 2002 MISL Fall Tournament, the 2003 MISL State Championships, and the 2007 MISL Novice Tournament were analyzed for consistency in how judges' preference was tabulated in all 11 Individual Events for final rounds (as there were no semi-finals in any of the 11 I.E.'s). The reason these tab sheets were chosen was due to the easy accessibility of the tab sheets. One of the authors of this paper, at the time this paper was written, was the current Executive Director of MISL and only had access to these three tab sheets. The results will be discussed in the analysis section.

Analysis

For this smaller study only five of the questions from the questionnaire were analyzed and examined. This was due to the research questions the authors are attempting to answer. The larger, retrospective study will include all questions. Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, and 8 were analyzed. These were the more integral questions that needed to be examined before the rest of the study can continue. Question 1 asked respondents to define their current occupation. Question 2 asked if the respondent had ever worked in a tab room for a forensics tournament before. Question 3 asked if the respondent had ever been in a situation in which he or she had to break a tie on judges' preference. Question 4 asked the respondent to define judges' preference in their own words. Finally, question 8 asked the respondent if breaking a tie based on the way he or she understood judges' preference was adequate and what they would do to change the way the forensic community breaks a tie.

For question 1, the authors simply recorded 10 different occupations for which the respondents identified themselves. These categories were created after an initial examination of the answers. Some respondents belonged to more than one category. Question 2 was a simple "Yes" or "No" question. Therefore, answers were placed into one or the other. The ability of a respondent to answer question 3 was contingent on if they were able to answer question 2. If a respondent had never worked in a tab room before, then they could not have been in a situation to break a tie on judges' preference. Therefore, 3 categories were created from question 3—"Yes," "No," and "Answered No to question 2."

Question 4 dealt with the respondents defining judges' preference. The authors dealt with this question by organizing the question into a 5 part analysis. The first variable the authors analyzed for this question was to look at the responses and decide if each definition discussed if judges' preference utilized an odd-number judging panel. The question for this variable reads "Does the definition incorporate having an odd-numbered judging panel?" The second variable was to decide if each definition consisted of the rank in the response to calculate judges' preference. This variable asks "Does the definition incor-

porate rank?" The third variable examined if the response had both rank and rate as a method to calculate judges' preference. The third variable asks "Does the definition incorporate rank and rate?" The fourth variable asked this question: "Does the definition include a detailed description of judges' preference?" The authors operationally defined "detailed" as a definition consisting of more than just a definition. For example, an inclusion of an example of how to break a tie on judges' preference or the inclusion of a step-by-step process. Variable 4 has a sub-variable, Variable 4.1, that asks "Does the definition include a sufficient description for the reader to properly calculate judges' preference?"

Responses

Question 1: What is your current occupation?

As discussed above, some respondents were part of more than 1 category. Ten different categories/occupations were created from the sample of thirty. The reason for this was the multiple roles that some coaches play and that some respondents were retired and former coaches. Seventeen respondents pronounced themselves as a Director of Forensics, one was a Graduate Assistant, three were former DOF's or coaches, three were Director of Individual Events, ten were faculty at their respective schools, one was an assistant coach (did not indicate if they were graduate assistant or not; therefore, the separate category) who also classified themselves as a Tournament Director (we can suppose that many of the respondents are or have been Tournament Directors' at one point, but that was not indicated nor asked), three were freelance or professional coaches, two were debate coaches, and one of the freelance coaches classified themselves as a member of the tab staff.

Question 2: Have you ever worked in a tabulation room for a forensics tournament?

In regards to question 2, 90% of the respondents (27/30) said they have worked in a tab room for a forensics tournament before.

Question 3: Have you *ever been in a situation where you had to break a tie on judges' preference?*

The answers for this question indicated that 83% (25/30) of the respondents had been in a situation in which they had to break a tie on judges' preference. Two people indicated they had not been. The remaining three had answered "No" to question 2 and, therefore, were not eligible to answer this question.

Discussion

What we want to do is expand the study to go further. Instead of conducting this study with a relatively small population, we would like to get the tabulation results of all fifty states over the last five years. Furthermore, after establishing the discrepancy in definitions, we would like to apply the data with our newly established criteria in a retrospective study of the entire USA.

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Etic vs. Emic Values in the Culture of Forensics

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Descriptive linguist Kenneth Pike (1947) uses the terms "etic" and "emic" to refer to concepts which either universally apply across cultural boundaries (etic) or are more narrowly meaningful within a particular human community (emic). These terms can be employed in the discussion of a wide array of topics, and are highly useful in the discussion of value systems (Lustig, 1988). This paper seeks to identify and evaluate the values which are significant within a particular emic cultural community (intercollegiate forensics) in relation to the values professed by larger emic and etic communities which overarch the microculture of competitive forensics. A number of values associated with subsuming emic communities (most particularly the academic field of speech communication and U.S. educational institutions in general) as well as universal etic values are considered vis-à-vis the teaching and practice of intercollegiate forensics.

It is impossible to think, choose, or act without drawing on and attempting to reify the value systems we subscribe to. The act of communication is inherently and unavoidable a value-laden and value-asserting enterprise. As Richard Weaver (1970) pointedly reminds us, "language is sermonic" – and every human enterprise accordingly scaffolds itself on the bedrock of values. The forensics enterprise is bound by this unavoidable truth. Thus, Hinck (2003) avows that "our instructional choices as teachers, coaches, and judges – consciously or not – reflect our values. Therefore, we should strive to become aware of our assumptions about the nature of our practices and critically evaluate them to ensure our competitive activities serve educational ends" (p. 67).

As members of the forensics community, our discussions of values have often defined the theoretical construct labeled "values" rather loosely. Instead of strictly adhering to the definition of this term generally accepted by psychologists, we have tended to conflate "values" with other theoretical constructs such as "attitudes," "beliefs," "skill sets," "advantages vs. disadvantages of competing," and so on. Technically, values can be defined as enduring generalizations which reside at the center of our cognitive systems. They are normative and evaluative in function, and can be either terminal (end-states we seek) or instrumental (the means by which we achieve those end states) in nature. Values tend to predict attitudes, which are the sum of all our relevant beliefs (valenced positively or negatively and multiplied by salience) about any given concept/object. Beliefs, meanwhile, are simply the acceptance of object-attribute links and tell us what traits are and are not associated with any given concept/object. Often when we talk about "forensic values," we really end up talking about the attitudes we see in or believe are promoted by the activity, or even about beliefs that forensicators tend to hold. Beyond this, we very often talk not about the values in forensics but rather about the value of forensics, focusing on the various benefits that we believe participants in the activity can derive from it. Put together, this makes for a somewhat confusing playing field when we try to focus on the topic of "forensic values" as such.

This confusion is further exacerbated when we consider the difference between "the good" and "the right." This distinction is based on the premise that conflicts can arise between overriding universal moral principles and the particular rules we enact to concretize or enforce those principles. For example, when Prince Gautama discovered that there was evil in the world, he was torn between obeying "the right" (the laws which bound him to his wife, his children, and his royal duties) and "the good" (the moral imperative to search for answers to the evil in the world. Gautama chose to abandon his home and family (to violate "the right") in order to seek deeper truths (the "good") – and in the process, he became the Buddha. Humans constantly face this dilemma of choosing between "higher laws" and "concrete rules" – and thus, strict "rule-following" is not always the most ethically ideal choice.

Clearly, the question of values and ethics is a stunningly complex one. Yet, because the issues at stake here are crucial ones, we need to directly address the question of values in forensics. In particular, we (like members of all communities) need to examine the values construct at the deepest possible level. As noted by British scientist Jacob Bronowski (1953), "the values by which we are to survive are not rules for just and unjust conduct, but are those deeper illuminations in whose light justice and injustice, good and evil, means and ends are seen in fearful sharpness of outline." Values are ultimately the wellspring of our survival – or our demise.

The present essay is a very preliminary attempt at investigating the extremely broad topic of values in forensics. Its goal is twofold: first, to identify values as they are avowed and practiced on the emic level by the forensics community; and second, to begin considering how forensic values do or do not mesh with the values espoused by some of the other emic and etic communities forensics participates in.

It is my hope that this brief introduction to the question can open the door to more detailed and incisive qualitative and quantitative research into some of the particular issues whose general outlines are raised here.

In order to provide a general structure for this essay, we will discuss value clusters according to the partitioning terms provided by Hofstede (2001). After collecting data from multinational corporations with employees in more than forty countries, Hofstede derived a set of factors (originally four, later five) which identified the communication qualities associated with various types of cultures. These factors (which can be thought of as value continuums) include: (1) individualism/collectivism, (2) masculine/feminine, (3) power-distance (high vs. low distances), (4) uncertainty avoidance (high need to avoid uncertainty vs. low need to do so), and (5) long vs. short term orientation. We will consider each of these continuums in turn, briefly defining each and then considering how values which arguably fall within each "play out" in the various emic and etic communities we are concerned with. Neither end of any of these continuums is necessarily "good" or "bad" as such. However, any position we assume on each continuum connects us to (or disconnects us from) not only particular personal and social benefits and costs, but also unites us with or separates us from other emic and etic communities.

In the following discussion, the phrase "the forensics community" (or similar references) should be understood as referring to the set of people and patterns which (in the author's experience, and as reflected in our published research literature) are most in evidence on the "national circuit." The values of this "community" unquestionably vary greatly from region to region, between schools affiliated with different national organizations, over time, across participants, and so on. This essay presumes a sort of "national norm" which constitutes a single level of emic analysis, and hastens to note that all of the generalizations drawn here will apply with greatly varying degrees of relevance to the individual programs and participants who together compose that "community."

Individualism-Collectivism Dimension

Dodd (1998) explains that "individualism concerns personal achievement. In contrast, collectivist cultures are those that emphasize community, groupness, harmony, and maintaining face (p. 92)." Perhaps surprisingly, while we call our activity "individual events," our values seem to cluster more toward the collectivist side of this continuum.

Individual events are clearly "individualistic" in that they place a high priority on personal achievement. However, this individual success takes place within a team framework, and the values which competitors must adhere to in order to achieve individual success are in fact relatively communal in nature. We talk about forensics teams, and every awards assembly culminates in the passing out of team awards. Recognizing this, Hinck (2003, p. 62) labels the activity a "collective effort," and underscores the similarity between competitive forensics and team sports by quoting Duke head basketball coach Mike Krzyzewski (1993, p. L9): "What better place to learn about trust, teamwork, integrity, friendship, commitment, collective responsibility (emphasis added), and so many other values....Where better to learn to work with other people...?" The communal spirit affects all aspects of a team's operation. Hinck (2003) points out that "[t]ournaments feature multiple rounds of competition over the course of a season and require students to function as a team providing support, encouragement, peer coaching, and cooperation in preparing for competition by contributing to Extemp files, debate research, and practice speeches (p. 65)."

This focus on the communal has obvious value implications. Dodd (1998) clarifies Hofstede's construct by noting that "one could expect a great deal more assertive behavior, self-disclosure, and other personal-advancement issues to arise in an individualistic culture. On the other hand, we could expect far more strategies of people pleasing, solidarity, relational issues, and face saving to occur in a collective culture" (p. 92).

One collectivist value that predominates in the forensics community is the group's demand for "professionalism." Paine and Stanley (2003) explain that forensicators adhere to an unwritten "professional code of behavior" that affects virtually every aspect of the values/attitudes/beliefs (particularly as expressed in behavior) manifested at tournaments. This professional code creates a highly "formal" structure for tournament behavior. This code regulates, for example, what clothes to wear, what exact phrases to use when entering or leaving a round of competition, how much to clap and in what way and who to clap for at awards assemblies, what reactions can be made to posted results, and so on. Participants who do not agree with or wish to violate this code tend to be sanctioned by others, and are more likely to drop out of the activity. Individual quirks are suppressed, group expectations are paramount. On more than one occasion, I have witnessed on my own team the aftermath of an individual member's violation of some sub-clause of this code: infractions (for example, displaying negative emotions when postings go up) have too often been followed by the private-space response of one or more team members "descending on" the violator with demands that similar "unacceptable displays of unprofessionalism" never happen again. This call for professionalism extends (in individual events) to a demand that participants display hyper-politeness to others at all times. Paying attention to others in rounds (never

cleaning one's nails or falling asleep), avoiding "van talk" in public spaces, complimenting the work of others, displaying appreciation to judges, and so on are all aspects of this communal value. Again, students who do not wish to follow this group code find forensics an uncomfortable world. As noted by Paine and Stanley (2003), some "students complained that forensics requires people to be too 'proper' and too 'adult acting', although in one case a student complained that audiences were not professional enough" (p. 49).

The value of communalism can have many benefits. For example, Paine and Stanley (2003) point out based on their review of the extant literature that "students who see themselves as part of a 'team' (rather than primarily as individuals) demonstrate higher commitment levels" (p. 38). Yet our attachment to communalism can also serve to detach us from larger emic and etic communities. Aden (1991) argues that we need to conceptualize forensics as a liberal art (rather than a science-like "laboratory") and reminds us that "at its core, a liberal arts education is designed to produce individuals who are able to think independently rather than relying solely on existing knowledge. To a degree, a liberal education is the antithesis of a science education. The former emphasizes the discovery of answers within a person and thus, the answers vary….A liberal education empowers the individual…" (pp. 101-102). Accordingly, Aden goes on to cite the statement by Bailey (1984) that the goal of liberal education is to encourage students to "respect themselves and others, as rational and autonomous persons" (p. 137, emphasis added). Bartanen (1998) concurs with the importance of individualism to the liberal arts tradition, noting that one of the central learning goals of the liberal arts is what she terms "reflection." She explains that:

> Liberally educated persons have a distinctive way of thinking about themselves, others, and the world in which they live. They are more reflective, bringing to bear habits of critical, systemic, and comprehensive thinking. As critical thinkers, liberally educated individuals do not accept assertions easily. They develop the habit of seeking answers to the questions: "Why is that the case?" and "By what authority do we know?" They challenge the boundaries of knowledge and attempt to learn how much and what it is that they do not yet know. We often call them "independent" thinkers." (p. 3)

Yet, Bartanen does not reject communalism per se – rather, she maintains a position on this continuum which also notes the worth of collectivism, particularly as its practice can connect us to the larger emic community of culture. She notes that "[c]itizen-leaders also learn to work cooperatively to solve problems and to employ teamwork to accomplish a desired objective. They come to recognize that successful solutions involve concerted efforts, over time, often with some compromise among competing human needs" (p. 4). The question, then, is one of degree. In the balancing act between serving the individual and serving the group, the emic values of the forensics community imply that the individual is best served by meeting group expectations. The collective wisdom of the community at large is assumed to outweigh the particular insights of the individual.

Masculine-Feminine Dimension

Some would argue that Hofstede's terminology here, based as it is on a sweeping gender metaphor, is less than optimal. His definition for these constructs is explained by Dodd (1998), who notes that "Hofstede's masculine cultures are those that exhibit work as more central to their lives, strength, material success, assertiveness, and competitiveness….Feminine cultures are those that tend to…embrace traits of affection, compassion, nurturing, and interpersonal relationships" (p. 93).

Central to defining the value commitments of the forensics community relative to this dimension is the ongoing debate between "education" and "competition." Historically, forensics has wrapped itself in the mantle of education. Perhaps the most frequently cited reference in this regard is provided by McBath (1975) at the 1974 National Developmental Conference:

> Forensics is an educational activity primarily concerned with using an argumentative perspective in examining problems and communicating with people. An argumentative perspective on communication involves the study of reason giving by people as justification for acts, beliefs, attitudes, and values. From this perspective, forensics activities, including debate and individual events, are laboratories for helping students to understand and communicate various forms of argument more effectively in a variety of contexts with a variety of audiences. (p. 11)

We find in this quotation the seminal reference to forensics as a "laboratory," a metaphor which has given rise to much discussion in the years since.

On the one hand, the image of the laboratory can be seen as suggesting an open-minded search for new knowledge, a place where "objective facts" outweigh "individual preferences" and students are free to experiment, fail, learn, try again, and ultimately (hopefully) "succeed." However, inherent in this metaphor is the idea that there is ultimately one "right answer" – a "final Truth," a Platonic ideal, toward which questing students should strive. Thus, it can be argued that the laboratory metaphor supports a view of education which is substantively at odds with contemporary values of diversity and the embracing

of multiple perspectives. We will return to this issue at a later point. Here, we will focus first on the value of "competition" as a high priority in the forensics mindset.

Hofstede notes that "masculine" cultures value competition. And the importance of competition in forensics is more than obvious. Miller (2005) explains that "[t]o make a strong case for viewing the intercollegiate forensics community as a microculture, we need to examine the sharing of common values, beliefs, and practices. Common characteristics along these lines include the shared sense of the value of competition" (p. 3). We can examine at least one particular terminal value (end vs. process) and one specific instrumental value (hard work) in connection with our general valuation of competition.

If forensics is defined as an education-based activity, we might assume that the "process" of putting an competitive entry together (reading widely to find topics/scripts, analyzing materials, developing excerpting skills, developing writing skills, analyzing emotions, etc.) ought to be valued more than is the "end product" (the concrete performance) that process eventuates in. In fact, however, the evidence suggests that the forensics community values product much more than it does process (Friedley, 1992; Burnett, Brand, and Meister, 2003; Ribarsky, 2005). As one student stated on a survey conducted by McMillan and Todd-Mancillas (1991), one of the disadvantages of competing in forensics can be that it becomes "an end rather than a means in the educational process" (p. 10). Judges are able to evaluate only what they see in rounds, and so the end product becomes the ultimate litmus test of the process. Since the student's mind is ultimately a "black box" the judge cannot access, the judge relies on the evidence of the product itself to draw assumptions about how much the student has actually learned. There is no clean way to punish students or coaches who short-circuit the process. Of course, the process can be and is short-circuited in countless ways all the time. Coaches locate topics and scripts for students who thus avoid reading widely. Coaches help students locate and sort through research materials, greatly reducing the need for students to develop analytical and processing skills. Coaches get far too heavily involved in "editing" and "cleaning up" speech manuscripts. Students perform passages in certain ways because they are told "it'll work like this," while having limited if any real understanding of deeper theoretical issues which inform the choice. In a competitive world, where only the end product can be directly witnessed by judges, the process is all too easy to shortchange when competitors and/or their coaches focus on the tin trophy rather than the lifelong learning. One possible response to this situation, if we wish to direct more attention to the importance of process, would be make greater use of interactive dialogue and questions at tournaments. A wide array of options could be considered here. For example, we might restore the type of post-speech questions we used to incorporate into rounds of Rhetorical Criticism, employing such questions in any and all events (quite possibly as a part of the judging process). Or, we might institute post-presentation competitor-to-competitor questions (emulating the model used in some rounds of Extemporaneous Speaking). Even more radically, we might significantly modify tournament schedules to allow extended periods of time in which judges and/or contestants could discuss the content and/or delivery of each presentation with its presenter. In whatever format such conversations take place, they could potentially be helpful to both competitors and judges. Competitors would have the time and opportunity to further explain ideas and/or choices made in the presentation which audience members are confused by, have questions concerning the viability of, or simply wish to challenge. Judges could clarify questions or doubts they have in their minds before they make their final ranking decisions. The process by which each final presentation was constructed could be queried, explained, and analyzed much more clearly.

Today, however, acutely aware of the educational dangers associated with holding high the value of "product over process," forensicators continually assert their allegiance to the instrumental value of "hard work," which too often becomes a shibboleth to the community. When someone comes up to a coach and praises the work of one of their students, the most standard of responses is to say: "Thank you! She/he has worked so hard on that!" The assertion of great effort functions to reassure the praise-giver that a valuable process lies behind the viewed product. We argue that competitive success is the ultimate proof that hard work has taken place, asserting that no one can win unless they have worked hard first. Thus Hinck (2003) states that "[c]ompetition requires students to try, to win, to prepare for the competitive event and learn from the activities one engages in to compete. Competition motivates students to prepare in earnest, to practice with an eye toward improvement, and to set personal goals for improvement" (p. 62). In the end, Hinck believes, "[s]tudents that make better choices in constructing and delivering their speeches tend to enjoy more success than students who neglect these elements of preparation for competition" (p. 64). Undeniably, many coaches and students do work hard – very hard. And it cannot be denied that there is, in general, a clear relationship between "hard work" and "competitive success." But the link is not absolute. Many students work very hard and yet do not achieve substantial recognition. Other students do very little work and yet win a great number of awards. Thus, Paine and Stanley (2003) concluded that "coaches and judges who wish for proof that

'hard work is its own reward' tend to be relatively disappointed by forensics" (p. 55). The disconnect-in-reality between the values of hard work and competitive success shakes one of the most basic value underpinnings of our community. In the words of Burnett, Brand and Meister (2003), "[i]n the forensics-as-education myth, the forensic hero is the forensic educator who works hard and whose students are competitively successful. The forensics community pays little or no explicit attention to the learning practices that the forensic educator incorporates. Here the forensic educator protects the virtue of education by coaching students to win awards" (p. 14).

Yet, while our valuation of competition pulls us toward the "masculine" end of this continuum, other facets of our activity incline toward the "feminine." Dodd (1998) notes that feminine cultures "embrace traits of affection, compassion, nurturing, and interpersonal relations" (p. 93). We see these values in evidence in our activity in a variety of ways. The "team" nature of forensics can powerfully bond forensicators (within and across squads) to each other. Thus, Paine and Stanley (2003) found that "having positive relationships with others is an important part of what makes forensics fun....relationships with teammates and people from other teams are important" (p. 44). The demanding code of etiquette referred to earlier, and the high valuation of collectivism more generally, also play a role here. Members of the community are expected to treat each other respectfully, politely, and supportively. Even judges who are too "negative" or "mean" on ballots can receive informal sanctions. Relationships built between coaches and students, between alumni and students, and among students themselves, typically prioritize the values of affection, compassion, and nurturing that Hofstede associates with "feminine" cultures. And beyond the bounds of the members of the forensics community alone, aspects of the activity function (or can function) to make participants more sensitive to and accepting of the viewpoints and values of others in general. For example, Burnett, Brand and Meister (2003) reference Muir's (1993) assertion that debate can provide a "moral education" for students as competition teaches them lessons which promote the values of tolerance and fairness. The promotion of this value can have important implications for one's citizenship, one's ability to participate in the larger emic community of country/culture. Encouraging us to cleave more tightly to this value (not yet fully embraced, but one which we can move toward), Bartanen (1998) argues that another of the learning goals central to the liberal arts is "connectedness." She explains that:

> Just as a liberally educated person seeks to know herself, so she works to understand how all humans are connected to one another. This connectedness is built upon abilities to see and feel the world as others do, to work cooperatively, and to serve others. In their liberal arts education, students are invited to enlarge their view of the world. In particular, they are encouraged to value well-informed empathy....Liberally educated individuals also have an instinct for reform; they want to make the world – or at least some small piece of it – a better place. Perhaps because of their ability to look at situations systemically and to imagine realistically the needs and emotions of those affected, they work to serve others in some way. (p. 4)

Overall, the forensics community holds values that can be defined as both "masculine" and "feminine" in nature. However, at the same time that we note this, we need to raise two important issues. First, do we hold these values in a somewhat "bifurcated" way? It might be argued that masculine values tend to reflect the "terminal values" of our community (they represent the end states we wish to reach), while feminine values tend to operate more as "instrumental values" (the means by which we achieve the end state of competitive recognition). Second, we must consider the way all of these values guide our interactions internally within the community vs. externally as we communicate on different cultural levels (in relation to other emic and etic value systems). Which values do we emphasize when we describe our community to those outside it, such as departmental colleagues, campus administrators, program reviewers and so on? In our conversations with others, do we build a "masculine" or a "feminine" frame through which we invite them to view our work and our community? Since much of what external groups perceive about us is based on what we tell them, we must assume that the values we promote in our external-to-the-community messages have a decided impact on how our colleagues, schools, localities, and cultures understand and react to us. We need to think in more detail about the values that we avow in the internal vs. external communication patterns our community engages in.

Power-Distance Dimension

As explained by Dodd (1998), those groups who have "a high power index are said to accept inequality as the cultural norm. In other words, these cultures are vertical – that is, they are hierarchical cultures. People expect hierarchy, and authoritarian style communication is more common in these cases. We could expect...more formalized rituals signaling respect, attentiveness, and agreement" (p. 94).

It seems obvious that the forensics community constitutes a relatively high power distance culture. Competitive results are used by many to divide the "haves" from the "have nots," the "top dogs" from those at the other end of the chain. The previous

reputations of schools, competitors, and perhaps even coaches are undeniably factors in many judging decisions. Just like in any other form of "sport," the language we use reveals our hierarchical nature. When Team B beats Team A, we talk about an "upset." When one judge disagrees with two others, we call him or her a "squirrel." We look at the names on the blackboard and immediately view that section as a "stacked" or "weak" round. According to Aden (1991), the tendency to accept high power distances is inherent in the laboratory metaphor, since laboratories are "controlled, secretive, run by elites, sterile, and involve the manipulation of variables" (p. 100). Friedley (1989) argues that one of our primary ethical responsibilities is to ensure "equality, consistency, and a sense of 'fair play' within the competitive arena" (p. 84) – but our tendency to value power-distanced hierarchies clearly threatens this ideal. Aden (1991) notes that there have been "frequent worries about the lack of inclusivity in all forensics activities" (p. 100), and Bartanen (1997) stresses how crucial it is that we strive for more verticality and a less horizontal mindset. She reminds us that we can all recall "many moments in forensics education when students are offered opportunities to encounter difference, to understand other cultural perspectives, to consider their point of view in context....I think of students (especially beginners) traveling from the limited boundaries of their campuses to encounter and enjoy at regional tournaments the perspectives of many other students and coaches" (p. 5).

Internally within our community, we often think of competitive success as a ladder. Beginners are expected to start at the bottom, learn all the rules, slowly climb upward, until someday (with enough work and the right attitude) the day comes that they reach the "top of the pile." This quest for the most recent permutation of the competitive hierarchy does not presume an equal playing field. Previous experience, effort, school reputation, financial constraints, school location, coaching assistance, and a myriad of other factors operate to put any given student at an advantage or a disadvantage when they walk into a particular round of competition. And when the round is over, the judge will evaluate it in very hierarchical terms. Each student will be ranked in relation to others – and only a select few will advance to the Finals, in the scoring of which we will pursue distinctions from one tie-breaking device to another until we finally have a perfect top-to-bottom hierarchy.

This value may or may not give our activity credibility in the eyes of administrators or assessors who are concerned with the public relations potential of our competitive success. But it does not necessarily endear us to departmental colleagues who value process over product, theory over skills, or research over hardware. Furthermore, our departmental colleagues tend to live inside departmental hierarchies dictated by educational politics that do not overlap with the hierarchies extant within the forensics community. We often talk about living in "two worlds" – campus-world and tournament-world – and thus the hierarchies which operate within forensics often carry little weight when we encounter other emic values. We need to think about the hierarchies that operate at the other levels of our lives and consider how the values we adhere to in forensics position us in other realms. Very few people can switch value systems at will, or fully live up to the expectations placed on them by widely divergent value codes. In order to best evaluate the values we promote in forensics, we must look at how they do or do not mesh with the values accepted by the other emic and etic communities we (and our students) operate within.

Uncertainty Avoidance Dimension

As explained by Dodd (1998, pp. 94-95) Hofstede's focus here is on the degree to which cultures are comfortable vs. uncomfortable when "dealing with diversity and ambiguity." Some cultures are relatively more likely than others to respond to feelings of anxiety by attempting to minimize the uncertainty being felt at any given time about any given situation. These cultures or groups employ rules to provide structure and reduce doubt.

The formal written rules which regulate the forensics community are relatively few in number. However, the unwritten rules which boundary the activity operate to create a highly structured forensics world (Aden, 1991; McMillan and Todd-Mancillas, 1991; Burnett, Brand, & Meister, 2003; Paine and Stanley, 2003). These unwritten rules strongly discourage risk-taking by coaches and students (Brand, 2000). As Ribarsky (2005) notes, "[w]hile the forensics community appears to support the diversity of ideas and experimentation in public speaking, the community's cultural norms have stifled innovation in forensics" (p. 19). This causes a severe disconnect with many of the educational goals forensics professes to seek, and reduces the status of the activity in the eyes of external audiences. For example, this value choice reduces our ability to prepare students for citizenship in the larger culture. Bartanen (1997) argues that:

> In our efforts to make competitive success more predictable for participants, we have standardized tournaments to the extent that one largely replicates the next with the objective of polishing a narrow range of behaviors in advance of the national presentation....'You either do it as a national 'in-crowd' does it or you risk complete censure' summarizes...[a survey] respondent. I find these comments very troubling. They reveal an activity which looks increasingly inward, ra-

ther than a community which seeks to be inclusive of and responsive to America's pluralism. (p. 6)

I am similarly troubled by our community's continual movement toward standardization. While standardization can be beneficial in many ways, mindless standardization has the potential to isolate us completely from the larger communities we are a sub-part of. For example, only a year ago one of my students was told by a judge in a round of competition that her rank was being severely penalized because she had used the "wrong color" poster board. Instead of using the standard black poster board (a choice which would have been nonsensical since the dominant color in the picture being displayed was black), she chose a different unobtrusive but non-standard background hue. The judge did not consider any possible reasons for this choice – he simply declared that the choice was "non-standard," and therefore completely unacceptable. If we have devolved to the point that we are basing our scores at national tournaments on such trivia as the slightly non-standard color of poster board, we have indeed reached a point where the unwritten rules are over-regulating a vast amount of free choice and original creativity out of our activity.

The pragmatic effects of this value on the forensics circuit are legion. For example, it operates to the detriment of experimental events. Nationwide, the list of events offered at local and regional tournaments has grown increasingly standardized, driven in large part by the "drive for legs" and the struggle to qualify for the national championship tournaments which finish the year. Today, "experimental" or "nuance" events appear far less than in the past. And even when they do appear, they may be marginalized in status, slated but not allowed to "count" toward sweepstakes points. Burnett, Brand and Meister (2003) account for this pattern by asserting that "experimental events threaten the value of competitive forensics by encouraging students to 'experiment' and 'discover' something new. Thus, experimental events encourage education and fun: elements that fall in direct opposition to the framework of competition and winning that pervades college forensics….[an experimental event] undermines competitive authority" (p. 17). Unfortunately, "fun" is one of the primary factors that causes participants to commit to forensics (Paine and Stanley, 2003) – and without it, people who are not fully satisfied by the competitive paradigm are more likely to walk away.

Our community's intolerance for ambiguity reinforces the claim that we implicitly believe in the Platonic ideal of "absolute truth" rather than the Aristotelian alternative of making the best available choice in any given situation. This idea that "a Truth" exists is accelerating our separation from the value systems extant at other emic and etic levels. Ribarsky (2005) strongly argues the case:

> …as the forensics community continues to implement the same presentational formats, the community limits its ability to implement other acceptable presentational formats. Without knowledge of other presentational formats, the community may be moving further away from a realistic style of public speaking….narrower expectations have locked students into one style of presenting in order to please a homogenous audience. The student no longer has to attempt to adapt to various audiences because the public has been removed from this public speaking setting. (p. 20)

And the problem of value-divergence (as well as and as accompanied by practice-divergence) does not stop with the issue of presentational formats. Referencing the work of Kully (1972), Brand (2000) notes that "[c]ontestants are evaluated on their adherence to practices unrelated to communication theory and based on competitive techniques" (p. 1). According to Kully, as cited by Brand, "there appears to be limited academic connection between the practice of forensics and the theory of and the academic courses in speech communication" (p. 192). As a result, "[n]ot only has the relationship between speech communication and forensics cooled considerably during the past few years, but it will continue to deteriorate" (p. 193). And indeed, the 36 years that have passed since then have seen the fulfillment of Kully's prediction. Unless we take decisive actions to close this gap, we will continue down the path of academic, financial, and theoretic isolation.

Another value dimension that arises here concerns our community's commitment to "argumentation." While our historic roots as a community (and more broadly as a discipline) spring from the grounds of argumentation, our modern approach to it seems to be tightly tied once more to the Platonic idea of singular "Truth." For example, it has been informative in recent years to watch the evolution of the introductions written for oral interpretation performances. Once upon a time, different performers made different choices. Then we started to standardize the use of the "teaser" preceding the introduction. Then we became enamored of starting introductions with quotations drawn from external "experts" or writers ("George Bernard Shaw once said….."). Then we began to write more and more ballots demanding that oral interpreters tell us what "the message" of any given text was. Rather than let texts stand on their own, tell their own stories, and potentially offer different insights to different audience members, we increasingly expect oral interpreters to tell us in their introductions what a text "means" (singular Truth assumed) – and beyond

that, they'd better prove to us that this text has a "new and unique message/moral" that separates it from all other pieces of literature. The message must be singular—it must be fresh—and it must be obvious/indisputable/central/provable. Again, the cultural value being expressed here is an extremely low tolerance for ambiguity. Our colleagues who teach oral interpretation do not buy into this value system – and our dogmatic adherence to it provides one more push toward separation.

Long vs. Short Term Orientation Dimension

Hofstede (2001) identifies a fifth value continuum which revolves around the culture's "time horizon." It asks the question of what importance the group attaches to the past vs. the present vs. the future. Groups whose orientation is toward the long term are typified by adherence to values such as persistence and shame (a group construct) avoidance, while groups oriented toward the short term tend toward a reliance on normative statements, stability on the personal level, and the protection of personal face.

Given the quick turn-over rate which typifies the forensics community, it is perhaps not surprising to find that our community tends toward the short term orientation. The competitive careers of college students are limited to four years, and the rate at which coaches "burn out" is much higher than the burn out rate for teachers at large. As a result, it is very difficult for the majority of the community to maintain or appreciate the value of a long term view. The past seems long ago (and often irrelevant), and the importance of the future is minimized by the fact that "I probably won't be around to see it." The present is paramount. For many people involved in the activity, the only rules and options they know are the ones which have dominated during the span of their personal journeys. As a result, learning from the past or preventing the potential problems of the future becomes (for many members of our community) far less important than getting ready for the tournament coming up next week.

Viewed against the backdrop of schools and departments who regularly review their missions, their learning objectives, and their "Five Year Plans," the short term time orientation of the forensics community feeds an emic value system at odds with the larger emic and etic value systems which surround it. Millsap (1998) observes that "[t]oo frequently forensic programs begin living in their own worlds and forget the impact they can have to the campus community" (p. 17). It is necessary that we act – not only in relation to this one value dimension, but in relation to all value categories – in ways that will reconnect us to the larger departments, colleges, and societies which house us. One aspect of this reconnection is key to Bartanen (1997), who argues that "[e]ducational mission – training citizen-orators for the 21st century – needs to be the driving force and determinative end of our work. Only then will our programs fit well within the speech communication departments that should be their homes; only then will our programs fit comfortably at the center of liberal arts colleges rather than teetering on the peripheral high-wire" (p. 9). Hinck (2003) also reminds us of the dangers of isolation, noting that "[o]ur students will graduate, leave our programs, get jobs, and pursue careers beyond competitive forensics. Therefore, what we teach and reward should have transfer value beyond tournaments" (p. 71).

Conclusion

This paper has done nothing more than inadequately scratch the surface of the immense issues it raises. Ultimately, this essay is simply an invitation to our community to directly examine the topic of comparative values as they knit us to or separate us from a variety of etic and emic codes. Our values inevitably and unavoidably scaffold the relationships we form with our world, our culture, our profession, our schools, our departments, and ourselves. We need to look with clear eyes both at what we say we value and at what our actions demonstrate we actually value. We need to consciously evaluate practices and patterns in terms of their discovered impact on the values we wish to accept ourselves and teach our students. As Richard Weaver avows, "language is sermonic" – and with each message we send, with each event we coach, with each ballot we write, we are preachers to the world.

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A "Pedagogy of Freedom" for Forensics Moving from Convention to Theory

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Introduction

Even a brief survey of academic journals and communication convention programs will reveal that ethics is a major concern among forensics professionals. The 2008 National Developmental Conference in Individual Events is no exception. A panel has been convened to present papers, discuss implications, and suggest policy action regarding ethical procedures in competitive intercollegiate forensics. While much past discussion and action has occurred on the subject of rules violations—ethical issues which enjoy essentially consensual agreement in the discipline—there is also a substantial concern over normative standards. These normative standards, which I refer to as "conventions," largely govern what actually occurs during individual events competitions. While national forensics organizations have taken some actions to restrain judges from relying on convention to the detriment of adherence to event rules, and literature decries the constraint upon creativity resulting from this reliance, the fact remains that convention continues to create "unwritten rules." In this paper, I contend that there is an ethical imperative for coaches and judges to take further action to overcome the negative effects of these conventions. Applying the educational philosophy of Paulo Freire, which he calls a "pedagogy of freedom," (Freire, 1998), I contend that to allow convention to dominate is to dehumanize forensics activities, resulting in an anti-educational "factory" product which fails the student. Finally, I will suggest proactive methods of using forensics pedagogy to further current actions in response to rules violations and to prevent convention from usurping the educational values of the activity.

Ethical Challenges in Contemporary Forensics

Ethical violations of some of the most fundamental rules of individual events activity reached a high point on each side of the turn of the 21st century. Disqualification of national champions in 1998, two for enrollment/eligibility violations and one for plagiarism, were cited as evidence that competitive desires had superseded the educational values of forensics (Burnett, Brand, & Meister, 2001, p. 106). An empirical study of a national informative speaking final round discovered that every speaker in the "best of the best" collection committed serious ethical violations in citation and use of evidence sources, ranging from apparently nonexistent sources to distortion and plagiarism (Cronn-Mills & Schnoor, 2003). The authors noted the unlikelihood that these six contestants represented all of the ethical violations present in the forensics activities (p. 47). This supposition is probably correct; discussion of evidence usage codes and the problems of identifying distortion in the use of supporting material were summarized in scholarly literature twenty years before the study referred to above (Friedley, 1983). Thomas and Hart (1983, p. 78), cite a growing trend that is now relatively uncontroversial in communication—that rhetoric is a symbolic interaction that "generate[s] knowledge and social understanding." The authors apply this epistemic function to the rhetoric involved in forensics, and argue that it creates an ethical imperative that must move beyond mere rule-based reactions to specific behaviors.

The problem of normative conventions in individual event activities is both more pervasive and more complicated than the violation of consensual rules governing eligibility and academic dishonesty. Gaer (2002, p. 54) suggests that competition, by its nature, encourages the development of "formulas" as "ways of winning." Paine (2005, pm 80), cites almost a dozen journal articles and "innumerable convention programs" devoted to the normative rules of individual events, and contends that the years of development "leaves many of the unwritten rules virtually unmodified for long periods of time." I have sat on convention programs that review the same issues journal scholars list: a "magic number" of source citations that must be reached in extemporaneous speaking and memorized speeches, the "two by two" format for impromptu, no third person prose, no material used that has ever been used before in the history of the universe (exaggeration only slight), and so on. All the authors cited in this paragraph, and I concur, decry the stifled creativity and limited education that results from the reliance on convention. In my experience, confirmed by discussions with coaches of other programs not part of the "national circuit," there are other distressing effects of the unwritten rules. It is difficult to explain the educational benefits of oral interpretation to a first-year student who reads a ballot telling them that a national award-winning author is not of "literary merit" solely because the judge heard someone perform that material three years ago—before the student had even began college. How do we explain to

students that Shakespeare is not worthy of performance in our activity? Worse, how do we explain this to other faculty and administrators? I recall a very active national program that almost ceased to exist because they performed for their administration's honors banquet a very racy selection that made elimination rounds at the AFA-NIET, but was of questionable literary worth to those who funded them. While this may be put to poor judgment as to what to perform for the home crowd, what were they to do when asked to perform the material that was acceptable for the NIET?

I have also encountered discouraging double standards due to convention. Over the past several years, I have seen instances of students from my regional programs admonished by judges in our brief forays onto the national circuit for using a speech topic that was used by "so-and-so" form "such-and-such national program in the finals of NFA last year." We later discovered that while the topic indeed was in the finals, it was a speech written solely for that tournament and taking a much different direction than my student's speech. Since our program was unable to afford the week-long stay at NFA the previous year, we really had little chance to discover the topic had been used. Nonetheless, I suspect there would be a strong reaction if I were to write a ballot to a student from a major national program informing them that I was docking points because a student from a seldom-traveling small college in my region had used the topic last year. I can recount an instance at our district tournament a few years ago where a coach-judge, paneled with a guest layperson, took one of my students to task for her drama selection—in fact, accusing her of falsifying her source. He was unaware that author Terry Galloway's *Heart of a Dog* had been published in at least two different sources. Even when my student pulled her purchased book containing the original source, the judge carried on in front of the layperson, who then ranked the student low because "something appeared to be fishy about the source." The sole rationale for the coach-judge's actions was that he had been coaching a student from one of the district's national programs on the same material from a different source. The point is that he could not believe that a student from one of the district's "lesser" programs would dare to perform the piece, although she had been performing it all year while the national program student had not started it until January. Of course, this person's coaching a student from a school that did not employ him is perhaps an issue in itself, but many would say I should simply tell my student to "learn from the experience." But what is learned from the experience when a senior is robbed of her chance to take the piece to nationals? And is this the type of learning we proudly proclaim when asked by our superiors to list the educational values of forensics. Other examples abound; I've had to explain to superiors the overwhelming number of mass market secondary source citations used in platform events. And most of us have had contact with incredulous colleagues in theater departments who cannot understand the concept of "competitive" oral interpretation.

Even if one wishes to assert that the double standards could be successfully dealt with if coaches of non-national programs would just "get with it," that only returns us to the most fundamental problem with convention—the diminishment of creative educational value. The very concept of conventional norms suggests a stifling uniformity and constraint upon the freedom necessary for education to flourish. Instead, I will argue that forensics should adopt a "pedagogy of freedom" patterned upon the educational philosophy given that name by Paulo Freire. Such a philosophy will support proactive educational measures which can enhance the effectiveness of consensual rules governing competition, and move us beyond convention to educational growth in forensic activities.

Paulo Freire's "Pedagogy of Freedom"

When Freire advocates "pedagogy of freedom," he means that we must seek freedom from the factory processing theory of schooling that pervades higher education today. For Freire, we must avoid looking at education as a "subject" (teacher) merely transferring knowledge to an "object" (student); instead, we must understand that "to teach is not *to transfer* knowledge but to create the possibilities for the production or construction of knowledge" (Freire, 1998, p. 30). Properly done, teaching increases critical reflection in both the student and the teacher, resulting in "epistemological curiosity." The result is that we eschew the "banking system" model of education, where instructors merely deposit knowledge into the student account (Freire, 1998, p. 32). It is important to understand that Freire is not advocating an "anything goes" approach to education. He demands "intellectual rigor" in the process of constructing and reconstructing knowledge as a joint enterprise between teacher and learner. Through critical thinking, creativity, healthy skepticism, and linking research to teaching and learning, both teacher and student can escape the banking system (Freire, p. 32-34). The ethical imperative for educators is explained in terms that cannot help but make one think of forensics convention:

> . . . to transform the experience of educating into a matter of simple technique is to impoverish what is fundamentally human in this experience: namely, its capacity to form the human person . . . . since there can be no "right thinking" disconnected from ethical principles, it is also clear that the demands of "right thinking" require that

the possibility or the right to change be not simply rhetorical. (Freire, p. 39)

The application of Freire's theory to forensics practice is incontestable. If we are to escape from the systematic suppression of creativity and critical difference enforced by convention, we must do so through a communication, a dialogue, between teacher and student. Coaches, and judge-critics in their function as teachers, must be willing to cooperatively investigate student interests and test the boundaries of normative behavior. It is this epistemic function of forensics, as noted by Thomas and Hart earlier in this essay, that gives forensics its greatest potential value. As educators, we must see ourselves as missionaries within our field, urging our colleagues and our guest judge-critics to entertain the possibilities of difference. Most of all, our ethical task is a proactive one: we must be willing to take actions which teach ethics through methodological rigor, resulting in epistemic curiosity. Responding to the ethical problems of evidence rule violations as well as the problems presented by unwritten rules of convention, Perry (2002) places the burden squarely upon coaches and judges to teach students the rules and the ethical principles in the activity. She proposes a concept of "civic virtue" to serve as a guide and motivating influence. I believe Freire would smile upon such a proposal; it is that sort of civic virtue that he was pointing toward as a pedagogy of freedom.

Ongoing Challenges for the Future of Forensics

Where are we, and where do we go from here? In response to the rules violations that came to bear heavily on the activity in the late '90's, the major forensic organizations took a number of actions. Directors of forensics are now required to complete a form signed and stamped by their institution's registrar certifying current enrollment of students entered at nationals. Entrants with memorized public speeches are required to submit referenced copies of their scripts, and oral interpretation students must have original copies of their literature or photocopies complete with copyright pages. Recently rewritten event rules and judge instructions for nationals attempt to point critics toward the purpose of the events, especially encouraging distinctions between prose, poetry, and drama as literary genre, and urging judges to be open to unconventional performances (AFA-NIET Website). But as the literature indicates, students will do what wins. And when ballots demand adherence to convention, students will adhere. Coaches who are expected to produce winning students will transfer the information about convention as subjects to their objects, and norm will supplant theory.

These are not just my personal observations. Billings (2002, p. 32-33) cites the ongoing struggle over convention as one of the assessment challenges for forensics in the 21st century. Oral interpretation events, in particular, remain embroiled in controversy. Issues such as programs that distort the author's intent (Billings & Talbert, 2003), and pedagogical disputes about whether we are teaching interpretation or performance (Gernant, 1991) continue to cause anti-educational reactions and reliance on convention. Dean (1990) identifies pedagogy as the specific solution to the problems of convention, and analyzes the lack of even basic instructional materials in individual events to aid in the educational effort.

I believe there are proactive solutions that are consistent with the pedagogy of freedom Freire spoke of and can enhance the educational function of forensics. To avoid the irony of the conventional categories of national, local, and personal solutions, I will mix and match accordingly. Actions already being taken by the national organizations can be furthered. While having students turn in scripts and sources provides some opportunity for enforcement of the rules, it is limited. First, only the national tournament makes the requirement; a student could qualify for nationals with illegal materials, then take time updating with the "real" thing for the NIET or NFA nationals. Second, these measures are punitive, and can occur only if someone raises a protest. Investigation must ensue, embarrassment is certain, and the entire discipline is called into question. We could do more. Wickelgren and Holm (2008, p. 12) raise the possibility of using one of the many available computer sites to detect plagiarism. I can already hear the cry: "National tournament committees have enough on their plate; they can't be scanning scripts for plagiarism!" Of course this is true. But the programs are not that difficult to use. A minor expenditure, perhaps available from the host school, could hire a work-study student at minimum wage to scan the papers during the national tournament. If this doesn't seem feasible, why not require students to submit with their scripts photocopies (including copies of the accurate citation information) of each of the sources used in the speech? We aren't talking about that many more pages of material (it all sits in a room unless challenged anyway), and the costs of copying for the respective programs are minimal (why would the material not have been copied in the first place?). Both proposals have a great advantage over the current system: they are proactive and serve the function of deterrence. Students who know their paper may be scanned, or know they must have copies of the source material, are unlikely to risk falsification, distortion, or plagiarism. We need not do these things only at the national tournament; scanning or script requirements could be a part of any tournament. National bodies could encourage, or

even require, tournaments to do one or the other through a sanctioning process. We must leave behind the era of "well, we don't want to tell people how to run their tournaments." The NCAA does not hesitate to tell athletic programs how to run tournaments and sports. Membership in AFA or NFA is voluntary; if we want our tournament to count for qualification "legs," we will comply with reasonable requests. Most importantly, coaches must take it upon themselves to teach their students about the ethics of evidence use, including distortion and plagiarism. Students often do not know what is right or wrong about use of evidence (Wickelgren & Holm, p. 5); it is our responsibility as co-learners in the discovery process to show them.

Some have proposed changes in the individual events themselves (Kuster, 2002). We could change the rules of some events to avoid convention. For instance, extemporaneous speakers might be limited by rule to the use of no more than five different sources. National tournaments might take the lead by using an event such as Persuasive Speaking to usurp convention; one year, nationals could require that the speech call for action to be taken, another year could require that the speech reinforce a previously held attitude or belief. Impromptu topics could be actual questions (avoiding current events so as not to give undue advantage to extempers), lessening the tendency for the event to become a contest of linking memorized examples to an obscure quotation by whatever means necessary. We might rethink oral interpretation events. Are we teaching oral interpretation? Our event descriptions and judge instructions use the words "performance" and "performer." Those mean different things to some scholars. Could Program Oral Interpretation become Program Performance? Might we fight convention by limits on the material a student may use, perhaps a selected list of prose or drama? Or could we require that students in poetry use no more than two poems in their program?

National organizations can also lead the way in assuring that judges follow instructions to avoid use of unwritten rules. We could use sanctioning to ask tournament directors to use the AFA judge instructions in regular season tournaments. We could require that judges be "certified" before they could be used at nationals. Other scholars (Mills, 1983; Ross, 1984) have written about the responsibility of directors of forensics to make sure their judges are properly trained, or to use judging seminars to teach judges. We could make a reasonable requirement for training judges and ask directors to apply their judges for certification. We might also steal an idea from intercollegiate debate and ask judges to submit judge philosophy sheets. These need not be compiled into a book. They could be scanned into a computer database accessible to all schools prior to the tournament. Again, this is a proactive idea; judges who are asked to certify, or to provide a written statement of philosophy that is subject to general review, are going to think more about their judging and will, one hopes, be less likely to write ballots largely based upon convention.

Finally, our national organizations and honoraries can expand their encouragement of academic excellence. AFA-NIET's "All-American" program is a good start. I know of one district that gave "top script" awards for platform speeches; perhaps we could encourage all districts to do so and send the top scripts (one from each district) to nationals, where a judge panel could review them much as they would judge an event. Given sufficient recognition and publicity, these actions could serve as proactive incentive to encourage academic excellence. Public relations are a major concern; we must avoid the idea that the "real" awards are those given to the event finalists at nationals and the "educational" awards are less important. We should make use of our media contacts to ensure that this does not happen.

In this paper, I have detailed concerns that have arisen in the past decade regarding ethical issues in forensic individual events. While many of these concerns have been based on violations of consensual rules, a far more common problem is the ethical problem of an anti-educational dependence upon conventional norms over sound theory. Paulo Freire's pedagogy of freedom explains a clear ethical imperative upon coaches and judge-critics to encourage critical and creative learning among our students. This imperative requires us to find ways to overcome the effects of unwritten rules. Not all of the solutions I've suggested will be acceptable to everyone. I am sure there are other ideas to add. That is the purpose of this paper—to stimulate a discussion of what we can do. The cause is clear and the call is urgent. It is up to us as forensic professionals to provide the answer.

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Forensics as a Business
A Business Ethics Approach to Ethical Violations

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In a way, I consider myself to be an outsider in the forensics community. Although I did major in Speech Communication, I also received a major in Management with minors in Marketing and Business Administration. Due to this background I view the activity of forensics differently, while I think it is one of the greatest educational activities, I also see it as a business. Just like businesses, forensic programs have stakeholders they are responsible to and trophies are considered to be the profits that we can show our "supervisors and investors." Because of this idea that forensics is a business, I have decided to utilize a business ethics approach to viewing and solving current ethical violations occurring in forensics.

Professional Codes of Ethics

There are quite a few unwritten rules of forensics as well as well as codes of ethics that are written. Shaw (1999) stated:

> somewhere between etiquette and law lie professional codes of ethics. These are the rules that are supposed to govern the conduct of members of a given profession [or community]. Generally speaking, the members of a profession are understood to have agreed to abide by those rules as a condition of their engaging in that profession. (p. 9)

In the forensics community we have two primary professional codes of ethics, the National Forensic Association (NFA) Code of Ethics and the American Forensic Association (AFA) Code of Standards. All forensic programs fall under either or both of these professional codes, even if a program does not attend either the American Forensic Association—National Individual Events Tournament or the National Forensic Association National Tournament, they still attend regional tournaments that abide by the description of events from both organization. However, there are problems with these codes. One major problem is the codes are out of date not adjusting for technological advancements. For example, the NFA's code was last updated in 1991, since 1991 the Internet—which was not readily available in 1991—has in a sense reinvented the activity. With the advent of the Internet comes the ability to copy and paste directly from news sources instead of putting it into a competitor's own words, buy speeches online, or scan news articles during extemporaneous speaking preparation. Another problem with the professional codes of ethics is the rampant disregard for them. Simply having a code of ethics is not enough, there needs to be some form of enforcement. While both codes do state their policies of what will happen if they are violated, these policies are ineffective and do not stop violations from occurring or allow effective means to deal with a reported issue of abuse. In order to attempt to curb ethical violations, it is important the community undertakes a project to create a committee of people that place a great deal of importance on ethics in the activity to develop updated universal codes and an effective means to deter violations.

Regulation

The activity could have a rule and/or policy for any number of potential situations; however they are nothing if an effective means of regulation and enforcement does not exist. Without regulation and enforcement, the policies are simply words on a piece of paper. While both the NFA Code of Ethics and the AFA Code of Standards lay out penalties and sanctions, in my opinion, these penalties do not stop violations from occurring. A type of regulation that might be effective is to form committees in various regions of the nation made up of respected members of the local forensics communities. These committees should first try to solve the problems by educating violators of the codes and how it is possible to abide by the codes and still be competitively successful. If education does not help deter the violators and the violations continue to occur, penalties that are already on record in the codes of the two governing organizations should be enforced and regulated.

Whistleblowers

When violations do occur, there is not an effective system set up to 'blow the whistle' on those who have committed violations against the professional codes. The accounting problems of the early 2000s as well as numerous other ethical violations in the corporate and governmental sector would not have been brought to light if not for whistleblowers. For example, if a Graduate Assistant witnessed the director of his/her program violating ethical norms by writing a speech for a student, there would be no way to effectively get the program to stop violating these norms without getting in trouble themselves,

with the director, program, and forensics community as a whole. Although the United States Supreme Court ruled in Garcetti v. Ceballos that the First Amendment does not protect government employees from retaliation if they were to 'blow the whistle' on their employers, this does not mean the forensics community should turn their back on any member of the community that decides to be a whistleblower. If a whistle blowing does occur, it should occur only because the whistleblower is trying to improve the educational aspect of the activity, not to promote their own agenda or further their career.

Oligopolies

Shaw (1999) stated, "Capitalism breeds oligopolies that eliminates competition and concentrate economic power" (p. 136), furthermore, "high costs and intense competition work against the survival of small firms" (p. 136). Oligopolies exist when there are few large corporations—or programs—and numerous smaller corporations that struggle to compete due to not being as large as the leading programs. This is occurring in the forensics community, programs lose funding because they cannot show their administrations the results the administrations are expecting and they cannot produce the expected results due to not being as large of a program. The National Forensics Association does a good job with their long time policy of having separate divisions for different sizes of entries; some state tournaments have a similar division of entrants. It would be helpful however if it were to go further, more regional tournaments should recognize divisions in entry sizes to allow smaller programs to contend for awards. I am not saying tournaments should just simply give awards away to teams, but should instead create divisions of awards so smaller programs have something to show for their work. Because trophies—especially team trophies—are expensive, the trophies for smaller sized entries do not need to be expensive trophies and could even be just titles or certificates.

In these various ways, forensics is shown to be a business. Because forensics is a business, a potential solution to ethical problems in the community should be to look at it through a business ethics approach and see that although it is a business, the purpose is still that of an educational activity.

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Coding Our Judges Off of Schools and Individuals When is it Necessary?

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Abstract

When examining issues that arise from tournament management, a chief concern among tournament administrators is the quality and size of their respective judging pools. In accordance with the AFA Code of Standards, many coaches try to avoid a "conflict of interest" by coding their judges off of particular schools and/or individuals when sending in their entry. Given that this coding process is self-regulated and highly dependent on individual ethics, coaches are left with no steadfast rules to dictate when a restriction is necessary and when it is not. This paper examines the coding process, the reasons coaches currently use to apply restrictions, the implications of this practice, and suggestions to refine it.

Background

In the hopes to govern and regulate forensics competitions, the American Forensic Association created a Code of Forensics Program and Forensics Tournament Standards for Colleges and Universities in 1982. Last amended in 2005, the code sets forth guidelines in the following articles: Competitor Standards, Competitor Practices, Tournament Practice, Adjudication Procedures, Penalties, and Amendments. Most relevant for this paper is Article III: Tournament Practice.

As outlined by this code of standards, when hosting a tournament "tournament directors must ensure that all participants compete on a more or less equal basis" (Louden, 2006, p.5). To facilitate this process, the code details stipulations that should be followed when assigning judges. These include, but are not limited to:

1. A judge shall not be assigned to judge his/her own team
3. A judge shall not judge debaters or speakers where there is a conflict of interest possible, such as:
   a. The judge has previously coached in college a debater or speaker he/she is to hear,
   b. The judge was, within the last two years, the coach of the school whose team or speaker he/she is to hear,
   c. The judge was, within the last two years, an undergraduate forensics competitor at the school whose team or speaker he/she is to hear.
4. Prior to the start of the tournament, all judges shall have an opportunity to declare themselves ineligible to hear specific debate teams, speakers, or events. (Louden, 2006, p. 5-6)

To adhere to these stipulations, specifically to avoid the "conflict of interest" "prior to the start of the tournament" by "declaring themselves ineligible," some directors will note judging restrictions on their entry form when they send it to the tournament director.

Current Practices

While the actual practice of noting a judging restriction is relatively simple, determining what circumstances call for a judging restriction is a convoluted process highly dependent on individual ethics. The code of standards created by the AFA merely provides examples of when a conflict of interest may be possible rather than defining and limiting the "conflict of interest" clause to specific situations. This predicament has forced directors to identify situations that may be perceived as a conflict of interest and lead to inconsistent decisions across forensics programs.

To get a better understanding of varying directors' decisions when it comes to coding off judges against individuals and teams, I asked a wide spectrum of directors to email me their thoughts on the issue. Specifically, they were asked to discuss the rules they use to decide whether or not to implement a judging restriction. Often these directors will be referred to as "respondents" and their identities will remain anonymous. Additionally, situations I have witnessed or discovered through face to face communication were added to the responses I received to assemble some idea of current practices. Current coding practices can be divided up into two areas: coding a judge off of an entire squad and coding a judge off of a particular individual.

The most widely used reason by directors to restrict a judge from judging an entire school comes from the code of standards' most specific regulation. Most coding restrictions stem from students' and coaches' past affiliations with other programs. However, affiliation is a vague term as well. The code of standards makes it clear that if the judge is a former undergraduate forensics competitor or coach of a school, they should be coded off of that school for the next two years. But, there are other instances when a director may see an individual as a part of their team and use this same affiliation justification

to either code a judge off of their team or ask the judge to code themselves off of the team.

For example, some directors extend this affiliation to alumni who may be at other schools, but have come back to coach their team for a weekend, a day, or sent topics to the team via email. In this instance, some directors will ask the alumnus to code themselves off the team. This affiliation is also extended to judges who may have traveled with a team earlier in the year as a hired judge. The respondent who uses the travel tenet explains, "Once you have traveled in a van with a team, even if you are from another school, then you have a connection to that team and so should be coded (off of that team)." While these are just a few justifications for restricting a judge from an entire school and probably not comprehensive, they represent reasons not explicitly covered by the code of standards and add to the inconsistent nature of current practice. Yet, another dimension of current practice lies in the reasons to code a judge off of particular individuals.

One of the greatest joys of the forensics community can also be one of its greatest detriments, the tight-knit and intertwined relationships that our activity fosters. The most common reason a director would code a judge off of a specific person is best described by one respondent as "a significant interpersonal history that would harm the objectivity of my judge and/or cause the student being judged unreasonable tension." Most of the directors who responded acknowledged that they would code off their judge from a specific person on another team that the judge may be dating or had past romantic/sexual relations. Other significant interpersonal histories that have resulted in judging restrictions derive from family relationships, marriages, and in even some cases heated disputes. The other major restriction on the individual level is if a judge for some reason has coached a student or helped them on a particular event either in person or via some other medium. However, one respondent explained that in this case she would narrow the restriction beyond the individual level and the judge would just be coded off of the student's specific event that was coached.

Whether it is on the team, individual, or even event level, it is certainly current practice for directors to implement judging restrictions that are not explicitly covered by the AFA's Code of Standards. While interpreting these standards and extracting ideals that are then applied to specific situations that may arise is an honorable endeavor, there are implications of this practice that weigh certain circumstances over others or foster unforeseen effects.

Implications

The implications of the current coding practice can be examined by looking at circumstances that could call for restrictions that currently are overlooked and effects of the current process that may be more damaging to the activity than the benefit of a perceived level playing field created by the Code of Standards.

Initially, a variety of issues come up when trying to decide whether a judge, put on an entry, should have any restrictions put next to their name. Many of these considerations are discussed earlier, but there are some considerations that have been overlooked, not enforced, or not deemed as influencing factors on a judge's impartiality. Some circumstances include, but are not limited to:

1. Hired judges teaching at the same school or attending the same school as some of the competitors could lead to a biased judgment. The AFA's *Code of Standards* only mentions coaches or undergraduate forensics competitors. Therefore, a student could be judged by one of their professors or one of their fellow classmates in a round.
2. High school summer camps have become so prevalent across the country they bring their own batch of possible restrictions. Out of the top 20 programs at the AFA-NIET in 2008, 12 of these teams have summer camps. Out of the top ten programs in the open division of the NFA National Tournament in 2008, seven of these teams have summer camps. Additionally, there are several camps hosted by colleges and universities not on these lists, a handful of camps hosted by independent organizations, and some hosted by high schools. Several of these camps hire coaches and students from a wide variety of different teams. With that noted, should the relationships made at summer camps disqualify judges from judging students who may have been colleagues only the summer before? Should the hiring of a counselor during the summer create the same affiliation to the host school as if that same person was hired throughout the year to be a judge?
3. From the same strain of thought, as collegiate programs continue to reach out to high schools, should restrictions be implemented to protect coaches and students from conflicts in this arena as well? If a judge coached an incoming freshman in high school at a summer camp or was a part-time coach for the high school, should they be regulated by the same two-year affiliation guideline as if the student was coached by the same person in college? On the flipside, if a high school coach is hired to be a judge at a tournament, should they be coded off of former students and alumni from that high school?
4. Transfer students are greatly affected by these regulations as well. If six students from the same team transfer to six different four-year programs after competing for two years, should the coach of that community college program code themselves off of those six students for the next two years?

The same situation could be applicable, probably in a smaller scale, to students transferring from one four-year program to another. This list of restrictions could become rather large, especially in areas where two-year and four-year programs compete against one another regularly.

5. When it comes to freelance judges, those that may be hired by several different programs or host schools on several different weekends, should they only be considered affiliated with a program if they travel with that school? If they come to the tournament on their own and either commute or are put up by the hiring party, is there a conflict of interest at the next tournament?
6. What are the coding parameters for different types of relationships? For example, when a coach of one team is dating a student from a different team should the coach be coded off of just that student or should the student be coded off of all of the coach's team to avoid tension? (Ex. Why did you coach your team so well they are beating me at tournaments?) Should the parameters be different if the relationship is between a coach of one team and a coach of a different team? Is any restriction necessary if coaching has not taken place across the two teams or is the possibility of tension in the home a worthwhile justification for restrictions? (Ex. Your student beat my student, go sleep on the coach.) If the relationship is between a coach and a hired judge with no affiliation, should the hired judge be coded off of the coach's team? (Ex. You gave my student a six in that round? Go sleep on the coach!) How long should the restriction be in effect? If a relationship ends is the two years that most other restrictions follow enough time or should two people who date and then break up be a permanent restriction?
7. Probably the most accepted form of bias in the forensics community that rarely even brings up the thought of a possible restriction is close friendships. We spend a great deal of time worrying about school affiliations and romantic relationships, but sometimes a best friend may be on a team other than one's own. While I agree with one respondent's comment, "Just because someone is your Facebook friend doesn't mean you can't judge him/her," the role Facebook and other social networks play in shrinking an already tight-knit community can not be discounted. It goes without saying that technology continues to make our world smaller and smaller, but this factor makes it seem that the sheer number of best friends living miles apart is not making an impact on our judges' impartiality. The fact is these networks provide yet another means for people to stay close and only reinforces a predicament that was certainly taking place decades before networks like Facebook were ever invented. Different roles that these friends may play - whether they are a coach, judge, and/or student - may affect what kind of restriction should be enacted, if any.

Despite these circumstances, the current coding process has implications that may be more damaging to the activity than the benefit of a perceived level playing field created by the Code of Standards. What makes these issues more destructive than the above circumstances not currently addressed is that all of these issues take place presently within the accepted system under the shroud of fair play. Some issues that deserve consideration may include:

1. The biggest issue facing the current practice is the high dependence on individual ethics. The coding system is currently self-regulated, meaning directors and hired judges are the only people who truly know if a restriction is necessary and it is up to their ethics to do the right thing. But, the right thing is not agreed upon by the community, so it always seems as if someone is trying to get a competitive edge or is trying to be too careful. One respondent explained the situation when she wrote, "The current way of allowing people to code themselves off creates lots of disparity between those teams who want to avoid bias at all costs on one end and those who like a pool filled with 'friends and family'." Taking motive out of the equation, another respondent wrote, "Given that each person is responsible for his/her school's coding, s/he might accidentally forget to code against someone. Also, because of the lack of additional restrictions that are commonly agreed upon, additional coding beyond the AFA *Code of Standards* is not consistent." Whether the coding is competitively motivated or not, it is clear that the practice is not consistent and thus hardly living up to its original cause to create a more or less equal playing field for students.
2. The ethical variations between directors and judges can also cause inconsistencies and blame placing at tournaments. For example, if a judge travels with Team A to a tournament, then the next weekend is hired by the tournament or another team and Team A shows up to the tournament, it is up to the judge to know that they should have coded themselves off of Team A. However, sometimes this is not the case and Team A will either say something the day of the tournament, not knowing the judge was going to be there, or keep quiet and hope for the best. Either way, the tournament director is left with little recourse, as rescheduling that judge the day of the tournament can become very difficult, especially if that tournament is nationals. In that judge's defense though, not every tournament advertises who is coming to the tournament and few advertise which specific students are coming. Judges and directors could list every team and individual that a judge should be coded against in precaution that they

may be at the tournament, but "not knowing someone was going to be there" is a common defense.

3. Following that same line of logic, many directors and judges are unclear of where the responsibility to place restrictions lies. As many respondents noted, the responsibility DOES NOT lie with the tournament director. Also, directors can not code judges from other teams off of their students and for good reason as this power could be used for a competitive edge. The responsibility lies with the judge. However, a judge may not believe they are biased against a student/team, know that an individual is uncomfortable with that person judging them, or realize that activity with a team earlier in the year requires a judging restriction and the judge does not code themselves off of that individual/team. Once again, the current system is vague making an argument for or against coding in particular situations just as valid because there is no standard.
4. All of this discussion of coding and disclosure of conflicts brings up a whole heap of privacy issues. Does the forensics world really want to start keeping tabs on all of the issues judges may have with students and vice versa? While the umbrella term of "significant interpersonal history" is a solid phrase to encompass a variety of conflicts, judging restrictions for each particular judge may become an ever changing laundry list of single individuals.
5. Whether it is a response to the privacy issue above or some other reason, it has become a common practice for judges that should be coded off of individuals to code themselves off of entire teams. One respondent when writing of restrictions that "can be pretty arbitrary and capricious" explained that a judge may not want to judge any student from a school because they may be having a conflict with the coach of that particular school. The respondent elaborates explaining this coach needs to "grow up and develop a clearer professional attitude. He's there to assess student performances, not pass judgment on those students' coach. That kind of attitude can be damaging to the activity." Another potential reason directors or judges do this team coding rather than individual coding is because they think it will be easier for the tournament director. Several respondents, who schedule several different sized tournaments, explained this is not the case. Also, this same course of action should not be taken by the tournament director. If a judge is coded off of an individual, the tournament director should not extend that restriction to an entire team.
6. Another concern of the current coding practice and perhaps the future of this practice as well, is the number of restrictions placed on a single judge. At local tournaments or at nationals if a judge has too many restrictions they become useless to the tournament director, but at most tournaments these judges still receive credit for being a full-time judge. At nationals, there have been judges coded off of three of the five teams with the largest entries and were not able to judge a full-time commitment purely due to restrictions. Another example was a judge that was coded off of five different teams and also could not fulfill their commitment. This hardly seems fair to judges who cover the same amount of slots, but judge more rounds because they have less restrictions. On the other hand, we still want judges to list any restrictions they may have to try and keep a level playing field. Overly restricting judges could quickly leave tournaments gasping for more judges, which may already be taking place with only the two-year affiliation rule.
7. One interesting note is the seemingly arbitrary nature of the number of years set in AFA's *Code of Standards*. It does not seem that two years prevents any conflicts that one year or three years would not also prevent. One respondent explained, "I try to code off any person that has coached or even traveled with a team while any student on that team was competing. This creates some issues in our region where...teams like to consider someone clean after two years even though they will be judging former teammates, students, and even lovers." This response also brings up the question of whether every restriction should follow the two years suggested for some restrictions in the code or if the time of a restriction is based on a case by case basis. The code sets the two years for the "students and teammates" mentioned in this respondents comment, but no time is set in the code for the "lovers" restriction. Another explanation for the two years set forth in the code may be an effort to keep graduate assistants from judging their former teammates. However, for graduate students who go to school for three years or start judging professionally that third year, they would still be judging teammates who were freshman when they were seniors.
8. Finally, our activity prides itself on providing our students with educational benefits that will transcend forensics and aid them in life after college. However, are we robbing our judges from the educational experience that comes with making tough decisions that need to be backed up with strong reasoning when we take the pen out of their hand with a restriction? One respondent commented on this very situation when they wrote that the current system "doesn't force the coach/Grad Assistant to develop and justify their judging criteria. It enables them to avoid making some professional decisions, and that's not necessarily good."

Possible Changes

It seems pretty clear that some changes need to take place to the current system in order to develop some consistency across forensics programs; however, determining how to accomplish this feat is no easy task. The array of possible changes to current practice span from more rules to no rules, everything in between, and devices to try and handle things that are currently done. This paper, as a prompt for further dialogue at the developmental conference, will list solutions proposed by several individuals and some of the justification for each and save in-depth discussion about feasibility, benefits, drawbacks, implications, etc. for the conference.

1. Add more regulations to AFA's *Code of Standards*, to rectify some of the vague and unaddressed situations. One respondent noted, "I think an additional set of agreed upon guidelines beyond the *AFA Code of Standards* would help bring everyone on the same page. We would then all know what to expect regarding coding against students for judging purposes. This would help tournament hosts as well, since any codings missed by the entering school could be caught by the host with such a list." This would be a strong solution, but may be difficult to come up with procedures, as another respondent noted, that would cover "some strange and unthought-of circumstance."

2. Have a neutral officiating organization judge tournaments across the country. One respondent with this idea explained, "Forensics stands essentially alone among all sports, arts, and other academic competitions in having people with a vital stake in the competition judging that competition. One person outside forensics compared it to Phil Jackson coaching the Eastern division semifinals while his team waits to play the winner. Nobody would accept that as legitimate... We must find and train a cadre of unaffiliated judges OR have teams agree not to attend some tournaments so their judges can be critics. This used to happen naturally in the old days when a host school didn't compete. We also must accept more non-forensics people as critics, and get comfortable with more diverse, realistic perspectives from people who may not always reward formulas and norms that we have fortified." This may seem idealistic on the forefront, but the benefits of such an idea warrant further discussion and research.

3. To combat the unequal share of judging due to restrictions, numerous restrictions could make one a part-time judge. One suggestion was that "if you have more than one school restriction, you should not be counted as a full-time judge." This probably would be best paired with a suggestion offered by a different respondent who suggested that schools be required "to have a certain number of their judges be 100% clean or no judge can have more than one conflict." Limiting the number of conflicts a judge may have would still allow there to be some coding off, keep it under control, and allow the judge to pick the restriction that would best limit their bias. If they could not narrow this to one restriction then they would not be considered a full-time judge.

4. Establish some form of a strike system for judges. This is not a new idea, but it may be time to rehash the arguments for both sides of this issue. The respondent who suggested this idea explained that in this system "tournament directors would list judges three days before the tournament, and then teams would anonymously strike a certain number of judges. Those with a lot of strikes could be removed from the pool and warned that they need to work on their skills/bias/comportment or they won't be hired again."

5. Review the list of judges for a tournament and the people the judge has suggested coding themselves off of and then let other attending teams make suggestions to that list. If multiple suggestions come in, then that team or person would be added to that judge's restrictions. This suggestion, also coming from a respondent, would help catch restrictions that may have been forgotten, but may add to the current problem of too many restrictions and other issues that may accompany that situation.

6. Notify the tournament director of judging situations that would NOT cause a conflict. We spend so much time on who judges should not judge sometimes we forget to mention who they can. For example, one respondent explained, "I will usually send a note to a tournament director indicating who my novices are so that they know my former students in the judge pool do not know those individuals and could judge them if necessary." In addition to novices, this could also go for transfers and, in the second year of a restriction, people who are going into their second year of a team.

7. Reconsider the two-year affiliation rule. Some of the more experienced respondents do not seem to think that two years of coding is necessary. One respondent, with some 40 plus years of experience, argued, "If I had an undergraduate student transfer to another school and continue to compete...in order to help make that student feel more comfortable, I might try to avoid judging him/her, at least for a semester." Another respondent, with the same amount of experience if not more, echoed the first respondent's sentiments almost exactly with a suggested restriction time of a

"semester/quarter of competition." Reconsidering the amount of time restrictions are expected to continue could be a compromise, but may still allow for some of the "significant interpersonal history" issues along with the questions of how long to keep different restrictions intact.

Conclusion

Coding judges off of different teams and students can be a very complex issue because of the many number of variants that are thrown into the equation. As stated earlier, judging restrictions were put into place to help tournament directors ensure that all students competed on a more or less equal playing field. However, forensics, at its heart, is a subjective activity and no matter how many restrictions we put on judges, there is always an advantage or disadvantage to students that is going to slip through the cracks. I feel more restrictions or even the restrictions currently deemed acceptable by the forensics community only create more problems than they are worth. The only restriction a judge should have is against the program they are hired by at that tournament. We should put the responsibility of training ethical judges back on those that are hiring them, whether it is the host or the attending school. There is a lot to learn from facing and making tough decisions. If a judge presides over a round that has their best friend, their significant other, and a member of their alma mater in it, maybe the judge will be forced to judge the round based on who gave the best performance – which should be their task anyway. And if a judge is not being objective, despite their connections to people in the round, then those complaints should be taken up with the hiring party, so that if the hiring party feels that the judge is being biased, the situation can be dealt with and used as a learning experience. One of the most highly respected individuals in this activity responded to the idea of judging restrictions with the following statement:

> After a semester/quarter of competition … I would not restrict myself. I do this because I know that I am a fair and objective judge - I can evaluate a performance based on the performance - not on how well I may know the student, not on how well I like or dislike that student, and certainly not on how competitive my program might be as opposed to their program etc. We need to start to be honest with ourselves - and being ethical in all factors of our activity. Trust is a key element.

Reference

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The "Culture of Qualifying" Revisited
or
What is the "End" of Forensics?

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A little more than twenty years ago, as a graduate student, I was given the opportunity to announce the awards at the Jackrabbit Jousts Tournament at South Dakota State University. And, thanks to my years in forensics, I think I did a pretty good job. Granted, I skipped over one of the contestants in Persuasion and after announcing first place, I had one "left-over" competitor in the front of the auditorium. Other than that, I think it went well.

Not long after the tournament, a very wise coach asked me a very important question, one that persists in the back of my mind still today. Larry Schoor asked, "Why did you announce how many AFA legs there were in each event? (A common practice at the time.) Not everyone goes to the NIET?"

I was shocked. I thought EVERYONE went to the NIET. Having cut my collegiate forensics teeth in Minnesota and South Dakota, I thought that the NIET was the ONLY national tournament.

Ten years ago, at the last developmental conference, I again asked Larry's question to the greater forensics community. In my paper on the "Culture of Qualifying," I contended that the focus AFA schools place on qualifying for nationals resulted in three problems: pulling slots, hunting for legs and a reduction in the quality of regular season tournaments.

Another ten years have passed, and not much has changed. The "Culture of Qualifying" still exists. And I am left wondering: Where do we go from here?

Media ecologist, Neil Postman, in his book *The End of Education,* claims that in the field of education, too often, we make decisions about what we should do, with little concern as to WHY we are doing it. He challenges his readers to consider the "end" of education; in other words, the purpose of what we do.

I think it is time for us to do that in forensics.

Our first question must be: Why do we have tournaments? Ask anyone, and you will get a variety of answers. Some may include: to get ready for nationals, to earn qualifications for nationals, to give our students practice, to make money, to fund travel, etc.

With our consideration of the purpose of a forensics tournament, allow me a few observations. Initially, the "Culture of Qualifying" still exists. It is perpetuated by the way we talk. You might be wondering if someone has a specific event "qualed." Or, you could be frustrated that a particular team is "showcasing" this weekend. At awards, it is not uncommon to hear a tournament director say, "I know you all want to get out of here, so I'll get through this as fast as possible." And while that may be a result of a long, weekend schedule; I contend that has more to do with our conception with the purpose of the tournament (legs/qualifications) than with time and logistics.

The culture of qualifying is also reinforced by our tournament practices and procedures. "Swing" tournaments came into vogue in the 1990s in and around Texas, where schools would generally have to travel great distances for competition. So, when they got together, it made "sense" to have two tournaments, instead of one. But, times have changed. You can try to argue that swings exist to save money or provide multiple opportunities for our students to perfect their performances. However, when we routinely drop slots between tournaments to "get out of the way" of other people trying to qualify, it is more probable that "swings" are the vehicles that drive the qualification machine.

The result is that the "culture of qualifying" confounds the purpose of the weekend tournament. I'm not sure what the purpose of one of our college tournaments should be, but I can tell what it isn't. This past year, I had the opportunity to attend one of the high school tournaments in my state. I won't lie...it had been awhile. I judged a few rounds, ate pizza off a paper plate, played a couple hands of cards while waiting around and I attended the awards ceremony. This wasn't an NFL qualifier and it wasn't the state championships. It was just a regular Saturday tournament. What took me by surprise was the awards ceremony. While I have never been a fan of a long, drawn out event at the end of a tournament, something different was going on. Amidst all the screaming and cheering, it was clear that the gathered assembly was honoring the success of their fellow competitors. They knew the purpose of their tournament. And they liked being there. Do we know the purpose of tournaments? And do we enjoy them?

To fully understand the "culture of qualifying" it is important to begin with a few observations. Initially, there are a lot of collegiate individual events programs in the country. Amidst claims the "foren-

sics is dying," in the past two years, 253 different teams attended a "national" IE tournament (AFA-NIET, NFA, PKD, NCCFI, PRP). Of those teams, 85 (33%) attended the NIET in 2008. And, only 35 (13%) schools attended the NIET as their only national tournament.

The purpose of this essay is not to indict or impugn the AFA-NIET. In fact, the AFA-NIET is responsible for much of the standardization and progress we have made in individual events over the last few decades. However, it is my claim that the AFA-NIET qualification system, in its current state, is a detriment to the health of individual events, and it should be changed.

For those of you younger than me (most of you), it is important to note that the qualification procedures for the AFA-NIET have changed many times. Here is a quick rundown:

- At first, only 1st – 3rd counted for legs.
- Then 1st-6th counted, but you needed 10 schools and 35 people for 6 legs. Tournaments were HUGE back then, but by Districts, you would have maybe 2 CA and 3 ADS slot qualified....in the whole district.
- In the early 1990's, it was changed so that only 12 competitors were needed to make 6 legs in an event.
- To manage the size of the tournament, a change was made so that 20 competitors were required for 6th place to count as a leg.
- To further manage the size of the tournament, a 66 entry per team cap was placed on each school

Clearly, the NIET is not afraid of change, but Postman's question rings true: Are we making changes to stay in line with our end (learning objective)? Or, are we making changes...for the sake of making changes. I'm not sure I know the answer. Do you?

So, we are back at the question, what is the end (purpose) of the weekend tournament? I may not have the answer, but I can tell you this: I want a tournament to be a tournament, and NOT just a place to earn a magical combination of qualifying legs. I want to take the time to celebrate the success of our students. I want to enjoy the experience and visit with my colleagues. And yes, as a Director of Forensics, I can make those choices, but the culture of qualifying so pervades what we do, that those choices become more and more difficult to make.

The current qualification system for the AFA-NIET should be changed. And I'm not alone. Twenty years ago, Dr. Roger Aden, then the Director of Forensics at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, proposed eliminating the "leg" system in favor of a double-district system, in which districts would host two qualifying tournaments a year. He knew that the current formula (top 10%) would be inadequate, but he was certain that could be worked out. It was his goal to shift the focus away from "qualifying" at regular season tournaments.

Hearing his proposal, as a student, I thought he was crazy. I was sure it would kill the weekend tournament. I was positive there would only be two tournaments a year. When the reality is that 66 percent of the colleges who compete nationally, do not attend the AFA-NIET, maybe tournaments would be just fine with out the current At-Large Qualification system. Before you call me a heretic ... let's look at his proposal again.

A double (or triple, the details can be worked out) district tournament would shift our focus away from earning legs, to improving performances. At the point we are pulling qualified events, we no longer use the tournament as a method to gain feedback to improve performance. Instead, the final round placing becomes the goal and once the correct numbers of placings are earned, competition and comments are unnecessary.

A double district tournament would reduce the requirements to travel to be competitive. You can tell me all you want that every school has a chance to win nationals, but the reality is that it takes a lot of entries. In 1995, the University of Pennsylvania placed 4th in Team Sweepstakes at the AFA-NIET with 18 entries. Today, very few teams in the top 10 have less than 30 entries, and most boast a full compliment of 66 slots. When I was coaching at Rice University, I traveled my team to 24 tournaments to qualify 30-40 entries for nationals. The current system rewards schools that have the money to attend more tournaments.

A double district tournament could save forensics programs. As a community we need to face the reality that we are in a major economic downturn. Gas prices alone have skyrocketed, and I would bet that most school's forensics budgets have not seen increases to meet those expenses. Colleges and universities are going to face tough budget choices and we need to be proactive. No one has proved that swing tournaments actually save teams money. Additionally, a different qualification system could prolong the tenure of our coaches. Many of our colleagues who leave the discipline cite burnout as one of their main reasons for leaving.

A double district tournament would more easily maintain the size of the AFA-NIET. Without the confounding variable of At-Large qualifications, the NIET Committee would have a much clearer idea of tournament size on a year to year basis.

A double district tournament would refocus the purpose of the weekend tournament. Instead of looking for "legs," students, and coaches, would have more freedom in when and where to enter various events. We could eliminate the words "showcasing" and "pulling slots" from our vocabularies.

Before you freak out, like I did twenty years ago, we all must realize one thing: eliminating the At-Large Qualification system (legs) will NOT destroy the weekend tournament. Two hundred eighteen schools who don't utilize the AFA-NIET as their national tournament found plenty of reasons to attend regular season tournaments. And, on any given weekend, literally thousands of high schools across the country attend tournaments without the motivation of earning a national qualification.

The double district tournament may not be the right answer, but at least we all know the question: What is the end of a tournament?

I urge the AFA-NIET Committee to abandon the At-Large Qualification and replace it with one that best supports the "end" of forensics.

An Optimum Balance of Forensic Goals
Balancing Competitive and Educational Ends Through Forensic Honoraries

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Abstract

The myriad benefits found through participation in forensics are well documented. Few co- or extra-curricular activities boast the range of opportunity and benefit that are found through forensics. At the same time, this diversity within the activity creates tension for some programs that struggle with the *best* approach to forensic participation. Few would argue that forensics is at the same time educational and competitive. The argument that evolves from this duality of mission is which, if any, is more important or prevalent. Answering this question has led to multiple associations, a wealth of scholarship, and the conclusion that there is likely no definitive answer to the query of which is most important. This paper reviews the debate over balancing competitive and educational goals in forensics. Particular attention is paid to forensic honoraries as associations that bring attention to multiple forensic goals, including both educational and competitive excellence. I conclude with arguments in support of forensic honoraries as outlets for programs seeking a balance of multiple forensic goals.

Introduction

In many ways collegiate forensics has become very much like sending one of my children with a pocket full of money on a trip through the candy store…or more accurately a credit card with a high limit in a toy store. The benefits forensic programs promote to their participants and institutions range from competitive to educational to social. Similarly, there are seemingly limitless choices of events and associations in which programs can participate. These choices can be a blessing when shaping forensic programs around particular institutional cultures and resources. Programs are able to create a face for themselves that reflects their own sets of goals, opportunities, and constraints. At the same time, these myriad choices contribute to a very diverse collegiate forensic atmosphere that can, at times, suffer from fragmentation and the lack of uniformity in what defines the collegiate forensic experience. There are countless national champions in each event each year. There are staffs and budgets that range from next to nothing to an almost embarrassment of riches. While these differences are not inherently negative, the tensions between which choices reflect the best or even an appropriate approach to forensics can promote a divide among programs that differ in their view and practice of the activity.

One such tension that has long faced our activity is between competition and education. While I doubt many programs would deny the co-existence of each of these ends, there is debate over practices that seemingly emphasize one over the other. It is not enough to accept the ability of programs to embrace both competition and education as complimentary of one another; differences in choices creates perceptions of particular choices being better or worse for blending competition and education into a single approach to forensic activities. While competition and education can, and should, be integrated into any program's approach to forensics, forensic educators must be cognizant of the specific choices they make and how they contribute to competition and education being shared goals of a single program.

A key area in which programs operationalize any blending of competition and education is the events and associations in which they participate. While no forensic association would deny the importance of each of these two goals, many have policies or cultures that vary in their emulation of a blend of competition and education; the effectiveness of balancing the two goals is a judgment each program makes in accordance with its own view of forensics. Again, these differences in views create and reinforce the breadth of choices facing programs.

I argue the forensic honoraries and their events are ideal for promoting a balance of forensic education and competition. While it is presumptuous to identify any forensic choice as the best, honoraries do codify a range of forensic goals and opportunities within their constitutions, tournaments, and cultures. Forensic honoraries offer a comprehensive approach to forensics, not only in terms of events offered, but also in the goals they promote for their members. This breadth of inclusion of goals and events provides a more intrinsic and explicit permutation of competition and education than what is promoted by other associations. I make the case for affiliation with forensic honoraries as a means of integrating a balance of competition and education by framing the debate over balancing these two ends, the nature of honoraries and how they embrace a breadth of forensic goals, and implications of affiliating with honoraries.

Balancing Competition and Education
The Debate in Review

Developmental conferences and forensic literature have and continue to frame the debate over competition and education. The earliest definitions of forensics promote the activity as educational at its core. McBath (1975) writes that forensics is "an educational activity…" (p. 11). Even in 1975 McBath acknowledged a range of options available to forensic educators, but posited that "various forensic communities can unite in significant ways if they endorse and pursue the overarching objective of providing students with experience in learning to communicate with people" (p. 11). Despite this focus on learning, it is also understood the activity exists within an atmosphere of competition. Bartanen (1994) writes in his directing forensics text that all the various forensic events "provide a unique opportunity for students to learn valuable life skills in an enjoyable, competitive environment" (p. 1). As a rule, the argument over balancing these two goals has become an enthymeme; because students are competing in forensics they are learning, and students learn to improve themselves as forensic participants in order to elevate their competitive potential. This assumed inherent co-existence of these two goals stems largely from the forensic rituals of practicing to compete that dominate the agendas of many forensic programs. Teaching is certainly at the heart of many educators' and students' approaches to practicing. At the same time, Olson (2004) may be correct when he suggests that most of what forensic educators do is motivated by "how it will advance their team competitively" (p. 3). Ribarsky, as part of her argument calling for greater acceptance of innovation, suggests that reinforcement of our existing tournament model is problematic when its "norm perpetuation further hinders the educational values" (p. 20).

While few would argue the benefits of approaching forensics through a primarily educational lens, Burnett, Brand, and Meister (2003) argue "promoting the educational value of forensics gives the activity saliency to mask its competitive motives" (p. 14). These authors argue that the culture of forensics is primarily competitive, as reflected in both its rhetoric and practices. They argue that to achieve a balance of education and competition, the forensic community should "be honest about what forensics really is: a competitive activity that no longer needs to clothe itself in the myth of education. Only then can we hope that the present myth of what the activity is all about, will become a future reality" (p. 20). In a response to Burnett, Brand, and Meister, Hinck (2003) acknowledges a dialectical tension within the forensic community between competition and education. At the same time, he suggests that the competitive forensic experience "can contribute to enhanced educational outcomes" (p. 65). He adds that benefits of the competitive experience are regardless of the degree of competitive success, suggesting "the activities that make competition possible engender positive values for life beyond college" (p. 65).

Additional scholarship has addressed the tensions associated with balancing education and competition. Brownlee (1995) calls for forensic educators to "create an environment within our separate programs that rewards learning, not just winning, and encourage(s) our national organizations to foster tournament activities and awards that appeal to all segments of the student population" (p. 15). West (1997), indicting the concept of qualifying legs for the AFA-NIET, writes "we have created a culture that is primarily focused on qualifying for a national tournament than on the pursuit of excellence in performance" (p. 79). Kistenberg and Ferguson (1989) suggest that competitive forensic arenas may not be the most appropriate contexts for performing literature. Gaer (2002) writes that as students and educators seek to emulate what is competitively successful in particular events, "we do create an activity where students become presentational robots and let freedom of creation and expression go by the wayside" (p. 56). Jensen and Jensen (2007) observe it is the responsibility of the program's director to create and maintain a program that embodies goals most salient to the program's culture, and then to sell or promote that program to its institutional community. They "acknowledge in order to effectively promote forensics one must highlight success" (p. 18). At the same time, Jensen and Jensen observe that "forensic success is diverse in its form and genesis," making it possible for programs to highlight whatever ends they deem most important and relevant to their program and its surrounding community. (p. 20).

The Case for Honoraries as Contexts for Balancing Education and Competition

Regardless of how programs frame themselves, and in what activities a forensic program engages, tournaments and competition are a forensic reality. As such, programs must make decisions as to which tournaments to attend, and the role national tournaments will play in their program. As a rule, supporting a national tournament is consistent with affiliating with the association sponsoring that national tournament. This connection is important because programs, at some level, endorse principles and practices of groups by joining their ranks of membership. There are countless national tournaments, and consequently national associations, from which programs can select. Some national tournaments have qualification standards, generally grounded in particular degrees of competitive success during the regular forensic season, while other tournaments require only membership in the sponsoring association as a requirement for participation.

A factor that may escape consideration by educa-

tors deciding with what associations they will affiliate is the impact that association and its national tournament will have on the program and its students. Consider West's indict of, as he terms it, "the culture of qualifying" and how one national tournament can dictate who competes in which events when, not to mention how it might be inappropriate to enter a tournament simply because an event has already qualified for a tournament seven months in the future (1997). It is the impact associations can have on forensic programs that motivates my call for affiliating with forensic honoraries. The three honoraries, Pi Kappa Delta (PKD), Delta Sigma Rho-Tau Kappa Alpha (DSR-TKA), and Phi Rho Pi (PRP) are open to any college, with PRP being restricted to two-year schools. Like other associations, these honoraries each sponsor a national tournament. However, their standards and activities extend their potential impact on programs well beyond an annual national competition. Each holds prospective members to particular standards of academic and competitive excellence and experience. Not only must programs meet membership standards, but educators and students must each meet standards for membership and join individually in order to be part of the honorary's activities. Course offerings in speaking or debate, an active forensic or speaker's bureau program, and meeting accreditation standards of the Association of College Honor Societies are the minimum standards for membership in DSR-TKA. Minimum grade point averages, competitive excellence, and service are required for introductory and advanced degrees of membership in PKD. Minimum levels of experience and competitive success are requirements for membership in PRP.

What makes honoraries uniquely suited to promote a balance of competition and education is their encouragement of both competitive success and academic excellence. Additionally, the honoraries' national tournaments are open to all individual members of the association, thereby affording programs the opportunity of attending a national tournament with any and all members of their program. The three honoraries offer students an opportunity to blend their academic pursuits and forensics in very visible ways. As honor societies, members are able to wear honor chords at commencement as a way of proclaiming their forensic involvement as part of their curriculum. Members are encouraged, and in some cases required for advanced degrees of membership, to engage in community service. Essentially, individuals share membership requirements with their programs, thereby receiving opportunities to participate in a variety of both competitive and non-competitive forensic activities. Even though each national tournament rewards competitive success with tangible awards, this is sometimes done in a very egalitarian manner. For example, the top 10% of an event at the biennial PKD national tournament receive top honors as superior award winners. Even though a top superior winner is announced, all plaques are exactly the same in an effort to strike a balance between the competitive success of being the best in an event at that national tournament, while de-emphasizing differences among a group of competitors who share a similar measure of success.

An additional reason for affiliating with honoraries as a means of balancing competitive and educational outcomes is the accessibility of the tournament to virtually all forensic students. Students need not meet a competitively-based standard to participate. Further, nearly any event in which the program participates is offered, along with events unique to that honorary. This represents two important benefits. First, students can be a part of a national tournament regardless of their competitive success during the year. Second, programs can provide their students a national tournament experience that is a team event. If team bonding and nurturing of all team members are program goals, honoraries and their national tournaments provide the ideal nationals experience. Bartanen (1997), in her keynote address at the Pi Kappa Delta Professional Development Conference, asked and answered the question, "even if reformed incrementally or systematically, is the vehicle of the competitive tournament sufficient for accomplishment of the mission of forensic education? Pi Kappa Delta has strongly answered 'no' to that question" (p. 8). She identifies the unique benefits and expectations of membership in PKD as testimony to its unique ability to blend multiple goals within a single forensic program.

While it may be that no association—honorary or otherwise—completely captures the essence of a given program, the combination of competitive, academic, and service excellence makes honoraries ideal affiliations for forensic programs seeking to embrace a breadth of engagement within the forensic activity. At the same time, there are implications for programs to consider when joining honoraries.

Implications for Affiliation

I acknowledge at the onset that honoraries may not fit well within every forensic program's culture. There are particular program characteristics that blend well with honoraries, such as comprehensive programs whose students participate in both individual events and debate, programs that travel to a small number of tournaments during the year, or programs that seek broad participation from several students regardless of competitive success or potential for success. At the same time, other programs may reject honoraries as being inconsistent with the mission of their program. While a number of factors contribute to decisions about with which associations to affiliate the focus of this paper is the connection between affiliations and the integration of both competition and education into a single forensic

program. Considering a few implications of affiliating with honoraries can help guide this important program decision.

Initially, a critical distinction of the national honorary tournaments is the lack of any criteria for entering other than being a member of the honorary. Clearly this differs from tournaments such as AFA-NIET, NFA, and NDT, all of which have specific competitive-based standards for being able to enter the tournament. The lack of qualification-based entry standards opens the field of potential competitors to a full range of competitive ability, which may well include the interper who reads from the script book to the public address speaker whose rhetorical and delivery skills are Kennedy or King-like. Even though one can argue that the truly accomplished students will ultimately be the ones who are recognized among the best, individual rounds of competition may reflect levels of performance that are not commensurate with what one might expect at a national championship tournament. Similarly, larger events allow for greater propensity that students who are less competitively talented than others can find ways to the upper tier of recognized performers while more competitively accomplished students fail to receive similar recognitions. At the same time, open entry national tournaments allow for the possibility that less experienced students with events that did not meet certain national tournaments' measures of quality can still be competitively successful. Similarly, the opportunity for all to enter a national tournament promotes any educational opportunity associated with the competitive experience for any and all competitors.

A second implication rests in the range of events in which a particular program participates. National honorary tournaments are comprehensive in nature, meaning a variety of both individual and debate events are offered. Comprehensive tournaments inherently mandate down-time for students who specialize in debate or individual events. More specialized programs may be unwilling or unable to exhaust resources for a tournament at which they spend half the tournament schedule not competing. Even though students are always able to enter additional events, the motivation for doing so at the end of a season may be minimal. Other national tournaments, with only a few exceptions, specialize in either individual events or a particular format of debate; these allow students and educators greater focus and, perhaps, more intensity in their participation. Conversely, the combination of comprehensive event offerings and open-entry allows for a true team nationals experience. Only program resources stand as a possible barrier to any student entering the tournament. Programs can promote the honorary nationals as a team event at which point the season culminates in a collective experience. This also does not preclude the same program from entering more competitively successful students at qualification-based national tournaments, allowing for a blend of egalitarian and elite nationals experiences.

A third implication is the degree to which programs with memberships in honoraries actively promote that membership. Any association has the potential to benefit member programs. The unique qualities of honoraries, as have been outlined earlier in this paper, envelop service, competition, and academic excellence. Not supporting the national tournament for one's affiliate honorary communicates questionable support for this multi-tiered approach to forensics. Programs that embrace these goals can better communicate the importance of such an integration of priorities by supporting tournaments and associations that promote such integration.

Conclusions

There are no doubt additional implications for programs to consider when deciding which national associations and tournaments to support. For some programs this means selecting the one national tournament experience that is most affordable, while others may schedule as many as three or four national tournaments as a way of broadening the unique competitive and educational benefits that come from being at nationals. In the end forensic programs and their administrators will make decisions about what best serves the goals of their programs and host institutions. These decisions will range from which students may join to which national tournaments the program will support. As Schnoor and Alexander (1997) note, these decisions "are 'professional' choices and should be respected as such by all of us" (p. 15). Further, we must all acknowledge that individual programs will view competition and education through different lenses. While there is a tendency for students and educators to characterize certain national tournaments or program choices as appropriate or inappropriate, such rhetoric unfairly disenfranchises programs and their students. It also presumes an ultimate nationals experience, or the right choice, neither of which exists in the world of forensics. Ultimately, as Littlefield (2006) writes, "whether competitive or not, educationally sound or not, the knowledge afforded students who engage in forensics provides a certainty or truth that cannot be gained in another environment. That is why forensics is philosophically justified" (p. 11).

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Re-examining Competition and Education in Collegiate Forensics
Establishing the Need for a Pedagogical Prerogative Perspective

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Abstract

The authors examine the dominant metaphors used to guide collegiate forensics practice during the last four decades. The interplay between education and competition serve as a focus for the analysis. The authors establish the need for a pedagogical prerogative perspective as a means of enhancing the educational value of intercollegiate individual events.

Introduction

> The belief that all genuine education comes about through experience does not mean that all experiences are generally or equally educative.
>
> John Dewey (1938)

The crowd gathers, 80,000 strong, in the stadium named after a seemingly irrelevant corporation, to watch the nation's best collegiate male specimen attempt to move an oblong leather ball across a line marked on the field, repeatedly. The overgrown specimen line up across from one another. Then, at the command of the smallish one who cowers behind the mass of muscled humanity, they hurl themselves at one another, resulting in a pile of flesh and dirt and sometimes blood. Then, with 80 million more viewing at home, and with 30-second spots costing seemingly irrelevant corporations millions, they line up and do it again. All are witnessing college football's national championship.

Four months later, 80 somberly dressed people have packed into a rarely used classroom on the campus of a seemingly irrelevant college or university to witness the nation's six most articulate specimen and speciwomen attempt to answer questions related to a variety of the most compelling international issues of our day --- in five to seven minutes after 30 minute of preparation, of course. And they talk. They speak of wars and famines, of peoples and places whose names are difficult to pronounce, of disease and disaster and dirty deeds of seemingly irrelevant corporations. Often they make us aware of scenes we would rather not contemplate, of piles of flesh and dirt and sometimes blood. Few are witnessing college forensics' national championship in extemporaneous speaking.

Competition is a great teacher. This assertion provides not only the philosophical foundation for forensic activity, but it serves to cohere disparate educational entities under a forensic umbrella. However, as Dewey suggests and as the contrasting introductory scenarios depict, not all experiences are "equally educative." Beyond the obvious troubling conclusions that can be drawn regarding societal values, the contrasting narratives reveal much about the often tenuous relationship between competition and education. While both cases are undeniably competitive and to varying degrees educational, at their essence they differ in the nature of the educational experience. When one poses the question (as one always should), "What is being taught?" the contrasting "intrinsic benefits" (Hinck, 2003) emerge. Football pedagogy develops mainly athletic skills—strength, speed, quickness, agility for primarily athletic purposes—blocking, tackling, running, passing, etc. Forensic pedagogy enhances the following: research skills, critical thinking, contextual analysis, topic expertise, organizational skills, argument support and development, and delivery competence, to name a few. The learning objectives associated with speech competition tend toward the academic and cognitive realms, ideally. However, when these core values are not consistently rewarded through competition, then the competition itself ceases to serve highly educative ends. Forensic competition that rewards strict adherence to unwritten rules, a fascination with insular fads and whims, a preoccupation with delivery nuance and affected displays of performance technique over more substantive argumentative and rhetorical concerns teaches students the wrong lessons.

Let us be clear. We do not join the chorus of voices who decry forensic competition. Rather, our contention is with competition divorced from virtuous pedagogy. We must ask, "What are we teaching?"

In order to answer this question that is central to our professional existence, we will examine the guiding perspectives that have shaped forensic education over the past four decades and suggest a new approach grounded in pedagogical prerogatives.

Forensics as Laboratory

The 1974 National Developmental Conference on Forensics established the laboratory metaphor as a means of explaining the basic function of forensics activity. The Sedalia Conference concluded that "forensics activities...are laboratories for helping students to understand and communicate various forms of argument more effectively in a variety of contexts with a variety of audiences" (McBath, 1975, p. 11). A

decade later, the guiding metaphor was reaffirmed at the Evanston Conference (McBath, 1984). No perspective on forensics has received more scholarly attention (Harris et al., 1986; Kay, 1990; Aden, 1991; Dreibelbis and Gullifer, 1992; Friedly, 1992, Swanson, 1992; Zeuschner, 1992).

The laboratory is a place where experimental research is conducted in order to test hypotheses and discover new truths. The forensic laboratory provides a learning context for students and researchers. The metaphor serves to highlight the benefits of student experimentation with communicative choices within the laboratory. It also allows for the gaining of new knowledge through studies conducted by communication researchers. From both perspectives, the goal of the laboratory experiment is education. Kay (1990, p. 63) refers to "providing a laboratory in which students can learn about human communication" as "the fundamental goal upon which our activity is based."

Despite its educational focus and longevity, the laboratory metaphor has met with several detractors. Aden (1991) delivered the most comprehensive philosophical criticism of the perspective. The scientific and empirical implications of the metaphor proved misleading to him. As Aden (1991, p. 99) noted, "judges/critics and students may mistakenly assume that there are 'right' and 'wrong' approaches...rather than avenues that are more or less educational..." In fact, Aden argued, the laboratory metaphor had the potential to "limit the educational value of forensics" (p. 100). He described the nature of laboratories as "controlled, secretive, run by elites, sterile, and involving the manipulation of variables" (p. 100). Beyond philosophical limitations, perhaps the most significant shortcoming of the laboratory metaphor is its irrelevance to actual forensics practice. While Kay (1990) offered a vigorous defense of the pedagogical foundation established by the metaphor, he observed, "there is good reason to believe that the laboratory notion is often seen as only incidental to competitive forensics. Competitors and judges alike are usually more interested in the activity of forensics than the object of that activity." (p. 64). A discussion of the foundational metaphor inevitably leads to the apparent strain between education and competition.

Forensics as Argument

The close association of the argumentative perspective with the laboratory metaphor makes it almost impossible to consider them separately. Whereas the laboratory furnished the context for learning, the content of the teaching was instruction in argumentation. The First National Developmental Conference on Forensics affirmed the centrality of this perspective through its conference publication titled Forensics as Communication: The Argumentative Perspective (McBath, 1975).

They defined forensics as "an educational activity primarily concerned with using an argumentative perspective in examining problems and communicating with people" (McBath, 1975, p. 11). Argument provided both a focus for educational inquiry and a convenient umbrella under which members of debate and individual-events communities could unite.

One should note that by the time of the Sedalia conference in 1974, intercollegiate competition in debate and various individual events had existed for decades. The conception of the argumentative perspective represented an attempt to provide a focus for forensic instruction that would unify disparate factions of the forensics community and justify forensic practice to administrators and the academic community at large. While there is not doubt that early forensic educations such as Ehninger and Ziegelmueller emphasized a pedagogical approach to forensic activity, the fact remains that competitive practices existed before comprehensive statements of theory and perspective. An ex post facto means of discovery may help to explain the lack of scholarship generated by the argumentative perspective.

The argumentative perspective has proven to be a much better "fit" for debate than for individual events. Kay (1990) observed that forensic educators, particularly those in individual events, have been "relatively unconcerned" with developing a theory of argument. He quotes from Larson and O'Rourke who claim that while the argumentative perspective has generated useful inquiry in the field of debate, "the literature on the use of argumentation in individual events is almost nil" (p. 65). Aden (1991) concludes that the argumentative approach failed to "capture the imagination" of forensic scholars (p. 101).

An obvious reason for the lack of commitment to an argumentative perspective emerges from the essence of the various forensic activities. While argumentation is central to all forms of debate, its relevance to many of the individual events is peripheral at best. Oral-interpretation events certainly lack an inherent dependence on argumentation. Yes, argumentative approaches to oral interpretation have been developed (VerLinden, 1987), and increasingly judges seem to expect an explicit argumentative statement, but this approach lacks theoretical support. It forces students to abandon the subtleties and ambiguities often intended by authors, and it offers unclear argumentative evaluative criteria in the place of a body of time-tested criteria offered by performance scholars (Richardson, 2006). In short, it removes the literary from the interpretation of literature. In events like Impromptu Speaking and Rhetorical Criticism, places where argumentation should be central, performance norms routinely trump argumentative concerns. As a result, the absence of a systematic, pedagogical focus leads to an overemphasis of argumentation in realms where argu-

ment is marginal and a disturbing lack of concern for argumentative development in events where it is vital.

Forensics as Liberal Art

In response to the perceived limitations of the laboratory metaphor, Aden (1991) offered a liberal arts perspective on forensics, claiming that the activity is "most educational…when it is viewed as a liberal art" (p. 101). He contrasts the scientific language of the laboratory metaphor and its dependence on existing knowledge with the independent, creative spirit of the liberal arts paradigm which empowers individuals to seek new answers and questions, Whereas the laboratory metaphor enjoined the argumentative perspective for theoretical grounding, the liberal arts approach sought rhetorical justification. According to Aden, placing rhetoric at the heart of forensic inquiry broadened the scope of legitimate forensic activity, and it empowered individuals by increasing the significance of the value of personal perspective. Given the place of rhetorical studies within the larger field of communication, the focus seems to be logical, pedagogical, and conveniently marketable. a rhetoric-centered approach seems more defensible than an argument-centered one in light of feminist and postmodern criticism. Teaching students to think critically and creatively in various rhetorical contexts would appear to be a valuable foundation for forensics pedagogy. However, the failure to inspire a systematic approach to forensic education and its profound lack of impact on forensic competition exceeds even the ineffectiveness of the laboratory argumentative model. Beyond Bartanen's 1998 article, few scholars have embraced the perspective in published form. And while many directors of forensics support the notion of forensics as both a liberal art and a laboratory, competitive practices generally mirror other concerns.

The liberal arts goal of fostering independent thinking is sadly lacking in several areas of individual-events competition. Current practice in impromptu speaking serves as an unfortunate example. Contemporary "impromptu" speakers attempt to exemplify generic "truths" drawn from, or perhaps somehow indirectly related to, quotations by choosing from lists of previously practiced examples. The event is so clearly example dependent that a speaker who attempts original thought through use of another means of support, like explanation, will undoubtedly suffer competitively. In fact, to attempt any strategy outside of the well-worn examples is to risk minor non-fluency, which in the competitive paradigm is akin to forensic suicide.

An area that traditionally emphasized creativity in the invention process is After-Dinner Speaking. Here, once again, the student of the liberal arts is discouraged. Judge critiques routinely reflect an insistence on problem-cause-solution formatting. Speakers who take the risk of not employing laugh lines every 5 to 10 seconds are often criticized for a lack of humor. As judges become more rigid in their fad-driven paradigms, critical and creative thinking are sacrificed on the altar of competition. Forensic practice does not merely fail to reward independent thinking; it often actively squelches it.

Forensic Education as Myth

> The time has come to stop deceiving ourselves and our administrators about the educational value of forensics. (Padrow, 1956, p. 206)

This quotation introduces Burnett, Brand and Meister's 2003 critique of forensic education. Interestingly, Padrow's quotation was offered a decade and a half before comprehensive national tournaments in individual events were held. Certainly, it was well before the preponderance of tournaments, journals, programs and program graduates that have emerged since the early 1970s. And consequently, it was well before the very practices and procedures against which the authors rail.

The educational-myth perspective posits that the "educational value of forensics" represents a rhetorical strategy designed to accomplish the following:

> housing the activity in departments of speech/communication, labeling forensics a 'co-curricular,' not 'extracurricular,' activity, attracting new students, soliciting funding for tournament travel, and even for pleading with universities not to eliminate entire speech/communication departments. (Burnett, Brand, & Meister, 2003, p. 12)

In an earlier article (2001), the authors argue that the structure and discourse of individual-event organizations emphasize competition to the exclusion of education. They note, competitive pressures create abuses in forensics" (pp. 107-108).

Anyone who has been around forensics very long can attest to the assertion that, indeed, ethical abuses have occurred and that their motivation, directly or indirectly, is most likely competitive in nature. Certainly, an emphasis on competition over education may contribute to unethical behavior. However, to discount the entirety of forensic education as myth requires substantial justification. In order to establish the myth, Burnett et al. (2003) theorize that the forensic educator functions as mythic hero, whose hard work in achieving competitive ends serves in the mythic framework as virtuous pedagogy, thus masking its true motive, which is competition. While the authors offer the myth as a compelling grand narrative, they fail to provide a single example of its use or development in the forensics community. No language evidence supports the educator a hero, or education as virtuous mask

assumptions. In fact, the stark reality of the examples offered to support the myth-- "staying up late working with students, calling for work sessions on weekends, discussing ballots in the van on a long ride home, or making changes in debate cases or speeches to improve the chances of winning at the next tournament" (p. 14)—actually undermine the mythic assertion. The claim that these activities are wholly competitive and therefore inherently not educational nor virtuous appears to be a hasty generalization founded in a mistrust of competition. Even though the authors claim to understand that competition can serve educational ends, their polarizing language and vilification of all things competitive presents a clearly dichotomous perception of the relationships between education and competition.

Hinck's (2003) response to Burnett, Brand and Meister should be required reading for forensic professionals. While agreeing with many of the criticisms of current forensic practices, Hinck dispels the "education myth" myth by delineating educational benefits related specifically to forensic competition and ones rooted more generally in competition itself. Studies by Rogers (2005) and Allen, Berkowitz, Hunt and Louden (1999) provide quantitative support for the educational benefits of forensic participation. In the face of an ill-defined myth, the tangible educational benefits of competitive forensics are reaffirmed. However, the forensic education as myth perspective serves as a cautionary reminder of the dangers of an over-competitive spirit.

Forensics as Athletic Competition

No one is arguing for forensics to be included as an Olympic event. And while these competitions share a common Greek heritage, and in more contemporary times over-enthusiastically blocked duos require more inordinate display of athletic prowess, forensics and athletics naturally occupy different fields of existence. Yet in the form of a simile, to say that forensics is like athletic competition is to articulate the predominant guiding force, both philosophically and pragmatically, in forensics today. Community indifference and inaction allow pedagogically unsound practices to flourish in contemporary forensic activity.

The absence of the athletic metaphor in forensic literature belies its pervasiveness in forensic activity. Forensic educators who may be reluctant to publicly endorse an athletic model support its persistence through practice. In athletic competition, the game itself is wholly self-sufficient. Football coaches, fans and analysts rarely discuss the educational value or learning outcomes of particular competitions. The competition is a well-established game that has provided entertainment and economic advantages for decades.

From its conception as a game, football has inherently involved competition. The same cannot be said of speech. People were expressing themselves for a variety of reasons long before speech competitions existed. When a team wins at football, it is understood that it has scored more points within the confines of a given game. But how does one win at speech? Since speech as an activity is not inherently competitive, it is reasonable to assume that objectives, rules and aesthetic ideals would need to be developed to define success in the speech-competition context. If the purpose of forensic activity is education, then competitive practices would need to be developed that foster achievement of that goal. Football will always be football.

But competition in speech may reference a variety of activities. The compelling question that demands our attention is at what are we competing? Unfortunately, through the years, the question has been answered with brief event descriptions, minimal rules, educational and enlightening convention panels, and tournament practices that tend to enhance the "playing of the game" while ignoring the pedagogical concerns of forensic educators. Athletics exists within the game, which is exactly the way that forensics has been treated. Regardless of what is being taught, the game and the competition, in and of itself, is seen as a worthy endeavor: What wins is good, and what is good, wins. Thus, from a Burkeian (1945) perspective, the forensic drama that ideally features the purpose of education through the agency of competition is upstaged by a drama whose purpose is winning. By allowing forensics to naturally devolve, forensic educators have opened the door for critiques like the one offered by Burnett, Brand and Meister. Valuable pedagogy does not inherently reside in speech competition. Our students are not blocking and tackling. Forensic pedagogy must be vigilantly nurtured by caring professionals.

The preponderance of unwritten rules represents a problem perpetuated by the indifference of the athletic perspective. Several researchers acknowledge the existence of subcultural norms that function as rules within the forensic community (For example, see Burnett, Brand and Meister, 2003; Hinck, 2003; Paine, 2005; VerLinden, 1997.) The use of a preview statement in limited-preparation and public-address events is a good example. Tournament rules generally do not mention such a statement, yet it has been established as a standard for more than three decades. Forensic organizations should either agree publicly to encourage the use of such a statement, or agree that the use of a preview is optional. In the absence of such a statement, fledgling programs and novice speakers are placed at an obvious disadvantage.

Certainly, the potential for abuse is magnified when one considered various nuances of particular events. A research question in rhetorical criticism, for instance, has emerged as an unwritten rule for many judges. The question of the educational value

of such a question over a well-reasoned thesis statement is one that has yet to be considered beyond convention panel presentations. Yet it is clearly a part of the evaluative criteria of several judges. Interestingly, while a question is being forced on students in rhetorical criticism, the clear thesis statement has all but disappeared from other forms of public address. Statements such as, "In order to better understand…" (and then, quickly, on to the preview) have replaced traditional thesis statements. These are offered by way of example to illustrate the phenomenon of unwritten rules. While their educational value might be questionable, or perhaps quite great – who knows?—they function within the community to reveal "insiders." Programs that can afford to travel across the country and whose numbers of students and judges are sufficient to identify emerging fads and trends greatly benefit from the unwritten nature of the rules. Unwritten rules also possess the potential to elevate individual judges' preferences to the level of criteria. And so, the whim of a particular judge trumps any kind of established pedagogical criterion. In the absence of such criteria, it is often much easier to learn who is good over what is good, which may partially account for the fact that familiar speakers receiver lower (better) ranks than unfamiliar ones (Richardson, 1994). An activity that lacks clear objectives, rules and ideals promotes hegemonic mediocrity.

An over emphasis of purely competitive ends may also lead to a disturbing isolation of students within the individual-events community. The very activity that potentially links students with significant issues and people can build a blinding hedge around the overly competitive. Hinck (2003) describes the dialectical tension that exists between the "public, community-oriented goal of our communication practices and the personal, or ego-oriented objective of competing for awards" (p. 69). Students may learn to view human tragedy as an opportunity for self-promotion. The Aristotelian notion of ethos gives way to the postmodern concept of methos. In Bitzer's (1968) terms, the exigence is not related to an honest crisis in the world that needs attention. The rhetoric instead is rooted in personal competitive success. In an era where the public voice is undergoing a profound credibility crisis, communication professionals are not helping by teaching students that issues are meant for selfish exploitation.

What are we teaching? A reality check is easily provided by exposing non-forensic audiences to forensic speeches. While our college classes are nearly always impressed by the content of the national final round speeches, the delivery is almost never appreciated. Over-enunciated phrases and overly polished verbal and nonverbal reactions sometimes elicit laughter, and not in after-dinner speaking. The competitive, more-is-better push is doing for individual events what it has done for NDT debate. These delivery choices represent responses to insular community norms. Students are being prepared for the next competition, not for public speaking in natural world contexts.

A myriad of other problems exist as a result of the predominance of the athletic perspective, not the least of which are ethical violations. Hinck's (2003) discussion of dialectical tensions in forensic activity highlights the difficult lines that forensic educators must draw. However, it is our contention that increased attention to rewarding those communicative efforts that reflect agreed-upon well-established pedagogical values will reduce dialectical tension and greatly increase the educational outcomes of forensic activity.

The distance between the forensic community's language and action is disturbing. Kay (1990) labeled it a "culture of self-contentment." A glance at the resolutions adopted at the Third National Developmental conference on Individual Events (Whitney, 1997) is insightful. The first resolution after the thanking of the hosts reads: "While competition and education are compatible, we believe that competitive ends that are exclusive of pedagogical ends are not conducive to forensics professionalism" (p. 3).

The Pedagogical Prerogative Perspective

It is the role and responsibility of each generation of directors of forensics to preserve the integrity of the activity as a unique learning environment and intensive teaching space. In this paper we assert the *Pedagogical Prerogative Perspective* as an epistemological foundation for an ontological product. The perspective is intended to celebrate and emphasize the philosophical foundation of forensics practice in order to promulgate the notion that the central concern of collegiate forensics is teaching communication in a fashion that meets the needs of exceptional students rather than a mechanism soley dedicated to "learning the value of competition." The activity engages the arts and sciences of oral interpretation, public address and argumentation/debate. In doing so, students are able to learn, through the study, training, and practice of these art forms, a wide variety of meaningful skills such as those articulated in the introduction to this paper. Yet, when a competitive paradigm is utilized as the primary lens through which a forensics program's value is assessed, the philosophical justification of forensics pedagogy receiving institutional support is problematized. More importantly, when competitive products are placed ahead of teaching priorities, then the value of forensics programs generally is problematized. Additionally, the products of forensics pedagogy are diminished, because students are not taught that competitive results are an act of the community honoring exceptional performance. Rather, as Burke conceived, our community often

teaches students to be "goaded by hierarchy" (Burke, 1984, p. xlii).

The *Pedagogical Prerogative Perspective* does not constitute the assertion of a wholly new idea. It is a device that seeks to answer the call of so many forensic educators, both present and published in the annuls of disciplinary literature, that sought to rectify the problematic relationship between educational and competitive goal seeking in the collegiate forensics. The *Pedagogical Prerogative Perspective* is a mechanism for emphasizing and articulating the fundamental purpose of collegiate forensics; an instrument for shaping the *practice* of collegiate forensics.

The perspective features three key elements: pedagogical prerogatives, reshaping forensics administration, and recognizing competitive results as a communal act of "honoring."

Pedagogical Prerogatives

As we stated earlier in this paper, "We do not join the chorus of voices who decry forensic competition. Rather, our contention is with competition divorced from virtuous pedagogy. We must ask, "What are we teaching?" Redefining events to include clearly designated pedagogical prerogatives rooted in communication, rhetorical and performance theory would answer this question. In 2006, the National Forensic Association adopted a comprehensive revision to the rules for Extemporaneous Speaking. At the end of the document that was presented to the membership for adoption, the Extemporaneous Speaking Committee included an addendum that stated, "The Extemporaneous Speaking Committee encourages the adoption of a set of pedagogical prerogatives in the form of educational objectives related to Extemporaneous Speaking." This addendum is reflective of the need for the activity to emphasize answers to the question, "what are we teaching?" The *Pedagogical Prerogative Perspective* encourages those of us who administer collegiate forensics programs and activities to take an active role in confirming the educational foundation for the activity in a specific and public manner. The development of teaching objectives for each individual event would be in line with current, and increasingly common, requirements in universities and colleges, as well as, state departments of education throughout the United States. In traditional curricular offerings, institutions commonly require instructors, departments, and/or colleges to specifically identify learning objectives or outcomes in each course and program. These are mechanisms of assessment. Two primaries forms of objectives exist. First, an *educational objective* is generally focused on the *instructor* behavior. Objectives are often articulated with language that emphasizes the content that the instructor will present or discuss during the course. Such statements shed light upon subjects and material to which students will be exposed during the course.

Yet, the second form, a *student learning outcome,* differs in that it focuses on *student* behavior as a product of teaching and instruction. Learning outcomes emphasize the demonstration of performance skills, concepts and theories that students will be able explain and employ, and specific content that students will present or develop such as a research project (Howard, G. & Stanny, C. J., 2005). The *Pedagogical Prerogative Perspective* emphasizes the notion of student learning outcomes as a key feature in forensics pedagogy because the statements ground the collective community in a standard set of educational goals. Like a traditional classroom, accountability for the success or failure of developing performance products that reflect these goals lies with the teacher and student. Yet, the implementation of pedagogical prerogatives in all individual events would diminish the impact and importance of unwritten conventions and ungrounded evaluative philosophies that have done so much to undermine the value of this activity. Such action would compel the community to look first to these statements in coaching, teaching, learning, performance and assessment. Additionally, answers to the question of "what are we teaching?" would be placed at the forefront of our collective consideration of each individual event. The pedagogical goals of each event would, therefore, shape the fashion in which students are trained and how evidence of successful teaching is assessed.

Operationalizing these ideas would require forensic organizations to clearly define the learning outcomes associated with each event. A delineation of the expected outcomes and evaluative criteria derived from them could serve as a valuable explanatory guide for students, judges, coaches and administrators. The sponsoring forensic organization would provide the mechanism for implementation, but one possibility is that the individual events community could borrow a page from the debate handbook and set a date for the release of the various event descriptions, learning outcomes, evaluative criteria, etc. each season. The authors are not endorsing the establishment of narrow, rigid, prescriptive criteria nor are we offering any event criteria at all. We suggest that the community development of well-written learning outcomes and criteria will produce forensic competition that rewards independent thinking, creativity and critical inquiry.

Reshaping Forensics Administration

Promoting forensics practice that emphasizes the speechmaking and developmental performance processes is at the heart of this element of the *Pedagogical Prerogrative Perspective*. For the collegiate forensics community at large, this entails administering competitive forensics experiences as *multi-*

institutional conference/classroom events. During the past three decades tournament experiences have increasingly moved toward fewer rounds, fewer judges, and, thus, fewer developmental performance opportunities for students. Additionally, the inclusion of non-competitive educational activities, such as lectures, discussion panels, and public debates, have become extremely rare. This shift is confounding given the unique educational opportunity that collegiate forensics presents to teachers and students. A forensics tournament has the potential to provide students with opportunities to present their work to instructors, teachers and scholars that are not employed by their institution. This configuration is certainly unique to forensics pedagogy. It is rare occasion indeed that a college basketball coach runs down to the opposing team's bench to provide some valuable feedback that, if accepted by the student athlete, may improve their performance skill set, knowledge or understanding. The uncommon nature of such an occurrence is precisely what makes collegiate forensics an activity that exists in a framework that stands in stark contrast to the athletic metaphor.

Collegiate forensics tournaments provide the opportunity for scholar-students to interact with and learn from dedicated faculty from other institutions. The theoretical structure of forensics competition justifies the descriptive phrase *multi-institutional conference/classroom events*. Yet, the conventional practice of administering forensics events is not commonly reflective of the philosophical foundation for the practice. Several national championship tournaments feature two judges in each preliminary round. Yet, this is an uncommon feature in the hundreds of invitational tournaments hosted by a multitude of institutions during the forensics season. The *Pedagogical Prerogative Perspective* encourages two actions in order to more strongly reflect the philosophical roots of the activity. First, as a community we should move back toward forensic tournament structures that provide more judges and more rounds of competition. The homogenization of tournament structures has diminished the experiential value of each individual event. The inclusion of unique features such as discussion panels, performance showcases or public debates within the time frame of an invitational tournament, would create a rich, memorable and potentially influential experience for students and coaches alike. At the very least, such inclusions would enrich the collective conversation about the fundamentals of the activity. Academic conferences have a long history of hosting a featured set of events such as NCA's Carroll Arnold Lecture Series. If we apply this structure to the model of a forensics tournament, then competitive rounds become the daily panel sessions and a tournament schedule is adjusted to accommodate the featured presentations or events.

We are not arguing that the importance of competitive rounds should be diminished by the inclusion of other activities. Rather, we are arguing that we, as a community, take full advantage of each *multi-institutional conference* by featuring more rounds, more judges and more conversation related to forensics pedagogy. When viewed from an institutional perspective, a collegiate forensics tournament is a special and unique learning environment. It is the call of the collegiate forensics community to make these events as substantitve and engaging as possible.

Competitive Results as an act of "honoring"

Each year the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences grants awards for Best Actor, Best Picture, Best Director, and even scientific and technical awards, such as the infamous 2007 accolade granted to Christien Tinsley, "for the creation of the transfer techniques for creating and applying 2D and 3D makeup known as "Tinsley Transfers" (AMPAS, 2008). Similarly the American Theatre Wing recognizes outstanding stage performance, direction and production at the Tony Awards each year. These accolades often function as a motivating factor for performers, directors and producers to achieve exceptional performance results. Despite the very fact of the existence of bodies that recognize achievements on stage and screen, we would be justly challenged to produce significant evidence proving that the philosophical motivation of performances developed for the stage and screen are primarily competitive. The actress Reese Witherspoon eloquently framed this notion in her 2006 Best Actress acceptance speech at the Oscar Awards stating, "I want to say that Johnny Cash and June Carter had a wonderful tradition of honoring other artists and musicians and singers. And I really feel that tradition tonight."

The communication discipline has long been most closely associated with the phrase "arts and sciences." Hundreds of colleges and universities throughout the United States include the term "arts" or the phrase "arts and sciences" in their name. These symbols are reflective of the very foundation of rhetoric and communication studies. The term "arts" is commonly defined as, "subjects of study primarily concerned with the processes and products of human creativity and social life" (New Oxford American Dictionary, 2007). "Science" is defined as, "a systematically organized body of knowledge on a particular subject" (New Oxford American Dictionary, 2007). Clearly, neither of these terms includes any reference to *competition* as an inherent aspect of communication studies or pedagogy.

The discipline does not begin with an initial consideration of competition. So too, must our conception of intercollegiate forensics begin in a framework that excludes a valuation of competition. The central purpose for the inclusion of forensics in departmen-

tal and college programming is to provide a space for the practice and products of forensics pedagogy. Yet, during the last two hundred years, and especially the most recent thirty (as higher education resources have become more heavily scrutinized and requiring defense of allocation) the conversation and perspective of the forensics community have shifted to strongly competitive considerations. This move continues to threaten the very existence of the activity at the collegiate level. As programs are threatened, DOF's and other advocates for the activity often defend programs based on their competitive results. This defense does not translate well into a college-wide or university-wide discussion of "value based on available resources." Indeed, if there is any aspect of collegiate forensics that is deeply rooted in competition, it is the constant battle for resources and the preservation of programs.

This element of the *Pedagogical Prerogative Perspective* is one that encourages forensics educators to teach the same basic philosophy concerning awards that is celebrated by the Pulitzer prize board, which selects the winners that distinguished set of awards each year. As Rich Oppel (2008) wrote, "For Pulitzer board members, the hope is that winning a prize will be a beginning, not a final wreath on a winner's head."

The *Pedagogical Prerogative Perspective* has the potential to reconfigure our conception and practice of collegiate forensics. Adhering to this perspective will result in a significant refinement of current practice that strengthens the activity for years to come. The full consideration of the perspective emphasizes that competitive results will become the honoring element of the activity, instead of the cause for engaging in the activity in the first place.

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New Wine in Old Wineskins
Questioning the Value of Research Questions in Rhetorical Criticism

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Recent years have seen a trend toward the inclusion and heightened valuing of research questions in competitive Rhetorical Criticism (Communication Analysis). The inclusion of this content element is quite a new phenomenon on the national-level competitive circuit. In fact, the absence of such research questions in competitive speeches was highlighted by Ott as recently as 1998. But by 2007-2008, the inclusion of a research question was established as essentially *de rigueur* for a vast number of judges. For example, consider the ballots received this past year by a competitively successful rhetorical criticism entry I coached. At one tournament, all five ballots written in response to this speech (2 in Prelims, 3 in Finals) wrote the research question at the very top of the ballot. For four of the five judges, their assessment of the handling of this question was clearly central to the scores they assigned. Three questioned the quality of the question: (1) "this is a big question to ask based on this one incident," (2) "Islamaphobia: relevant, but a bit out of the public consciousness (for a while now)," and (3) "your research question needs clearer, specific focus – you could apply it to *many* artifacts. How can you focus the question on this specific artifact?" The fourth judge meanwhile focused on the adequacy of the question's answer, stating that the response needed to be "extended." Ballot comments about this speech's research question continued throughout the year – requiring this aspect of the speech to be the single most frequently rewritten and rethought aspect of the speech across the length of the competitive season.

To borrow language from many Persuasive speakers, "this is not an isolated incident." As both a coach and a frequent tab-room worker, I have read innumerable ballots written by critics judging this event. Research questions have clearly become a crucial component in many judging paradigms. Given the precipitous rise of this speech component, it is important that we assess the nature and worth of emphasizing research questions in competitive rhetorical criticism. In order to do so, we will: first, establish a philosophical perspective from which to answer the question (we will privilege the vision of forensics as an "educational liberal art"); second, speculate about the reasons why this element has so quickly gained favor among judges; third, assess the degree to which this element meshes with other required elements of competitive speeches in this category; and fourth and finally, propose a paradigm shift.

A Philosophical Grounding

The philosophy we accept dictates the forensics world we build. Ott (1998) stresses this fact, opening his article with a quotation from Faules (1968), which states: "At some time during a teacher's career he [sic] will be asked to explain why he [sic] is asking students to perform in a certain way or to carry out a particular task. His answer will determine whether he is an educator or [simply] a trainer, whether he himself is educated, and whether he has considered the reason for his beliefs. The educator knows the 'why' of what he does, and to him theory and conceptual knowledge take precedence over conditioned responses....Pedagogy is generated by theory, and theory comes from a philosophy which is grounded in certain values (p. 1)."

Perhaps the most popular metaphor used over the years to frame the discussion of forensics-as-education has been McBath's "educational laboratory" (1975). For example, Burnett, Brand, and Meister (2003) point to Ulrich (1984) and Whitney (1997) as examples of community members who have relied on this metaphor. But while the laboratory metaphor can be interpreted in quite positive ways (particularly if we envision the laboratory as a place where exploration and risks are dared within a safe environment), this metaphor becomes problematic if we envision the laboratory as a site where "one right answer" (a single Platonic "Truth") is envisioned as the ultimate end sought. Thus, Aden's definition of forensics as a "liberal art" (1991) may be a more satisfying way to conceptualize the field. In any case, a significant numbers of scholars have stressed the significance of educational goals in forensics. Others, however, question this vision. Instead, some believe it is better described as a competitive playing field – a world in which education is an appealing shibboleth but competition is a full-blooded reality. Thus, Burnett, Brand and Meister (2003) title their article "Winning is Everything: Education as Myth in Forensics." Providing an explanation for this title, they write: "current practices in forensics focus on competition and not on an often-referenced education model....although forensics can be viewed as both an educational and a competitive activity, the practice of competition co-opts education. In Burke's terms, through the focus on com-

petition, we have developed a 'trained incapacity' to focus on the merits of education....Our training at best blinds, and at the least clouds, the mythic "educational" virtues of the forensics community (p. 12)."

In the face of these two visions of our activity, this essay is committed to a value paradigm which asserts the primacy of educational values over competitive values. While the activity undeniably is highly competitive in nature, my concern is with what I see as the "ultimate justification" for forensics. The position staked out here asserts that the value of forensics is massively diminished if it is defined primarily as an act of competition. This is not to deny that competitive is a powerful and valuable teacher of many valuable concrete skills and mental perspectives. However, I believe that competitive goals are too often privileged to the detriment of more important ethical, practical, emotional, spiritual, and life-learning educational goals. Thus, as applied to the question at hand, this paper seeks to determine whether or not the inclusion of research questions in competitive rhetorical criticism: (1) does or does not make "logical sense" within the context of critical writing at this level of educational growth among students, and (2) does or does not help students to better prepare for graduate work in communication studies (or related fields).

Why Have Judge-Critics Embraced the Use of Research Questions?

The answers suggested here in response to this question are at best speculative. I have not yet attempted to gather any empirical data on this subject, and so I am relying on informal conversations, a reading of the extant literature, a study of various ballots written by judges, and my own instincts in order to reach my conclusions. Tentatively, I believe that the circuit's turn toward research questions is based in part upon: (1) a general desire for change in the event/activity, (2) a desire to deepen the level of thinking (cognitive complexity) demanded by the event, (3) a desire to connect students more deeply to the scholarly traditions of our discipline, and (4) a desire to clarify the extant judging criteria (an urge for additional standardization).

First, humans desire change. While we appreciate continuity and tradition, we also want to try new things and take new paths. We need to believe that we have new insights to offer, new discoveries to make, new vistas to look out over, new roads others have not seen before that deserve to be traveled. When it comes to academia, schools periodically create new "Five Year Plans" that project goals and objectives for the future that will take them beyond where they stand at present. Academic departments periodically review their curricula and major/minor tracks with an eye toward updating and enhancing them. Instructors regularly rethink the individual courses they teach, looking for ways (both minor and major) to improve them. This general urge certainly applies to the educational laboratory of forensics at large as well as to the written and unwritten "rules" the community employs in relation to the individual speaking events. We do not want to "do the same thing forever." Nor do we need to. Nor should we. In fact, even the quickest glance at the field of rhetorical criticism as an academic discipline demonstrates the need to evolve our practices. As noted by Foss (1989, p. 71), the modern-day pursuit of rhetorical criticism can be (in a certain sense) dated to its birth in 1925 with the publication by Herbert A. Wichelns of his article "The Literary Criticism of Oratory." For the next forty years or so, Neo-Aristotelianism constituted the virtually singular track critics trod in their work. But this all changed in the mid-1960's, triggered by the work of Edwin Black. As a field, we discovered that there were a lot more ways to look at rhetoric, a lot more tools available to dissect it, a lot more questions to ask about it, and a lot more insights to be derived from it. Today, rhetorical critics revel in and rely on the freedom to study a vast array of rhetorical artifacts from a plethora of perspectives. These perspectives are typically grounded in the work or other critics, but each work of criticism is a unique blend of past knowledge, a particular rhetorical artifact, and the unique insights of the particular critic. No critic is "locked in" to the boundaries established by another. To a very meaningful degree, each writer is free to write and rewrite the rules they individually play by. Thus, as it relates to competitive forensics, it makes sense that our community "bucks against traditional constraints" and wants to find new ways to pursue this event.

Second, in our role as educators we genuinely yearn to teach our students more. One aspect of this desire is particularly relevant here. Adherents of the traditional Western style of thinking, we want our students to demonstrate their ability to think in depth by showing us that they can connect the fragments of their thoughts on any given subject in a linear and maximally-realized way. Including a research question, at first glance, appears to be a way to demand greater coherence in speeches. It's presence implies that the student has followed a logical and mentally progressive process in writing the speech: they must have begun with an artifact, which then gave birth to a research question, which then caused the student to search for and locate the "ideal tool" by which to answer that question, which then demanded an application of the tool to the artifact, which then (through the application process) produced a clear and coherent answer to the question. This is, after all, the research paradigm associated with the "hard sciences" we often idealize and seek to emulate. Littlejohn (1983) defines the process of academic inquiry accordingly:

> Inquiry involves processes of systematic, disciplined ordering of experience that lead to the development of understanding and knowledge….Inquiry is focused; it involves a planned means or method and it has an expected outcome. The investigator is never sure of the exact outcome of inquiry and can anticipate only the general form or nature of the results. These scholars also share a general approach to inquiry that involves three stages. The first and guiding stage of all inquiry is *asking questions*. Gerald Miller and Henry Nicholson [1976], in fact, believe that inquiry is 'nothing more…than the process of asking interesting, significant questions…and providing disciplined, systematic answers to them.'…the second stage of inquiry is *observation*….The third stage of inquiry is *constructing answers*. Here, the scholar attempts to define, to describe and explain, to make judgments. This stage, which is the focus of this book, is usually referred to as *theory*. (p. 9)

This general process substantially reflects the standardized outline we expect students to employ when writing competitive rhetorical criticism speeches today: ask a question, observe the phenomenon (apply a rhetorical method to a rhetorical artifact as a lens through which to view its properties), and then answer the question (derive critical conclusions). Thus, many judges may well believe that they are enhancing the education of the students they critique by requiring them to present clear and pointed research questions. In this context, the use of research questions is perceived by judge-critics as a valuable addition to the educational laboratory.

Third, as rhetorical scholars ourselves, we seek to pass on the knowledge of our field to our students. We want to aid them as they begin the journey toward becoming rhetoricians. Ott (1998) reminds us that "[t]he academic discipline of speech communication and the activity of intercollegiate forensics are natural allies….Collectively, these two traditions represent a unique intersection of theory and practice (p. 53)." Accordingly, LaMaster (2005) observes that "Rhetorical Criticism is modeled after academic rhetorical criticism" (p. 32). At some level, we hope and intend that participating in this competitive event will better prepare our students for possible future study in the discipline. The value of working with this event for students who are considering going on to graduate school is often stressed – and indeed, a significant number of forensics competitors ultimately pursue careers in the area of rhetorical scholarship.

A fourth reason also can be suggested as to why judge-critics have embraced the inclusion of research questions in competitive speeches. As participants in forensics, we feel a constant pressure toward higher levels of standardization. We want to be able to evaluate students as fairly as possible. We feel pressure to offer "mainstream" comments that demonstrate our understanding of and adherence to "unwritten rules" that enhance the do-ability of coaching and the predictability of results. As a rising number of our colleagues talk about and vote on the basis of research questions, the likelihood that we also will adopt this practice increases. Thus, it becomes even more important that we evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of this trend now, before it becomes even more deeply entrenched in our collective judging paradigm.

Evaluating the "Fit" of the Research Question in the Practice of Competitive Rhetorical Criticism

In order to conduct this evaluation, it is essential to begin with Littlejohn's preceding description of the inquiry process. By analyzing the progression he describes, we can observe that two critical concepts are central to it: (1) a linear time progression, and (2) a step-to-step freedom to make choices at any given stage of the process depending on what has happened in the preceding stage. I will argue that both of these essential components of the inquiry process are impossible to achieve in a genuine way within the current standardized rhetorical criticism model.

First, the inquiry process mandates that the research question pre-date the selection not only of the general body of theory the researcher employs (Marxism, feminism, or whatever), but also – and much more importantly – precedes the selection of the particular rhetorical tenets ("methodological elements" we often call them in forensics) the critic employs in relation to the general body of theory. Thus, the research question points the way to a general critical perspective, but does not immediately mandate the selection of particular "methodological constructs" (those appear later in the process). An extended quotation from Ott (1998) helps to clarify the point here:

> Modern textbooks on rhetorical criticism survey several methods. These methods are unified, not by a set of narrow rhetorical tenets, but by a general outlook. In *Rhetoric and Popular culture*, for instance, Brummett identifies five key methods: marxist, feminist and psychoanalytic, dramatistic/narrative, media-centered, and culture-centered. Brock, Scott, and Chesebro's *Methods of Rhetorical Criticism* is organized around the methods of fantasy-theme, neo-Aristotelianism, dramatistic, narrative, generic, feminist, and deconstructionist. Similarly, Foss's *Rhetorical Criticism* covers cluster, neo-Aristotelianism, fantasy-theme, feminist, generic, ideological, narrative, and pentadic….All of these methods exist, not as a narrow set of con-

> trolling terms, but as a general perspective on discourse. Genre criticism generally examines the shared expectations created by classes of texts…and so forth. *This scholarly view of method has two important consequences. First, each method can produce an infinitude of distinct, yet valuable analyses. A feminist criticism of a text, for instance, might look at repressed desire, or phallic representations, or sexist language, for there is no single, prescribed way to do feminist criticism. Second, any number of methods could be brought to bear on a single text, each yielding its own valuable insights.* (p. 62, emphasis added)

Only after the critic selects her or his general method (their broad critical outlook) does she or he start to dissect the artifact, studying it closely in order to then identify the particular critical constructs that will be useful in order to dissect this particular artifact from this particular general stance. This brings us to the second key issue at stake in our discussion: the concept of intellectual freedom. To reiterate Ott once more, "a feminist criticism of a text, for instance, might look at repressed desire, or phallic representations, or sexist language, for there is no single, prescribed way to do feminist criticism" (p. 62, emphasis again added). The writer-critic must be free, based on their analysis of the rhetorical text at hand, to make choices about which specific rhetorical constructs will and will not be essential in order to unlock certain aspects of the text (not all aspects) from this particular critical angle, with no presumption being made that this is the "only" viable angle, or even necessarily the "best" angle. In fact, the words "only" and "best" are invalid and intellectually stunting descriptors of the task being attempted.

Rhetorical criticism, as practiced in competitive speeches, robs the research process of both its temporal flow and its intellectual freedom. We require that students model their work after that of a more "established" scholar. Accordingly, we require that they select "a model" and use only the tenets (steps, concepts, components) directly employed by that earlier scholar when that scholar analyzed some other artifact. Ott (1998) again illuminates this process, noting that "what passes as method in forensics is simply one critic's analysis of a particular instance of discourse. Although scholarly critics use methods, such as the ideological perspective, their analyses are themselves not methods (pp. 62-62)." In other words, "feminism" is a "method" – but the particular concepts used by author Jane Doe to study the feminist aspects of Artifact One do not in and of themselves constitute a "rhetorical method." The pitfalls inherent in this tendency to misdefine the word "method" are also noted by Ott, when he explains that any given author "identifies certain principles at work in the examined discourse, but *those principles are not a method*. They are the scholar's critical observations, and when a student uses those observations as a method, the student critic is, in effect, pirating someone else's critical observations concerning a specific rhetorical artifact and forcing those observations to account for another instance of discourse" (p. 63, emphasis added). Thus, by defining the phrase "rhetorical method" in this manner, the following holes in the intellectual process inevitably arise.

First, students become hopelessly tangled in the intellectual time-progression they should be following. They are unavoidably locked into an infinitely regressive circle of action. They cannot choose a question then choose a (general) rhetorical method then choose relevant constructs, because once they get to stage three (choosing relevant constructs) they discover that those concepts have already been chosen for them. They can't choose constructs that fit their research question, especially as that question applies to the artifact they want to study. Instead, they must follow the lead of the earlier author. And that earlier author was trying to answer a particular research question of their own in relation to a particular artifact of their own choosing. Logically, the only way the student can coherently enter this circuit is to use the same research question the original author pursued, and to apply it to a rhetorical artifact that is as similar as possible to the original rhetorical artifact. Doing this is difficult at best and impossible in toto. And when the student tries to do anything else, the process disintegrates completely. How can they possibly answer a different question about a different artifact using the same constructs? Again, Ott explains this well:

> Competitive RC is still caught in the 1960s model of methodological pluralism. Although student criticisms are characterized by a wide variety of theories, the overall approach to RC continues to entail a narrow and reductionistic conception of methods and to be animated by method. In forcing a narrow set of principles gleaned from a specific rhetorical analysis to account for the rhetoric they are analyzing, student critics tend to fall into one of two traps. On the one hand, many students mangle a critic's controlling principles until they fit the discourse they are analyzing. Some students, on the other hand, disfigure a discourse until it fits the controlling principles found in a published rhetorical analysis. Hence, students shred their artifact by ignoring language that does do [sic] not fit the method and by quoting textual fragments out of context to create a perfect correspondence between text and method. Competitive rhetorical criticisms tend to lack any real explanatory power because they force the practice to fit the theory, or the theory to fit the practice. (p. 65)

Locked into the use of another author's "method" (as the term is misdefined), student's must resolve the time-progression problem by abandoning the ideal of freedom. They must march lock-step with the author whose work they emulate. Thus, grasping one horn of the dilemma, students who seek to answer their artificially-duplicated research questions can only replicate the same answer discovered by the original author. The student can only produce "unimaginative and unenlightening criticism" (Ott, 1998, p. 63). The only alternative is to grasp the other horn of the conundrum and distort the tool and/or the artifact in a way which produces a "new answer" generated by critical misrepresentation. Neither horn is educationally appealing.

It is important to note that Ott observed this problem arising prior to our contemporary addiction to the research question. For him, it is generated by our misdefinition of the term "method" alone. And I agree with him. But I take the position here that this problem is significantly exacerbated by the movement toward including research questions. At an earlier time in our field's history, students and coaches at some level "understood" that competitive RCs were inevitably emulative acts of learning. They have always been similar to the ancient practice of "learning by imitation." This style of teaching has a long and respectable history in our field. It dates back to the school of speech founded by Isocrates in 392 B.C.E., at which students relied heavily on imitating models in order to develop their own skills (Golden, Coleman, Berquist and Sproule, 2003, p. 83). In the same way, competitive rhetorical criticism has long encouraged students to copy others first (rely on the clusters of critical terms recognized scholars in the field have shaped), learn from that, then go on to do more "original" work. But our demand that students use research questions (as well as the relatively recent escalation in the time allotted to "critical conclusions") produces a significant shift in our mental imaging of the game. Students are now being told that they must produce original questions and reach original answers – but that they can only do so by using absolutely unoriginal clusters of critical concepts ("methods") developed by somebody else to take some other intellectual journey. We are asking students to do the ultimately un-doable.

Proposing a Paradigm Shift

At least as recently as the early 1980's, the typical competitive rhetorical criticism speech employed a largely "imitative" approach to the study of rhetorical theory. It relied on requiring students to imitate/emulate the critical process followed by established scholars in the field in order to learn through modeling. But in recent years, as we have de-emphasized the importance of detailed "application steps" and escalated the prominence of "critical conclusions," as we have shifted away from canonical "mainstream" or "previously discussed" rhetorical artifacts and toward the study of artifacts typified by "recency, shock value, and obscurity" (Ott, 1998, p. 55), we have moved further and further away from a primarily imitative approach to writing competitive rhetorical criticisms and evolved toward a writing model that edges closer to the academic inquiry process. This evolution is clearly apparent in our recent efforts to graft the research question (an element central to the academic inquiry process) onto the competitive prototype. Accordingly, we are currently attempting (consciously or unconsciously) to reap the benefits of two quite different types of teaching/learning approaches: the "old" imitation-based style and an emerging "academic inquiry" style. While either model in and of itself has value, the two simply do not blend very well – and students who attempt to travel down both paths at once are very likely to end up writing speeches which distort or misrepresent the learning process, the actual "process-as-experienced" chronology of their work, their understanding of theory, their operational definitions of critical constructs, their selection and interpretation of data from the artifact, and the conclusions they attempt to reach.

I believe that we must abandon the attempt to reconcile the irreconcilable and choose between these two models. Or rather, we should make room in this competitive event for students to choose (based on their personal and individual levels of expertise, based on their personal and individual learning needs) which of the two writing models to employ when constructing any given speech.

There is no reason why every single rhetorical criticism speech needs to cleave to exactly the same writing format. If the goal of forensics is in fact to educate students (we return to the philosophical roots established for this paper at this point), then we need to coach and judge all competitive events based on their ability to enable student learning. Ultimately, I believe that we've gotten our priorities turned around. Overall, forensics events have evolved to the point that a single ideal unwritten prototype tends to define our thinking relative to any given event. This prototype tells us in great detail exactly what the structure, content elements, delivery, research base, topic choice and so on of any given speech in any given competitive category "should be." These standardized prototypes make it easier for us to coach any given event, easier for us to judge any given event, and easier for students to "learn the rules to win" in any given event. But since when is education supposed to be about making things "easy?" Granted, any student who follows the prototype will learn "something." But there are so many things that the prototype cannot teach – and so many students who will learn the prototype, perfect it, and then ask (in the words of the old Peggy Lee song): "Is that all there is?" The answer, of

course, is that is not all there is. There is so much more to learn, if we'll just give ourselves permission to teach it and our students permission to immerse themselves in it.

Which brings us to a proposal. Let us make room for at least two different prototypes in the event we call "Rhetorical Criticism" ("Communication Analysis"). Students who feel that they can learn more from the imitative approach at any given point in their career should be allowed (better yet, encouraged) to revert to the writing style of the early 1980's, when comparatively more time and effort were invested in the "application" step of the speech, research questions were not expected, and critical conclusions (which play a minor role in published journal articles anyway) were minor or nonexistent. Students who employ this model could "learn from the masters" and dig deep into a set of critical constructs deemed coherent by an established scholar. They would be held accountable for demonstrating a clear, coherent, and detailed ability to understand and apply a limited set of critical constructs. Yet, even as we consider returning to this model, it is important that such a return should ideally attempt to address and resolve some of the problems noted by scholars at that time. For example, as noted by Givens (1994, p. 31), Murphy (1988) bemoaned the fact that, even twenty years ago, too much speech time was being devoted to the explanation and building of method and not enough to actual analysis and application. According to Murphy, as of 1988 "judges want[ed] an introduction to the method, an explanation of the method, an application of the method, and methodological conclusions (p. 4)." As a result, according to Givens (1994, p. 31), competitors made "the methodology, not the artifact, the focus of their speeches." A return to a model which eliminates research questions and de-emphasizes critical conclusions would still face the challenge of optimally balancing the explanation vs. the application of theory.

On the other hand, students should also have a second choice. They should be able to write speeches which reflect a full and genuine use of the inquiry process if they so choose. These students would produce work highly similar to what we see published in our professional journals. They would start with a research question, select a "method" (defined as feminism, Marxism, genre criticism, or the like), then select a set of specific critical constructs which they personally are convinced will operationalize that method for the particular artifact they have chosen, then apply these constructs, then draw critical conclusions. In other words, the crucial difference between this second model and the style we currently employ on the circuit lies in where the precise list of sub-steps or critical constructs comes from. Under this model, I propose that we abandon the search for a particular article or book chapter written by somebody else which offers up a pre-digested set of "steps." These "steps" are in any case a sort of Holy Grail which many authors don't really offer, even though forensics conventions and terminology compel us to look for these "concrete lists." These conventions pressure us to deduce or identify a "set of steps" which often aren't there in the original article to begin with. If we simply abandon the search for the "perfect list" or the "ideal article" – if we rethink our definition of and expectations concerning what constitutes a "critical method" – then we can clear the way to genuine critical inquiry. Students can create their own "lists of steps," select their own clusters of "critical constructs," and thus be empowered to ask and answer research questions in a much more genuine way.

Ultimately, we are drawn back to the question of what philosophy we wish to be guided by. Are we really just "trainers" who can coach students to follow a set of rules in order to win awards? Or are we in fact educators, who are determined to offer each student who comes to us an optimal opportunity to learn as much as possible from as many different angles as possible in order to develop a cognitive groundwork which will serve them well as they move on toward the graduate schools (possibly) and careers (probably) and lives (definitely) which will follow the brief span of their undergraduate competitive careers? Consciously or unconsciously, willingly or unwillingly, every choice we make as coaches contributes to the answering of this question – for the circuit at large, and for the individual programs we are invested in. Whether or not we include research questions in Rhetorical Criticism is just one small piece of this puzzle. We are certainly not defined as teachers, or as a community, by the way we respond to this one "narrow" conundrum. But the way we approach the answering of this question, wherever we ultimately take our stand, forces us to confront basic issues we cannot ignore. How can we refine any given event to ensure that it makes logical and theoretical "sense?" How can we make sure that each event exists not in "competitive limbo" but rather in relation to our general field of study? How can we use each event to teach our students things they don't already know and skills that will serve them well later? What responsibilities do we bear as educators?

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Performing for the Audience
Putting the Public Back Into Individual Events Training

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Abstract

Forensics would benefit from utilizing more nontraditional judges at tournaments. The paper argues for creating more diverse judging pools. Specifically, the benefits and challenges of including community judges are addressed. Although the issue of including more nontraditional judges has been raised in the literature on debate, there has been less discussion in the Individual Events community.

Why is it Important to Bring the Public Back into Forensics?

What is the true purpose of forensics? For some speech and debate participants, there seems to be an obsession with winning (Greenstreet, 1997). However, surely forensics' genuine goal is more about learning important communication skills and less about winning. In addition, coaches would argue forensics should play a prominent role in teaching students important "real world" skills (see Derryberry, 1991) to succeed in their academic, professional, and personal lives – research, teamwork, perseverance, critical analysis. Participation in forensics should teach students about the issues of the day, expose students to important literature, and prepare students to present in a variety of professional settings. Forensics should be about preparation for life! As such, there is a need to put renewed emphasis on the benefits accrued from participating in forensics. In addition, the forensics discipline should work to foster the notion of public discourse among competitors.

One strategy to center forensics more in the public realm would be to include more community, or nontraditional, judges at tournaments. A community or nontraditional judge is defined as a person who has either limited training in contest judging or limited current experience in judging (Bartanen, 1994). Weiss (1985) claims that the forensics community remains relatively hidden, that far too few community members ever see a speech and/or debate performance. Of course, using additional nontraditional judges does present some challenges, but on the whole students benefit from outside perspectives. Community judges provide a fresh look at the activity and their presence can remind both students and coaches of the importance of audience analysis. The tendency to overlook the vital role of audiences in forensics training has been noted as a frequent mistake (Derryberry, 1991). Hence, providing a more diverse judging pool would put the audience front and center and provide opportunities for speakers, interpreters, and debaters to get experience communicating with a variety of listeners.

Additionally, forensics is not a private activity, nor should it exist in a vacuum (Weisz, 1985). However, without the energy and ideas offered by nontraditional judges, the forensics community can become isolated and even inaccessible. As such, it is important to critique the forensics activity from time to time. Hawkins (1991, as quoted in Derryberry, 1991) argues that "forensics must constantly justify and defend itself against budget cuts, career-obsessed students, and apathetic administrators." The forensics community must continually ask important questions about its practices and purpose.

Furthermore, among traditional judges "technique" sometimes trumps delivery, organization, writing skills, or subject matter. Traditional judges are increasingly homogeneous in their judging expectations (Bartanen, 1994). Weiss (1985) writes that "weird practices luxuriate in rank profusion, unchecked by the vigorous pruning which public exposure would require." In other words, in a closed system, winning techniques often become norm-based and it is important to question "norms" to understand how forensics relates to life outside the tournament circuit.

Some of the norms that have developed over the years in forensics include the following: rapid delivery; reliance on an over abundance of sources; transitional movement between main points in a speech; and the almost obligatory use of crisp and appropriate book technique. If one were to dare break from the norm, s/he might even question the use of books at all, and if one does choose to use a book, what is considered an appropriate book? What color should it be? What size? There are also unwritten rules about dress and expectations for literature, organizational formats, and topic choices. Additionally, the forensics community seems to be confused regarding the necessity of an implications section in Informative Speeches or if it is necessary to include some type of political commentary in a literature program. There is also an ongoing debate regarding what organizational pattern is best for an Impromptu Speech—a 3-1 or 2-2 format? Community judges help us to recognize the tacit norms of forensics and give us reason to consider the purpose and value of these practices.

Another question that should be asked is can we perform our pieces in public? And how would they be received? Our students need to be able to adapt to and connect with their audience. Are our performers anticipating their audience? Are they adapting to the audience during their performance? Do they respect the audience's decisions? In addition, it is important that students remember performance is an art, not a science. Our students must be willing to admit that others are often right and be able to accept criticism regardless of the source.

Reasons for Including More Community/ Nontraditional Judges

Community judges increase educational opportunities by providing a 'real world' perspective in the round. While some critics of community judges assume such judges are incompetent, no empirical evidence demonstrates that nontraditional judges are less capable than traditional judges of critiquing individual events (Bartanen, 1994). Diversifying the judging pool would expose the students to a greater array of opinions and ideas regarding their performance. Surely one of the purposes of forensics is to teach students how to speak to diverse audiences and how to adapt speeches for particular audiences. Community judges 'force' students to conduct an audience analysis and to consider the public.

Utilizing community judges also provides an opportunity to create connections with the larger community. Further, judges from the community will be likely to discuss their experiences with other community members, thus providing important publicity for forensics programs, which could result in greater support for the activity.

Third, nontraditional judges enhance cultural diversity. One important step to increasing diversity in participation is to increase the diversity of the judging pool. Judging diversity provides important role models and listeners who share cultural backgrounds. A diverse judging pool might also serve to welcome more participants from underserved communities. Additionally, nontraditional judges are more likely to offer new ways of understanding and performing in forensics (Bartanen, 1994).

Finally, instating community judges means the forensics activity will be able to give as well as receive. Insofar as forensic performances are exemplary, they should be made public. Insofar as speech and literary content may be enriching, it should be shared. Going public and creating a community discourse can help the audiences as well as the participants (Weiss, 1985).

Reasons for Including More Community /Nontraditional Coaches in Forensics

Community members might also be useful in coaching roles. According to Boylan (1995), forensics programs receive relatively little support from community judges. Additionally, when community members are recruited, they are often uncomfortable jumping into a round as a judge or have inflexible schedules. Regardless of these challenges, they do have important insights to share with forensics participants. Community coaches can attend squad meetings and/or forensics showcases to provide critique and offer suggestions. In addition, after some time as a coach, some individuals may decide to begin judging, thus increasing the judging pool. Plus, students often complain about the lack of personal coaching time, so adding community coaches could help to alleviate this problem.

Who Might Be a Community Judge?

Forensics coaches may find interested community members in a variety of arenas. College professors and staff provide an immediate pool from which to draw coaches and judges. Certain departments, including Communication, Political Science, Theatre, English, Career Preparation, and Law/Pre-Law are logical first contacts, but qualified faculty may reside in any department on campus. High school teachers may also be interested in assisting with collegiate forensics. Community organizations including the Rotary, Toastmasters, League of Women Voters, American Association of University Women, and Chamber of Commerce may provide pools of community participants. In addition, professionals such as attorneys, elected officials, business leaders, and members of the religious community can provide useful insights. Local theatre groups could be helpful as well. Parents of past forensics competitors can be effective coaches and judges, particularly if they were involved their own children's forensics careers. Even former students can be useful community assistants. If a program chooses to use students, it is advisable to use students who have graduated, and therefore are not immediate peers of the competitors, and have had some experience and/or training in performance. With any kind of community participant, however, it is assumed s/he will have had some knowledge of, experience with, or training in performance activities.

Other Methods for Bringing the Public Back to Forensics

Speaking, interpreting, and debating before a variety of public audiences ranging from literature classes, political science seminars, service clubs, and religious organizations would be another method for giving performers experience in adapting to a variety of audiences (Derryberry, 1991). On our campus at the end of the spring semester, we host a Forensics Showcase to highlight our students and to provide an opportunity for them to perform for a different and much larger audience. Open audience performances can be a valuable method for seeking audience feedback and gaining a new perspective on a

topic. Some forensics programs also schedule their students to present their informative or prose, for example, for business and community groups (Derryberry, 1991).

Challenges Posed by Community Judges

Some critics claim community judges do a disservice to our students because such judges do not 'understand' forensics. Regardless of one's viewpoint on the inclusion of community judges, it is true that all nontraditional judges share one common trait – they tell the contestant how a "normal" person would respond to their effort. This vital perspective helps to ground forensics experience in actual life experience.

Despite beliefs to the contrary, research reveals that traditional and nontraditional judges use a similar paradigm when evaluating students. According to Evans (1963), as published by Evans & DeLozier (1966), in ranking a series of orations, the decisions of groups of undergraduate college students with no formal speech courses or with one speech course correlated significantly with the decisions of a group of speech teachers. In other words, differently trained evaluators judge speeches in similar manners.

Another challenge might be that the nontraditional judge lacks expertise on an event. This challenge can be met by providing training and informational sheets prior to the competitions. Tournament coordinators may decide to schedule brief informational meetings to discuss the rules of the event as well as what is appropriate feedback, etc.

Another criticism voiced is that nontraditional judges lack expertise on the topics of discussion. However, given the range of topics discussed on the forensics circuit, it seems obvious that most people are not experts many of the subjects covered. Traditional judges are as likely to be unfamiliar with a particular topic as nontraditional judges.

Finally, C. T. Hanson (1988) provides criteria for what makes a "good" judge:

1. Writes concrete, helpful, truthful comments in a sufficient amount that you can learn from them.
2. Pays attention, shows genuine interest in the speaker.
3. Not prejudiced, biased, or partial against a school or a contestant but gives fair treatment to all.
4. Actively listens, looks at contestant, doesn't just write but gives feedback.
5. Makes contestant feel comfortable, smiles, is polite.
6. Knows the event and its rules.
7. Objective, doesn't refute while listening.
8. Provides constructive criticism in a tasteful and tactful manner, doesn't cut the person down.
9. Gives reason for low rank/rating.
10. Write both positive and negative constructive comments.
11. Grades on ability to do selection, not preference for material.
12. Open-minded.

When examining this list, it is clear both "traditional" and "nontraditional" judges can meet the criteria provided. Perhaps these traits should be included as part of tournament/judging orientation sessions for community members. Surely a present judge who does her/his best to explain her/his decision is considered a worthy critic.

As a result of the analysis provided, this paper argues that the Forensics community would benefit from making an attempt to include more nontraditional judges—who are properly trained and instructed—in the judging pool. Finding out what reaction the performances genuinely elicit will strengthen the activity.

In the end, a fair question to ask is: "Wouldn't Forensics be changed by including more community judges?" The answer would be, "certainly," but it would be a positive change. Our students would be readier, more capable of performing and being effective regardless of what audience he/she might encounter. Utilizing public coaches and judges would also give the forensics community another reason and method for creating connections in the community. And these are two reasons for working to put more public back into forensics.

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Uncertainty in Spontaneity
Toward an Epistemic Impromptu

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Abstract

This paper reviews the recent argument that forensics is epistemic, suggesting that those who adopt that metaphor could serve themselves better by approaching impromptu speaking as an epistemic exercise. It draws upon Pat Gehrke's critique of debate pedagogy to form a framework to analyze impromptu as it is currently performed—and its obsession with starting from the truth, espousing all views with certainty, and adhering to a linear model of analysis. Finally, it offers several options for those impromptuers wishing to break the mold, arguing that the so-called "mistakes" made by beginning impromptuers could, with practice, lead to more insightful speeches than the current style of competition.

Introduction

James Geary (2005), author of two books about aphorisms (or what we call "impromptu quotations"), calls them "particle accelerators for the mind." He explains his fascination for the earliest, and shortest, literary form:

> They make you question everything you do. Aphorisms are spurs to action. It's not enough to just read one and mutter sagely to yourself, 'How true, how true.' Aphorisms make you want to do something; admiring them without putting them into practice is like learning to read music but neglecting to play an instrument. (p. 8)

A full-career impromptu speaker will put hundreds of these assertions into practice. The current expectation in the event requires that the student select a single interpretation of each quotation, then argue for or against its accuracy. While teaching an introductory impromptu speaker this method eases the difficulty for instructors, more experienced competitors may encounter a malaise toward the event. Some consider the structure too limiting; it provides little wiggle room for considering multiple ways a quotation can be construed. Similarly, the constant arguing of linear perspectives may eventually feel like oversimplification. More than a few impromptu speakers have confessed to me that they felt like a "motivational speaker" by the end of their career. I target this paper toward those experiencing this impromptu malaise, and recommend new approaches to prevent intelligent minds from feeling constricted. Maximizing the effectiveness of impromptu as a learning exercise will require competitors to aspire toward an epistemic perspective.

Robert Littlefield (2006) recently broke from the ranks of those debating the educational or competitive nature of forensics. Instead, he claimed that forensics, like rhetoric, is epistemic. Forensics provides experiential knowledge, forcing students to adapt to the complexities of each unique environment, from the preferences of individual judges to fellow competitors' interpretation of events. Just as in the real world, the most honest and hard-working individual may fail. What Littlefield provides is a personal philosophy for forensics, one which may not only help the community better understand the activity, but also help fledgling programs justify their existence:

> In the end, I must be content with an imperfect, relativistic world where not all is good, not all are fair, not all are ethical, and not all practices are justifiable. The only way I can justify forensics is with the understanding that experience is knowledge; forensics is epistemic. (p. 13)

I believe that Littlefield's insights deserve to be taken seriously, if only as a coping mechanism for students who put forth great effort for little reward. But for those of us who adopt an epistemic metaphor for forensics, it would serve us well to evaluate the events as we teach them and consider how to better harness the metaphor. The experience of forensics is epistemic. But are our events epistemic?

Pat Gehrke (1998) reviews the theory of rhetoric as epistemic, as advanced by Robert Scott: The belief that truth stems from human interaction. Gehrke argues that we should not approach arguments as though we possess correct answers. Likewise, he does not believe we should regard those we debate against as "opponents," but rather as possessors of unique perspectives and ideas to be "constructively engaged" (p. 9). He confronts current argumentation pedagogy, highlighting four ways in which textbooks and professors have failed to connect theories of epistemic rhetoric to actual teaching:

> First, argumentation texts favor a particular logical model of reasoning: a Western linear mode of logic. Second, there is an implicit assumption

of the need to know the truth before engaging in argument. Third, these texts approach argumentation and debate from an oppositional model. Fourth, and perhaps most disturbing, the critical tools of argumentation are depicted as ways to assess others' reasoning and rarely one's own. (p. 5)

In this paper, I apply these criticisms of debate pedagogy to the practice of impromptu speaking at American Forensics Association and National Forensics Association tournaments. I select impromptu because it has inexplicit rules and guidelines. It is the one event where students are literally provided seven minutes to grapple with a quotation however they choose. The expectation that every speech push a single persuasive argument is, therefore, an entirely "unwritten rule" that students have every right to break. (This differs from persuasion, where, as the name implies, the student should persuade.) Further, because impromptu is a limited preparation event, students who concur with my sentiments can nimbly react and experiment without sacrificing the time required to write and memorize scripts. For this reason, I believe that if forensics competitors truly seek to dismantle the rigidity of their activity, impromptu could be the most reasonable place to begin. My goal is to place forensicators on the road toward an impromptu ripe with experimentation and aligned with the epistemic perspective that many communication scholars have embraced.

Difficulties with Impromptu

Truly epistemic argumentation recognizes a diverse array of argumentative styles, including feminist, non-Western, and narrative-based models. As Gehrke attests, most argumentation textbooks fail to address these theoretical shifts. Instead, he states, they "generally rely upon syllogisms, the Toulmin model, or fallacies of informal logic" (p. 6). Similarly, impromptu speaking utilizes a simplified version of Stephen Toulmin's logical model. The Toulmin model stresses the "movement" from observable data, through warrants for a position, to a claim (Benoit, Hample, & Benoit, 1992, p. 227).

"Unified analysis," the structure utilized by the vast majority of impromptu speakers, hinges on movement from the data given (the quotation) to a claim (the speaker's thesis statement). The speaker then provides two warrants, or "reasons" for their claim. True to the Toulmin model, the speaker illuminates backing for his argument, in the form of theories or anecdotal examples. Impromptuers are expected by judging paradigms to repeat every major argumentative warrant, or "tag," multiple times in the speech. This technique is called "signposting," and ensures that the speech answers a question central to Toulmin's model: "How [did] you get there?" (Benoit, Hample, & Benoit, p. 227) This allows judges to transcribe the speech easily, diagramming the speaker's utterances in a linear outline. Even less-used "three-point" structures, though mold-breaking, still emphasize signposts and a linear structure centering on a thesis statement. Impromptu, therefore, suffers from the same linearity Gehrke observed in argumentation classrooms—and limits speakers' rhetoric more than a fully observed Toulmin model.

Gehrke's second contention with argumentation pedagogy is its assumption that one must start from the truth, and argue accordingly (p. 7). Like debate, impromptu has fallen into the truth-adherence rut. Impromptu speakers are taught to always agree or disagree with their quotation. Their thesis statement is then built on this choice, and the speaker argues accordingly.

The notion that a student must "pick a side" is troubling because seldom will the student actually "know" what he is arguing. When a student develops his interpretation of the quotation, the reasoning used is what theorist Charles Peirce (1998) called "abduction." The process is as follows:

> "The surprising fact, *C*, is observed.
> But if *A* were true, *C* would be a matter of course.
> Hence, there is reason to suspect that *A* is true (p. 231)"

It is, literally, the process of forming a hypothesis. In the case of impromptu, C is the quotation, which is always a surprise, and A is the immediate stab at its meaning. As Peirce suggests, "The abductive suggestion comes to us like a flash. It is an act of insight." But, Peirce warns, the abduction is an "extremely fallible insight (p. 227)."

Abduction is untested and unreasoned. It is, quite simply, an immediate hypothesis. When an impromptu speaker develops a "thesis," what he has truly developed is a hypothesis: An abductive, potential explanation. Yet, competitors are encouraged to speak with an air of certainty, jettisoning all doubt. In other words: Not only does impromptu force students to start from a truth; it forces students to argue on behalf of an untested truth.

Third, Gehrke criticizes the oppositional nature of argumentation pedagogy. He refers to numerous other scholars who refute the mindset that a debate takes place between two rival positions, where only one can be correct (p. 9, 10). Epistemic perspectives do not embrace such absolutism, because beliefs rely on individual experience. A student respecting the multiplicity of possible beliefs on a subject should be commended as insightful. As Toulmin (1992) explained in his book Cosmopolis: "Tolerating… plurality, ambiguity, or lack of certainty is no error, let alone a sin. Honest reflection shows that it is part of

the price we inevitably pay for being human beings, and not gods." (p. 30).

The notion that other sides should be attacked, rather than thoughtfully contemplated, has also been adopted in impromptu. Before speaking, impromptuers do not witness each other's speeches, which prevents direct refutation. However, students still refuse to consider any viewpoint beyond the solitary, linear argument they construct. Consider a student, in an impromptu round at a national tournament, using one of the following claims:

1) "While most of the time, *X* perspective is true, I will argue that we should be mindful of *Y* perspective."
2) "In my *personal experience*, *Y* perspective is correct."
3) "While my first instinct was to argue *Y* perspective, I hit a snag and realized *X* perspective must be correct."

In the first example, judges would chastise the student for conceding that other arguments are more often true than their own. In the second, one could expect a judge to trivialize the student's use of personal experience as evidence; impromptuers are expected to speak in universals. In the third instance, the competitor has conceded that their first hypothesis failed, and that they had to restart with a different one. As a student groping for truth, this speaker has the potential to grapple with the multifaceted nature of the quotation. However, the student has acknowledged an alternative viewpoint, and will likely suffer as a result.

When students feign omnipotence in their arguments, they reject the linear Western model to which the competitive framework otherwise adheres. In order to differentiate his model from classical logic, Toulmin included qualifiers that specify degrees of certainty. He also implemented rebuttal statements, which offer possible circumstances in which a claim could fall through (Benoit, Hample, & Benoit, p. 232). In suggesting these as possibilities in structured (or unstructured) argumentation, Toulmin reinforced the view that faux-confidence need not infiltrate debates. However, these statements are not tolerated in impromptu rounds. Instead, forensics educators teach students that any argument supported by three or four interesting examples can be advocated with complete certainty.

Finally, Gehrke fears that the three previous concerns leave students in argumentation classrooms without the capacity for self-reflection. He finds that textbooks focus on deconstructing what others say, rather than one's own arguments. Students, rather than examining their own identity, instead are taught to combat the "influences" of others (p. 11). Gehrke stresses the risk this creates: "Focusing argumentation and critical thought away from the self impedes the consideration of how arguments represent and construct the self" (p. 12).

Impromptu provides students with a remarkable opportunity to identify their own beliefs. Many competitors spend their entire college careers examining assertion after assertion, contemplating what each means to them. They call upon their knowledge base to determine how they will respond to the quotation. Then, they spend as long as six minutes considering the subject, actively, in front of an audience of other critical thinkers. After four years of this, students should walk away with not only the capacity for producing eloquent sophisms, but also the humility to recognize how many different ways a simple pithy statement can be understood. Impromptu, in other words, could be a powerful tool in identity construction.

Obviously, teaching students to say everything with complete confidence, and quickly, has practical benefits. Williams, Carver, and Hart (1993) stressed impromptu's ability to help students "move intelligently from the classroom to society," providing them with the sort of "practical experience" they will need in job interviews (p. 29, 30). But Gehrke contends that argumentation instructors should resist the urge for this business-minded pragmatism:

> As teachers of argumentation we need to be careful to avoid the temptation to "sell" our discipline as a "product" that will enhance organizational "output" or personal career "performance." These industry terms subvert the existential motivation to self-critique and return argumentation to the role of a tool for domination or suppression of others. (p. 39)

As impromptu instructors, we have the fortune of teaching students willing to place their hearts and minds on the line in front of an audience. We should seize this opportunity to create generations of critical thinkers who do not succumb to the buzz-word mentality that simplifies all ideas into easily transcribed "tags." It is time to move toward an impromptu that is open-minded, situational, and tailored to each individual competitor's experience.

A Toolbox for an Epistemic Impromptu

I have identified how impromptu is restrictive and fails to meet its full potential as an inspiration for self-critique. What I provide is not a rigid alternative structure, because, like Gerhke, I believe that a prescriptive antidote "would betray the very goal of this project" (p. 32). Instead, I advocate several possible alternatives and encourage competitors to develop and construct their own. Many of these propositions refine the so-called "mistakes" speakers make when they begin their careers. Here I suggest that a speaker who actually practices and develops what we currently regard as off-limits could even-

tually deliver deeply insightful and inspiring speeches.

Embrace a Narrative Structure

Impromptu speaking already relies upon anecdotal evidence; most speeches are driven predominantly by stories. As such, converting to a narrative-driven structure would not be a challenging stretch for most students. Rather than adhering to a rigid, signposted format of data, warrants, and a claim, this would be based instead upon the format that drives many of the most famous speeches in history. R. H. Stephenson (1980), in his search for an ideal method for analyzing quotations, drew upon a type of rhetoric typically ignored by forensics as an activity: Epideictic. As he explains, "this form of oratory... was assimilated by the ancients to the genre of literary prose and the literary statement of general truths" (p. 13). Because the aphorisms students analyze lack specific content, the student cycles through a series of stories that illuminate the multiple issues it raises.

Gerard Hauser (1999), in his examination of epideictic in Athens, suggested that the teacher-persuader in this type of speech "presents the story of individuals and deeds worth imitating," interpreting values to the audience along the way (p. 17). The epideictic impromptu speaker would work from one narrative episode to the next. The challenge would lie in creating smooth and eloquent transitions between each story, such that the audience witnesses the speech as a concrete whole rather than a choppy series of assertions.

Don't reveal the Destination

Gehrke notes that many Chinese speakers who develop English as a second language do not state their argumentative thesis until the end of an oration (p. 24). Impromptu competitors should not be criticized for opting to save their central theme until their conclusion, as this would allow for a speech that builds to a point of culmination—rather than a speech that continually tries to justify itself.

Alternately, students could be encouraged to create a speech that refutes itself—a speech that, in the spirit of epistemic rhetoric, considers multiple sides before settling on a position. Adopting this style would better reflect the way people actually communicate; as Gehrke notes, traditional Western structures "can never completely account for the logics of discourse, the multiplicity of ways involved in the arguments of the everyday" (p. 23). He suggests that students in debate switch sides mid-argument to understand the fallibility of each perspective. Impromptuers, who are not tethered to a single position, could go a step further than their forensic peers in debate. Epistemic speakers would weigh several perspectives on a quotation before settling on one—or better yet, settling on none. The self-refuting impromptuer could become a manifestation of multifaceted argument. For a speaker to state one case and in the same breath state another does not merit condemnation. If considered thoughtfully, it could show that the student appreciates our world's uncertain and untidy nature. By adopting these strategies, students could abandon the imaginary certainty that currently leaves a "motivational speaker" aftertaste.

Consider the Type of Quotation

Marjorie Garber's (1999) assessment of how writers utilize quotations noted that, "Quotations are inserted into a borrower-text as precisely what their authors did not claim: a ground of fact" (p. 666). Similarly, impromptu speeches almost universally regard the quotation as a truth-statement; a great deal of emphasis is placed on interpretation, or what the point the author "intended to make." This fails to recognize that not all quotations are meant to be taken as statements of truth. By considering the different styles quotations can adopt, speakers can adapt their speeches to reflect each situation.

Literary theorist Gary Saul Morson (2003) has created a schema for analyzing quotations, noting that they tend to adopt one of two major forms: The dictum and the aphorism. Dicta, he notes, are statements that attempt to close off a philosophical debate; they are declarations that "aspire to absolute clarity" (p. 417). Aphorisms, on the other hand, are not meant to be taken as something to be agreed or disagreed with. They are open-ended philosophical statements, designed to provoke deeper thought on an issue (p. 421).

Fellow theorist Kevin Morell (2006) noted another scale by which aphorisms can be critiqued: Creative versus destructive. Creative aphorisms have an optimistic nature and encourage constructive thinking; destructive aphorisms aim to shut down a line of thought (p. 373). Grappling with these questions of form before diving into analysis could provide students with new angles and perspectives for considering the quotation.

Likewise, a specific consideration could be made for proverbs: What Geary calls an aphorism without identity (p. 14). Impromptuers frequently receive proverbs, which are so socially pervasive that students can likely remember hearing them before the round. In this situation, the student could engage in an actual rhetorical criticism: They could question why, exactly, this statement has become so popular (or so cliché), and whether that reflects positively or negatively.

Finally, students can, when it applies, recognize an author's context. Certainly, "Absolute power corrupts absolutely" can receive the standard treatment of interpretation, agreement, and application. But a competitor who acknowledges the time period or experiences of Lord Acton can provide background

and perspective on why he made this utterance, unearthing ironies and inaccuracies in the process.

Ask, "What Does This Quotation Mean to Me?"

One of the worst taboos in impromptu speaking is the personal example: the explanation of how a friend, family member, or speaker dealt with the situation in the quotation. I suggest that forensicators reevaluate the absolute rejection of a personal dynamic in the event. In other events, such as After-Dinner Speaking, competitors often receive accolades for delivering speeches that relate to their personal life or plight. In impromptu, permitting students to express what the quotation, or their analysis, means to them would help to eliminate any disconnect between speakers and their speeches.

People have unique and personal reasons for their beliefs. Near the end of a speech, a disclosure of biases or personal experiences would shed light on *why the student argued the way he or she did*. Not only would this disclosure give the audience insight into that student's social reality; it would aid the student in discovering an identity. Perhaps the student could concede that certain arguments were hasty and not in line with more deeply considered beliefs—helping students, with practice, to link their speeches more closely to their actual worldview.

Build Your Own Structure

I concede that many of the aforementioned ideas will fall into some type of framework. Some semblance of signposting will be necessary, alongside theoretical and anecdotal examples to ensure that judges do not perceive students as merely rambling. Likewise, the event's limited preparation time virtually forces students to have a mental plan for guiding the process of invention. But structures need not be cookie-cutter. Forensics educators can present a smorgasbord of argumentative styles and help students create "Frankenstructures" of their own.

Every student sees the world differently; every student brings a different outlook to the table and has the potential to create a structure that reflects his or her unique perspective. While some will contend that unified analysis and similar structures should remain the universal standard, the belief that they serve each student equally is unfair. Many students are too contained by the structure, or do not think in Western chains of logic. To hold those students to unwritten rules is irresponsible. Similarly, arguing that educators should adhere to these structures simply because they are easier to teach underestimates students' abilities, particularly those who have already developed the skills unified analysis has to offer. As educators and judges we must help students invent the structures that suit them the best, and never condemn them for attempting something out of the ordinary. Breaking speech paradigms requires extraordinary courage for students. Those who experiment deserve open-minded ballots so they are not dissuaded from future attempts.

A caveat: Even upon hearing suggestions for alternative structures, many students will still feel that unified analysis remains their best fit. I do not intend to condemn students who, upon reflection, make that decision. However, I still contend that within that structure's confines, students should strive to acknowledge opposing ideas and express genuine uncertainty—because any hypothesis generated in a minute has not received the reflection required to justify forthright conviction.

Throwing Away the Ladder

In his first major work, *The Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein (2003) commented on his aphoristic methodology:

> My propositions serve as elucidations in the following way: anyone who understands me recognizes them as nonsensical, when he has used them—as steps—to climb beyond them. (He must, so to speak, throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it.) (*TLP* 6.54)

Impromptu speaking can serve a similar role: Every quotation a speaker receives can act as a rung on a ladder toward greater understanding. Students can grasp how much knowledge depends upon circumstances and how each individual's story influences what he believes to be true. Just as how Littlefield argued forensics can be justified on the "philosophical level" (p. 1), so too can impromptu.

As entrants in one of the largest events in forensics, an event that is in no way immunized against judging subjectivity and poorly chosen quotations, impromptu speakers with a strictly competitive perspective have set themselves up for disappointment. Speakers who view their event as a philosophical journey will instead perceive their successes and failures as a bittersweet aspect of the conversation they chose to join. Our duty, as educators, is to let these experimenters thrive.

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* Internal numbered citations refer to paragraphs, rather than pages.

"No, It Has Nothing to Do With CSI" Using Public Relations to Promote New Forensic Programs

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Abstract

Directors of new forensic programs are commonly faced with the challenge of building program support within communities that have little, if any, prior knowledge of competitive forensics. The diversity of forensic events, organizations, and awards can make message development and program promotion a daunting task. The organizing schemata of a public relations campaign and an understanding of college and community media needs can be powerful tools for a new program director. This report provides forensic directors with specific strategies and tactics for implementing a public relations campaign to build program support.

Introduction

Financial constraints and budget cuts are a common concern for forensic educators, and have been a recurring theme in forensic scholarship and at the Development Conference on Individual Events (Pettus & Danielson, 1992; Littlefield, 1989; Underberg, 1989). Current economic realities make budgeting concerns all the more daunting for many programs. In Florida, the state legislature has cut the budget for state schools by roughly $130 million for the 2008 – 2009 year (Aasen, 2008). As universities tighten the belt by decreasing costs, those programs that are viewed as being costly and non-essential to the mission of the institution may face severe financial constraints or even the chopping block.

In order to ensure the continued development of forensic programs, program directors are charged with ensuring that their institution views the program as essential. There are many excellent arguments and studies available that explore the importance of collegiate speech and debate, unfortunately, the academic or pedagogical merit of a program does not always translate into a persuasive financial argument. For smaller programs in particular, the high cost of travel versus the number of students on a squad can be viewed as a costly expense to college administrators. Thus, directors must illustrate to administrators that the college realizes a tangible benefit through the funding of forensic programs. This is, in essence, a problem of public relations and can be tackled through a strategically-designed publicity campaign.

As many faculty have noted (occasionally with a note of cynicism), popular athletic programs often receive significant institutional support, even during periods of budget cuts. As Moscowitz notes, "in a culture dominated by intercollegiate athletics, co-curricular competition in debate and IE … usually resides in the shadows of football, basketball, and even field hockey" (2005, p. 61). In the eyes of administrators, athletic programs can fulfill two important roles for an institution: they may be a revenue source, and they raise the profile of the institution. Most forensic programs are not likely to provide the same wealth of alumni donations or media coverage as a strong football or basketball program. However, diligent promotion of collegiate forensics can provide a steady flow of local media coverage that exceeds other co-curricular activities. By working to build a higher program profile, program directors can generate a level of "buzz" about the activity that will help with recruitment while providing the college at large increased media exposure.

The Promotion Problem

Forensics is a complex culture with a diverse body of organizations, events, rules, and competitions. As the title of this article jokingly points out, the very moniker "forensics" often confuses those not involved in the activity. From a public relations perspective, the primary problem becomes: how does one promote a complex program that the average individual knows little about? Even local media gatekeepers are unlikely to run stories that allow for a full discussion of the various forms of debate or individual events.

The role of the Director of Forensics entails wearing a variety of hats including educator, coach, travel agent, accountant and more. Program promotion adds another role to that list, which can be discouraging for those without a public relations background. Unfortunately, there is a lack of easily accessible promotional materials for DOF's, particularly in regards to media relations. While strategies for recruitment are available in a variety of publications and conference proceedings, a review of the National Forensic Journal revealed only one article focusing primarily on publicity (Moscowitz, 2005). The literature available on promotion and publicity provide excellent suggestions for raising program awareness through demonstrations within the community, outreach to internal publics such as student government, website development, etc. but tend to overlook local media. Obtaining media coverage ranging from feature articles to news shorts is feasible for program

directors, and can be achieved without major additional time expenditures.

Elements of a Public Relations Campaign

For public relations educators, there is no shortage of texts and articles proposing the "ideal" elements of a public relations campaign. Seemingly, each public relations author has compiled his or her own collection of items that are bundled into acronyms for ease of use, such as the RACE method (research, action, communication, evaluation) (Grunig & Hunt, 1984), the ROPE method (research, objectives, planning, evaluation) (Hendrix & Hayes, 2006), and the ROSTE method (research, objectives, strategies, tactics, evaluation) (Parkinson & Ekachai, 2006). I am not brave enough to coin my own acronym, and full discussion of each element is beyond the needs of most program directors. The two areas that this article will focus on are research and strategies / tactics focusing on internal and local media.

The most basic objective for most program directors would be simply to increase the amount of media coverage a program receives. While a true public relations objective should be measureable, most teams do not need to establish a goal as specific as increasing reach and coverage by 20% over a six-month period, for example. An objective within the reach of most programs is regular coverage in school publications and local print media.

Researching Publicity Opportunities

Gathering the necessary information for a campaign need not be a time consuming process, and can largely be handled by team members or work study students. The key is finding the right contact people within your institution and in the local media to target. Knowing who the gatekeepers are and what they are looking for is the starting point to increasing program awareness. The following are some research starting points for increasing a programs' publicity network:

1. Create a media contact list which includes the college paper, local papers, and the college in-house public relations department / personnel. In-house PR personnel may also be willing to share a copy of the college media list.

2. The media list should include specific contact information for key editors (usually education section editors in your local paper). Also include journalists and editorialists who write for the education section of the paper.

3. Regularly read the education section of the local paper to get a feel for the writing style and topics that are covered.

4. Find out what the in-house process at your college or university is for creation and distribution of press releases.
   a. Many schools have an online form for faculty to fill out with newsworthy information. In my experience, it is preferable to draft your own press releases and submit them rather than use this form. This will allow you to highlight the newsworthiness of your release, rather than allowing someone else to decide whether your update necessitates a press release.
   b. Most institutions will not allow individual faculty or departments to send out promotional information without institutional approval. Make sure you know who the decision-makers are in that process. You are more likely to gain approval by submitting complete, newsworthy press releases.

5. Explore other avenues beyond college and local papers. Many local papers now offer online blogs or editions where users can post their own news. In-house publications such as alumni magazines or newsletters can also be targeted.

6. If your campus has a student public relations organization such as the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA), suggest that they organize a campaign for the team. If you have a public relations or journalism student on the team, suggest he or she take on the role of team publicist.

Strategies & Tactics for Getting by the Gatekeepers

The problem program directors face in gaining publicity, as noted above, is that it is difficult to succinctly synthesize what the activity entails, what occurs at a tournament, the differences in events, forms of debate, and so on. For many of us in the forensic community, our passion for the activity makes it a challenge for us to explain it in a way that would fit within a ten-minute informative speech. If we have to explain the activity every time we want to promote it, the likelihood of getting our messages heard is small. Fortunately, there is one particular aspect of forensics that every editor and reader understands, and that collegiate media thrive upon: competition. Public relations efforts that strategically focus on competition are more likely to be well received and used by local media.

An easily overlooked resource for drafting press releases is the sports pages of college and local papers. Framing forensic press releases in a similar manner to athletic programs raises the interest level for readers. Even the most obscure of collegiate sports receive semi-regular coverage during a successful season. It is not necessary for journalists to explain those sports to the reader, because the

newsworthy element is the competition itself. Below are a number of framing tactics, some inspired by collegiate athletics, that can be employed by program directors in their own publicity efforts.

1. Don't overlook the value of college rivalries and dominant state sports teams. For example, some might argue that there are two types of Floridians: Gator fans & Seminole fans. So, when my team competes against UF or FSU, I note it in the press release.

2. Tie the program to school pride by connecting it to the college mascot name, particularly in headlines and lead paragraphs. For example: "Forensic Bruins Score Big at Kentucky Invitational".

3. At large tournaments, make note of the number of teams participating, at smaller tournaments, focus on the number of students participating.

4. Report both on students who have done well at a tournament and students who have shown improvement.

5. If the program is participating in a number of tournaments on consecutive weekends or there are not a lot of "breaks" to report, report two consecutive tournament results in one release. For example, "Smith and Jones Close the Season with Regional and National Wins."

6. Incorporate quotations from students on the team, team captains, and coaching staff. Use quotations from coaching staff to focus on a student or the team's success or improvements. Listen carefully during awards ceremonies for quotable statements by the tournament director.

7. Explain the importance of regional and national tournaments that act as division qualifiers, state championships, honorary nationals, etc.

8. Mention when students qualify for national tournaments, and note how many events the student has qualified in. For example: "Doe's 2nd place finish in after dinner speaking qualifies her to compete at the American Forensic Association national championship. This is the third AFA event Doe has qualified for this season."

9. If you host a competition, pitch the tournament as a feature story to local editors or invite a local columnist to judge.

10. When a speech or interpretive topic is timely in relation to regional or national news, include the topic in the release. For example, "Jones also placed third in after dinner speaking with her presentation on how the marketing industry sexualizes preteen girls."

11. Create a boilerplate (closing paragraph) that summarizes the history of the team and provides contact information for readers. This is a basic press release element and will add consistency to releases. (See bottom of appendix A for example).

Conclusion

While no set of strategies or tactics can guarantee successful coverage of a program, following the suggestions listed above should help program directors improve frequency of publication in local media. A full public relations campaign must go beyond press releases and media relations, but press releases are a primary means for reaching the objective of increasing local awareness of forensics through media coverage. For administrators, co-curricular programs that receive regular media coverage provide an attractive selling point for the quality of academics at the institution.

Nearly twenty years ago, Robert Littlefield (1989) noted the need for a promotional package for forensic directors lacking public relations expertise. In that time, a wealth of materials have developed with suggestions for fund raising, program justification, and profile building on campus. The budget crunches colleges and universities are facing across the country provides a renewed incentive for the forensic community to spread the word beyond campus through local media.

Appendix A – Sample Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Public Relations
(863) 555-4118

FORENSIC "BRUINS" START THE SPRING SEASON OFF STRONG

SPRINGLAND, Fla. (Jan.21, 2008)-Sophomore John Doe and junior Jane Smith kicked off the spring competition season over the weekend with three top finishes at the Winter Haven Invitational Tournament.

The University of East Florida hosted eleven college and university teams at the Winter Haven Invitational, including the University of Florida, Florida State University, University of West Florida and others. Doe and Smith were the only members of the team competing at the tournament, and placed in three out of the four events they entered.

Doe continued his winning streak from the fall season, walking away with a first place finish in Dramatic Interpretation and fourth place in Prose Interpretation. Newcomer Jane Smith shined in her first outing, finishing in the top ten in Impromptu Speaking and sixth in After Dinner Speaking.

"John has been on his game this year," said coach Jack Jones, "he has showed consistent improvements in his rankings at every tournament."

This is the second time the team has walked away with multiple awards at the Winter Haven Invitational despite a small entry. With several new recruits to the team, this looks to be a promising semester for the forensic "Bruins".

The Wright University Forensics Team began competing in intercollegiate competition in Fall 2005, and is sponsored through a generous grant by local businessman, T.T. Landerry. In their three years of competition, the team has earned regional and national recognition. For more information about Intercollegiate Forensics, please contact Coach Jack Jones at jjones@wrightuniversity.edu.

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How is that Helpful? An Analysis of Ballot Helpfulness

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Abstract

The study confronts several issues relating to the helpfulness of ballots from different types of judges. An analysis was performed to analyze 135 ballots from several collegiate forensic tournaments held throughout the United States. Coaches, graduate assistants and hired judges were compared.

Introduction

Every seasoned forensic coach has heard a student complain at one time or another about a ballot that does not appear helpful. Many times, coaches have even encountered ballots that are not only unhelpful, but are insulting and hurtful for competitors to read. Real-life examples include, "The only reason you placed this high is because this was an incredibly weak round," "I hate your haircut," and "You should not be doing this piece. You are nowhere near as pretty as Renee Zellweger."

Although these comments are obviously bad, many other comments are just as unhelpful but are still presented to students because of a judge's inexperience. The purpose of this study is to analyze three categories of judges: coaches, graduate assistants, and hired. Hypothesis 1 states that coaches provide comments that are more helpful than graduate assistants or hired judges. Hypothesis 2 states that graduate assistants provide comments that are more helpful than hired judges, but are less helpful than coaches. Hence, these two hypotheses lead to the conclusion that hired judges provide the least helpful comments.

Methods

In determining the category to place each individual ballot, the name of the judge was examined. If it was not legible, the ballot was not used. If the name was legible and it was possible to determine their status (coach, graduate assistant, etc.), they were sorted into their corresponding category. In order to determine their status, the authors' knowledge of individuals and departmental websites were utilized. If the name was legible and it was not possible to determine their status through these means, the judge was considered a hired judge for the purposes of this study. Most of the hired judges were self-selected because they identified themselves as hired by either writing the word "hired" or placing an X for their affiliation on the ballot.

Ballot organization process:
Is the name of the judge legible?
No → Not Used
YES → Can we find the judge's status?
    NO → They are considered hired.
    YES → Sort them appropriately.

We collected 45 ballots for each category from several Midwest tournaments along with one state and two national tournaments for a total of 135 ballots. The names and affiliations of the judges were covered along with the competitor's name, rank, rate, and round. The ballots were then coded based on whether they were coaches, graduate assistants or hired judges. A range of numbers was used for the coding to prevent the coders from subconsciously placing the comments into pre-determined categories.

The categories were borrowed from Scott and Birkholt; A Content Analysis of Individual Events Judge Decision Justification, (1996) (Delivery, Content, Organization, Characterization, Rules, Topic, and General) with the coders looking for helpful vs. not helpful comments.

For this study, two sets of coders were used. The first set (Group A) was composed of individuals with several years of forensic experience. The second set of coders (Group B) was composed of individuals who had very little forensics background. The purpose of the two sets was to represent the two very different types of forensic judges: those who are familiar with the activity (coaches, competitors, graduate assistants, and some hired judges) and those who are not (many hired judges).

Results

When examining basic statistics of Group A, there were 363 total comments. Hired judges accounted for 126 of these comments, graduate assistants were responsible for 97, and coaches wrote 140 comments. In order to gain a better view of Group B, these coders collectively analyzed 710 total comments. Hired judges accounted for 227 of these comments, graduate assistants were responsible for 239, and coaches wrote 244 comments.

Regarding helpful comments, Group A coders reported that hired judges offered 37 and graduate assistants and coaches offered 35 and 58 respectively. Of the number of comments that were found to be

not helpful, 89 were written by hired judges, 62 written by graduate assistants, and 82 written by coaches. Roughly 29.37% of hired judges' comments were helpful (70.63% were not), 36.08% of graduate assistants' comments were helpful (63.92% were not), and 41.43% of coaches' comments were helpful (58.57% were not).

Regarding helpful comments, Group B coders reported that hired judges offered 143 and graduate assistants and coaches offered 166 and 157 respectively. Of the number of comments that were found to be not helpful, 84 were written by hired judges, 73 written by graduate assistants, and 87 written by coaches. Roughly 63% of hired judges' comments were helpful (37% were not), 69% of graduate assistants' comments were helpful (31% were not), and 64% of coaches' comments were helpful (36% were not).

Delivery

The most common comments were regarding delivery. This category accounted for 108 of the 363 comments, equaling approximately 29.75%. Of the 108 delivery comments, Group A reported that hired judges offered 50, graduate assistants 23, and coaches 35. Of hired judges' delivery comments, 32.00% were found to be helpful. Likewise, 39.13% of graduate assistants' delivery comments were helpful as were 22.86% of coaches' delivery comments. In general, approximately 30.56% of all delivery comments were found to be helpful, as reported in the findings of Group A.

This category accounted for 261 of the 710 comments (36.76%) for Group B. Of the 261 delivery comments, hired judges offered 99, graduate assistants 62, and coaches 100. Group B reported 69.70% of hired judges' delivery comments were found to be helpful. Likewise, 80.65% of graduate assistants' delivery comments were helpful as were 62.00% of coaches' delivery comments. Overall, 69.35% of all delivery comments were found to be helpful, as reported by Group B.

Content

Comments regarding content were also plentiful, amounting to 108 if the 363 total comments, which is approximately 29.75%. Of the 108 content comments, hired judges offered 28, graduate assistants 28, and coaches 52. For hired judges' content comments, 39.29% were found to be helpful. Likewise, 39.29% of graduate assistants' content comments were helpful as were 48.08% of coaches' content comments. Overall, 43.52% of all content comments were found to be helpful.

Group B reported that comments regarding content amounted to 210 if the 710 total comments, which is approximately 29.58%. Of the 210 content comments, hired judges offered 70, graduate assistants 79, and coaches 61. For hired judges' content comments, 65.71% were found to be helpful. Likewise, 69.62% of graduate assistants' content comments were helpful as were 65.57% of coaches' content comments. Overall, 67.14% of all content comments were found to be helpful.

Organization

Organizational comments amounted for 44 if the 363 total comments, which is approximately 12.12%. Of the 44 organizational comments, hired judges offered 10, graduate assistants 15, and coaches 19. For hired judges' organizational comments, 20.00% were found to be helpful. Likewise, 46.67% of graduate assistants' organizational comments were helpful as were 52.63% of coaches' organizational comments. Overall, 43.18% of all organizational comments were found to be helpful.

For Group B, organizational comments amounted for 63 if the 710 total comments, which is approximately 8.87%. Of the 63 organizational comments, hired judges offered 13, graduate assistants 26, and coaches 24. For hired judges' organizational comments, Group B reported that 61.54% were found to be helpful. Likewise, 84.62% of graduate assistants' organizational comments were helpful as were 83.33% of coaches' organizational comments. Overall, 79.37% of all organizational comments were found to be helpful.

Characterization

Characterization comments amounted for 34 of the 363 total comments, which is approximately 9.37%. Of the 34 characterization comments, hired judges offered 10, graduate assistants 7, and coaches 17. For hired judges' characterization comments, 30.00% were found to be helpful. Likewise, 42.86% of graduate assistants' characterization comments were helpful as were 58.82% of coaches' characterization comments. Overall, 47.06% of all characterization comments were found to be helpful.

Characterization comments amounted for 52 if the 710 total comments for Group B, which is approximately 7.32%. Of the 52 characterization comments, hired judges offered 13, graduate assistants 31, and coaches 8. Group B found that 92.31% of hired judges' characterization comments were found to be helpful. Likewise, 87.10% of graduate assistants' characterization comments were helpful as were 75.00% of coaches' characterization comments. Overall, 86.54% of all characterization comments were found to be helpful.

Rules

Of the 363 total comments, 20 were regarding rules (5.51%). Hired judges and graduate assistants offered 2 and 10 rules comments respectively, whereas coaches offered 8. When examining the helpfulness of the comments, 50.00% of hired judges' rules comments, 40.00% of graduate assistants' rules

comments and 50.00% of coaches' rules comments were observed as helpful. Overall, 45.00% of all rules comments were reportedly helpful.

Of the 710 total comments for Group B, 50 were regarding rules (7.04%). Hired judges and graduate assistants offered 10 and 12 comments respectively, whereas coaches offered 28. When examining the helpfulness of the comments, Group B found that 80.00% of hired judges' rules comments, 66.67% of graduate assistants' rules comments and 78.57% of coaches' rules comments were observed as helpful. Overall, 76.00% of all rules comments were reportedly helpful.

Topic

Comments regarding topic accounted for 10 of the 363 total comments (2.75%). Hired judges, graduate assistants, and coaches authored 6, 2, and 2 comments, respectively. Of those written by hired judges, 16.67% were helpful (83.33% not helpful); of those written by graduate assistants, 0% of the comments were reportedly helpful (100% not helpful). The helpful topic comments written by coaches accounted for 50.00% of coaches comments. Overall, 20.00% of all topic comments were reportedly helpful.

Group B found that comments regarding topic accounted for 13 of the 710 total comments (1.83%). Hired judges, graduate assistants, and coaches authored 2, 2, and 9 comments, respectively. Of those topic comments written by hired judges and graduate assistants, 0% of the comments were reportedly helpful. The only helpful topic comments were written by coaches; 77.78% of coaches' comments were helpful. Overall, 53.85% of all topic comments were reportedly helpful.

General

For Group A, the last category of comments, general, accounted for 39 of the 363 total comments (10.74%). Hired judges, graduate assistants, and coaches authored 20, 12, and 7 general comments, respectively. Regarding helpful comments, 15.00% of hired judges' general comments fit this category and 85.00% comments that were not helpful; 8.33% of graduate assistants' general comments were helpful and 91.67% were not helpful, and coaches provided no helpful general comments and 7 general comments that were not helpful. Only 10.26% of all general comments were reportedly helpful (89.74% were not helpful).

Group B found that hired judges, graduate assistants, and coaches authored 20, 27, and 14 general comments, respectively. Neither hired judges nor coaches provided any helpful comments, and 14.81% of graduate assistants' general comments were seen as helpful. Only 6.56% of all general comments were reportedly helpful (93.44% were not helpful).

Discussion

At first glance, it is clear that the coders in Group A (those with a surplus of forensic background) found fewer helpful comments than those in Group B (those with limited forensics experiences). Most interesting is the phenomenon of Group A rating 43.18% of comments helpful, but Group B found 79.37%. Again, this disparity is likely due to the experience level of the coders who represent different types of judges. It is conceivable that Group B believes some comments are helpful, but those with more forensic experience recognize that "nice delivery" is generally not helpful to a competitor.

The trend in both groups was that the comments were primarily concerned with delivery and content while rules comments were rarely given. Characterization and topic comments were also minimal, perhaps because these comments are often reserved for specific events and are not always applicable to every ballot.

Hypothesis 1 was supported. *Coaches provide comments that are more helpful than graduate assistants or hired judges*. When examining the helpfulness of comments, coaches generally provided the greatest percentage, as recorded by Group A. Of those comments authored by coaches, 41.43% were helpful. Coaches provided the greatest percentage of helpful comments in all categories, except for delivery and general comments, in which coaches provided the smallest percentage. The general comments category is deceiving because there were so few general comments that were helpful; 0 out of 7 coaches' general comments were helpful, only 1 out of 12 graduate assistants' comments were helpful, and only 3 out of 20 hired judges' comments were helpful. With these figures in mind, the interesting findings are that hired judges provide more general comments, and general comments are overwhelmingly not helpful.

Hypothesis 2 was also supported. *Graduate assistants provide comments that are more helpful than hired judges, but are less helpful than coaches*. Graduate assistants' comments were 36.08% helpful and 63.92% not helpful. This is less helpful than coaches (41.43% helpful; 58.57% not helpful), but more helpful than hired judges' (29.37% helpful; 70.63% not helpful). Graduate assistants provided the most helpful comments in characterization, the least helpful comments in rules and topic, and finished either tied with another group or in the middle in all other categories.

Future studies need to be done to further examine hired judges in the forensic arena. A question worth posing is whether competitors would benefit from hired judges who have received training prior to entering the judging process, or if adequate training is even possible without prior forensic experience.

References

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Appendix A: Group A Statistics

JUDGE TYPE	DELIVERY						ORGANIZATION					
	Helpful	%H	Not Helpful	%N	Total	%T	H	%H	N	%N	T	T%
Coaches	8	22.86%	27	77.14%	35	9.64%	10	52.63%	9	47.37%	19	5.23%
Graduate Assistants	9	39.13%	14	60.87%	23	6.34%	7	46.67%	8	53.33%	15	4.13%
Hired	16	32.00%	34	68.00%	50	13.77%	2	20.00%	8	80.00%	10	2.75%
	33	30.56%	75	69.44%	108	29.75%	19	43.18%	25	56.82%	44	12.12%
JUDGE TYPE	**CONTENT**						**RULES**					
	H	%H	N	%N	T	T%	H	%H	N	%N	T	T%
Coaches	25	48.08%	27	51.92%	52	14.33%	4	50.00%	4	50.00%	8	2.20%
Graduate Assistants	11	39.29%	17	60.71%	28	7.71%	4	40.00%	6	60.00%	10	2.75%
Hired	11	39.29%	17	60.71%	28	7.71%	1	50.00%	1	50.00%	2	0.55%
	47	43.52%	61	56.48%	108	29.75%	9	45.00%	11	55.00%	20	5.51%
JUDGE TYPE	**TOPIC**						**CHARACTERIZATION**					
	H	%H	N	%N	T	T%	H	%H	N	%N	T	T%
Coaches	1	50.00%	1	50.00%	2	0.55%	10	58.82%	7	41.18%	17	4.68%
Graduate Assistants	0	0.00%	2	100.00%	2	0.55%	3	42.86%	4	57.14%	7	1.93%
Hired	1	16.67%	5	83.33%	6	1.65%	3	30.00%	7	70.00%	10	2.75%
	2	20.00%	8	80.00%	10	2.75%	16	47.06%	18	52.94%	34	9.37%

JUDGE TYPE	GENERAL							
							Hired Helpful	29.37%
	H	%H	N	%N	T	T%	Hired Not Helpful	70.63%
Coaches	0	0.00%	7	100.00%	7	1.93%	Graduate Assistants Helpful	36.08%
Graduate Assistants	1	8.33%	11	91.67%	12	3.31%	Graduate Assistants Not Helpful	63.92%
Hired	3	15.00%	17	85.00%	20	5.51%	Coaches Helpful	41.43%
	4	10.26%	35	89.74%	39	10.74%	Coaches Not Helpful	58.57%

Appendix B: Group B Statistics

JUDGE TYPE	DELIVERY		ORGANIZATION	
	H	N	H	N
Coaches	62	38	20	4
Graduate Assistants	50	12	22	4
Hired	69	30	8	5
Total	261		63	
Total H/N	181	80	50	13
Percent H/N	69.35%	30.65%	79.37%	20.63%

CONTENT		GENERAL	
H	N	H	N
40	21	0	14
55	24	4	23
46	24	0	20
210		61	
141	69	4	57
67.14%	32.86%	6.56%	93.44%

RULES		TOPIC		CHARACTERIZATION	
H	N	H	N	H	N
22	6	7	2	6	2
8	4	0	2	27	4
8	2	0	2	12	1
50		13		52	
38	12	7	6	45	7
76.00%	24.00%	53.85%	46.15%	86.54%	13.46%

Perceptions of Past Competitors Presentation of the Data

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Introduction

In the past five years several well established forensic programs in our region have been discontinued. The reasons given to justify these decisions often centered on a lack of resources available to sustain the programs. Certainly the presence of scarce resources in an academic setting is understandable, but what many current coaches and competitors found especially concerning was the perceived lack of resistance by faculty at those institutions who were themselves once forensic competitors and coaches. In fact, in some cases former competitors were active and vocal supporters of the decision to end their institution's forensic program. The idea for this project developed as we discussed what might cause someone who once gained enormous benefits from the activity to willingly encourage the disbandment of a program. Our initial reactions were angry and defensive. As active participants in forensics who commit much of our professional and personal energies to the activity, we felt betrayed by our former colleagues. How could one time kindred spirits shift loyalties? Once our emotions had time to cool and we were able to gain perspective, we realized that our best reaction would be to stop speculating on the motives of others and actually conduct some research that might provide insight into how former competitors in forensics currently perceive the activity. Perhaps by understanding their perspectives, we as active forensic educators could nurture collaborative, rather than adversarial relationships.

Method

Once we decided to pursue this project, we struggled with the selection of a data collection method. Given members of our target population are all still currently active in college/university academics or administration, we wanted an approach that would provide in-depth insight into participants' perceptions, but also maintain participant anonymity. We are a relatively small discipline and when one focuses on an even smaller subgroup within the field, the potential for possible bias and intimidation becomes plausible. We felt participants needed to feel that they could respond candidly without fear of retaliation should their perceptions of forensics be negative.

To help ensure anonymity, we chose to use a survey that could be administered online. We posted our survey using the web based program to which our institution has an educational membership. A member of our campus Information and Technology Services office assisted us with uploading the survey as well as retrieving the data. The use of this third party further protected the identities of respondents. The survey included a combination of closed ended demographic questions, Likert scale based items regarding past and present attitudes toward forensics, as well as some open-ended prompts requesting reflection on key issues. We coded the responses to the open-ended questions using basic grounded theory coding techniques and identified several reoccurring themes.

Given the specialized population needed for our study, we chose to solicit participants through both direct request as well as word of mouth. An advantage we have as researchers is a collective experience working with forensics of over 70 years. Based on our own experience and knowledge, as well as input from other colleagues, we developed a list of potential participants. Using the National Communication Association membership directory, we were able to contact these individuals directly through their listed e-mail address. Our e-mail request explained the project and included the link to the posted survey. We also asked participants to consider forwarding the e-mail to any colleagues they have who might fit our desired population. Because we have no way of knowing to whom the e-mail might have been forwarded we are uncertain of exactly how many people received the survey request. We estimate that about 125 people were contacted.

We received 48 completed survey responses.[1] Of these respondents, 96% had competed in forensics for four or more semesters, 80% competed between 1970 and 1999, with an equal number falling into each of those 3 designated decades. The remaining participants were equally divided between having competed prior to 1970 or after 2000. Additionally, 90% of the participants had served as a forensic coach at some point in their career, with almost half of those individuals coaching for nine or more years.

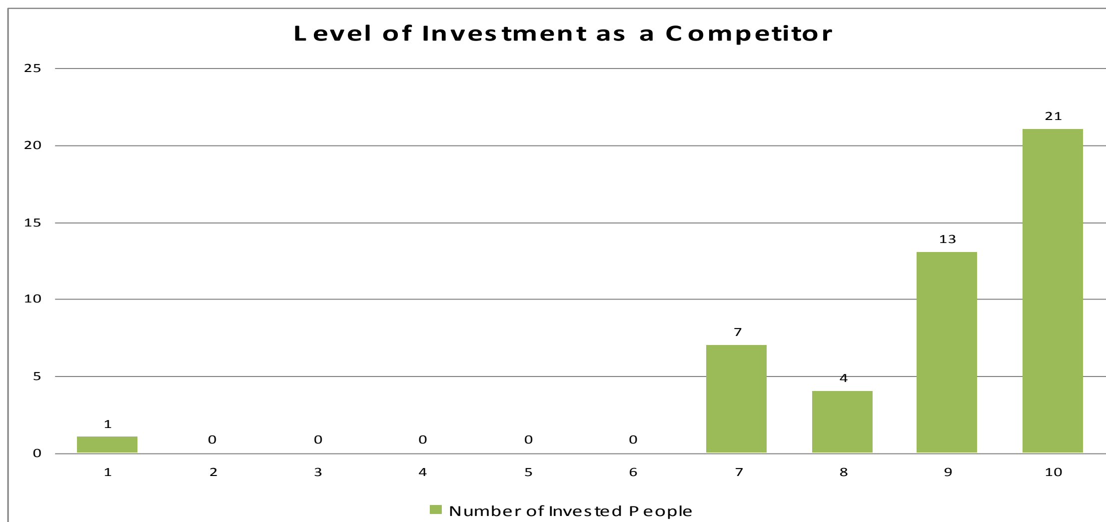
[1] Some respondents did not answer all items.

The basic demographic details demonstrate most of our respondents had significant involvement in forensics prior to their current positions. As one might expect from former forensic competitors, our respondents provided us with thoughtful and articulate responses.

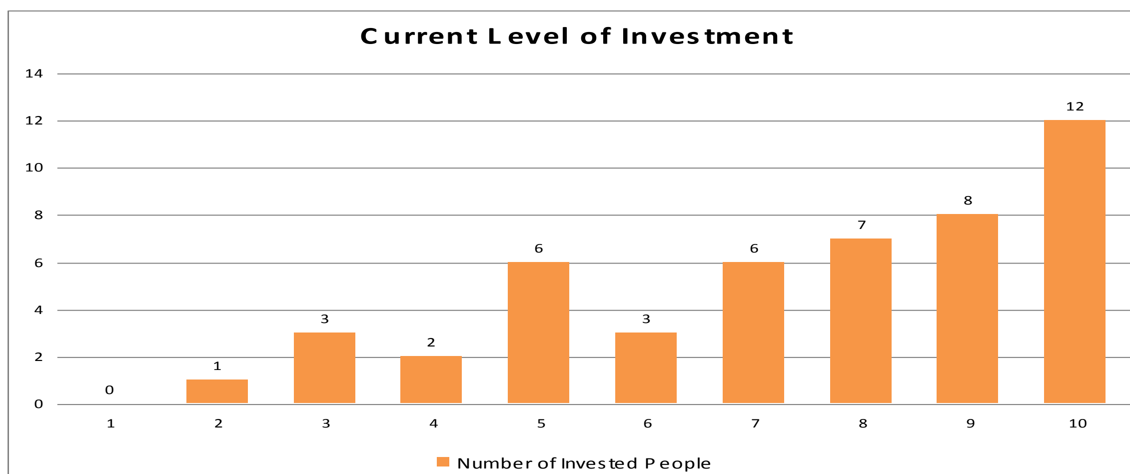
Results

In order to present the data, we will first review the general attitudes participants revealed when responding to the Likert items, and then offer a detailed overview of the themes found in the answers to the open-ended questions. Initially, respondents self-reported a high level of investment in forensics when they were competing (graph 1). Current support for the activity did decline as the level of investment felt lessened once people left the activity (graph 2). This decrease in support is expected given that respondents are no longer actively involved in a forensic program. In general, however the overall feeling toward forensics is still positive.

Graph 1



Graph 2



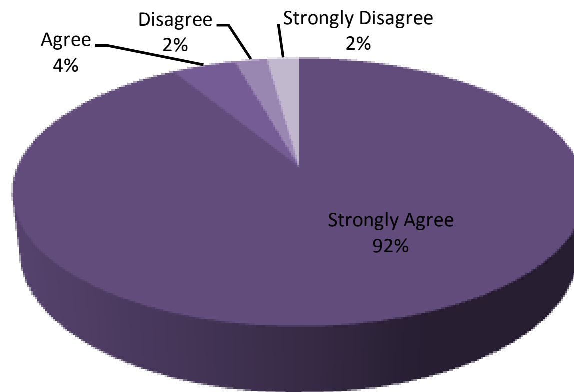
Our purpose in asking questions which measured basic attitudes was primarily to help contextualize the more in-depth responses given to the open-ended prompts. Our assumption that attitudes toward forensics become conflicted when one moves to holding non-forensic positions within an academic institution was supported. When responding to the Likert scaled items, respondents showed a generally positive attitude toward the benefits they gained from forensics, but a weakened resolve to commit resources toward sustaining programs. 92% of respondents strongly agreed that forensics provides students with valuable experiences (graph 3) and 85% strongly agreed that participation in foren-

sics contributed to success in their academic careers (graph 4). Yet, when asked if a Communication Department should provide financial support for a forensic program, only 69% strongly agreed (graph 5). This attitude was consistent with the results to the question of whether a Communication Department should provide personnel support to a forensic program to which only 68% of respondents strongly agreed (graph 6). Even fewer, 60%, strongly agreed that the Director of Forensics should be a faculty member in a Communication Department (graph 7). Although these basic attitude assessments provide some insight into the perceptions past competitors currently have toward forensics, the qualitative data reveals possible reasons for these shifts in support.

The coding of the responses to the open-ended survey prompts revealed six common themes around which responses seemed to center. The themes are: educational value; impact of competition; scarcity of resources; disciplinary identity; conflicting goals; and concerns with organizational culture. Certainly several of these themes are linked in various ways, but in the interest of clarity of discussion we will deal with each individually. For many of the themes, respondents provided comments that praised and critiqued forensics with respect to the related issues. A dialectical tension of sorts emerged in several of the themes.

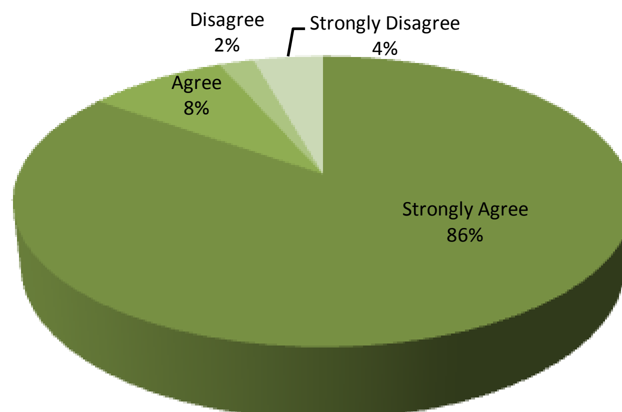
Graph 3

Forensics offers valuable experiences for students



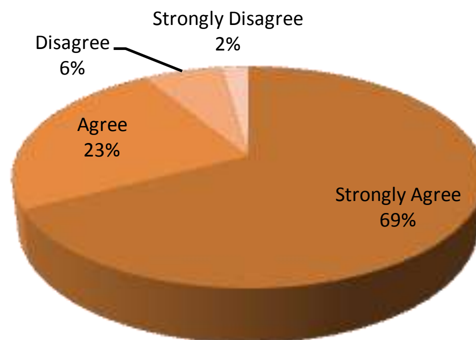
Graph 4

Participation in forensics contributed to success in my academic career



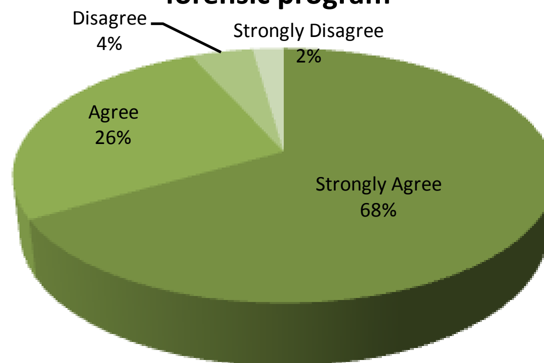
Graph 5

A Communication Department should provide financial support for a forensic program



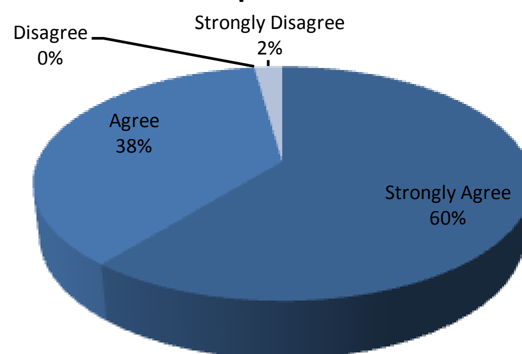
Graph 6

A Communication Department should provide personnel support for a forensic program



Graph 7

The Director of Forensics should be a faculty member in a Communication Department



Educational Value

Initially, respondents were overwhelmingly positive about the educational value of forensics with respect to both academic and life skills. The most frequently cited academic benefits were improved speaking and writing skills, developed critical thinking and competence when researching. One respondent stated forensic participation, "refined my ability to think on my feet, to organize and synthesize material, and to analyze ideas and events. It also taught me valuable research skills" (respondent 11). Although numerous respondents echoed that they acquired similar skills, a few made mention of how the introduction to such academic pursuits impacted their overall perspective on learning. Respondent 27 articulated this stating, "I learned to love learning. I honed essential skills for research and writing that served me well in graduate school. I learned to think clearly and quickly, organizing my thoughts well. Forensics helped me find my voice and articulate my beliefs. It also ignited a life-long intellectual curiosity."

Although supporters of forensics will frequently cite the quality academic instruction participants receive outside the classroom as a benefit of the activity, those connected to forensics are also well aware of the interpersonal growth experienced during involvement. As a community we do not often document the growth in "life skills" our students undergo while participating. Several of the survey respondents, however, did reflect on the personal growth they experienced as a result of competing in forensics. One respondent wrote:

> I view my involvement with individual events as the most influential activity of my life. I am a better teacher, writer, time manager, and overall communicator as a result of my involvement in the activity. Professionally, this often means I can juggle more obligations, teach more effective courses, and write more effortlessly than most of my colleagues. My experience as a coach also aided me with budgets and provided administrative opportunities that are rare for people in their 20's. (Respondent 35)

Clearly this individual sees his/her involvement in forensics as invaluable. Perhaps one reason such personal growth is possible is that forensics nurtures unique mentoring relationships between faculty and students. The sheer amount of time spent together as a team allows coaches to know students on a deeper level, and therefore provide more individualized guidance. This educational benefit was mentioned by survey participants as indicated when one explained, "It was forensics that got me interested in the world of ideas. Coaches and peers were role models for things like reading good literature, arguing ideas, being interested in politics etc" (respondent 22). Another added, "There is little that compares to the mentoring relationships one could develop with undergraduate students. Many were closer than any other level of education. Including graduate mentoring" (respondent 32). Many of us currently involved in forensics would concur that it is the interpersonal connections we are able to build with others in the activity that sustain us.

Some survey respondents were not as optimistic about the educational value of the activity. Usually these comments seemed to center around a feeling that the culture of the organization had changed since their era and consequently some learning opportunities have been lost. Respondent 40 articulates this concern clearly, "There is a culture that impedes serious academic engagement in the activity and keeps students from engaging in serious academic activity/siphons their energy away from it." Specific concerns mentioned include: "some forms of debate undervalue critical thinking and effective public speaking" (respondent 19); "high speed debate, stupid cases, judge selection processes that make debate a game" (respondent 39); "focus on the judge to the exclusion of the other audience members" (respondent 20); "lack of concern for the public dimension of debate" (respondent 44); "move away from communication to machine gun fire speech" (respondent 30); "tournaments every weekend do not allow time to hone speeches. Students would benefit more by improving in between tournaments rather than just going to lots of them" (respondent 34). This list of grievances is no different from recent concerns regarding the activity being discussed by current forensic coaches and participants at conference panels and business meetings. Perhaps we should be comforted that our potential allies have a developed understanding of critical issues in the activity. Regardless, we need to heed the warning that "there is a growing perception among faculty that forensic skills are no longer developed as previously" (respondent 11).

Ironically, despite the almost unanimous opinion that forensics teaches students valuable skills in argumentation, public presentation and research, some respondents did mention a disillusionment with the activity due to "poor academic attendance and performance of some forensic competitors" (respondent 24). One participant showed concern that "many graduate students are coaxed into coaching and their course work suffers because of the activity's time commitment" (respondent 13). If our activity serves as an outlet to teach skills well beyond what is experienced in a typical classroom setting, we certainly lose significant credibility when our "advanced" students make irresponsible decisions regarding the balance between their forensic participation and academic course performance. When asked to speculate on major reasons why forensic programs are disappearing, one respondent frankly

stated, "It's hard to sit in a faculty meeting and defend a team whose cumulative GPA rivals low sports teams" (respondent 11).

Generally, the negative critiques of the educational value of forensics were based in concerns over the impact of competition. As one self-reflective respondent noted, "The activity can sure move from being academically sound to a full-contact sport (competitively speaking) very fast. It is difficult to maintain a healthy balance. I failed to do so" (respondent 26). The balance between education and competition in forensics is tenuous at best. Numerous survey respondents reflected on how competition has shaped and changed the activity.

Impact of Competition

Although some respondents identified the value of competition, as expressed in the claim, "I believe that a forensic program should be educational as well as competitive" (respondent 45), many did not like how competition, rather than education, seemed to drive decision making among coaches and forensic leaders. One respondent complained of, "excessive competitiveness of some coaches that do not place education first" (respondent 30). Another pointed out that "really competitive programs have been forced to 'professionalize' their staff" (respondent 37) which in turn prevents these individuals from serving their departments in any other way than securing forensic wins.

Respondents also offered criticism regarding the shifts in larger organizational policies and practices that further lead to the glorification of competitive goals. When asked why he/she chose to leave forensics, one respondent explained it was an:

> increasing heavy emphasis given to qualifying for nationals. This is evidenced by the increasing number of two day swing tournaments that diminish the number of rounds competed and judge critiques available for the goal of creating two chances to qualify where previously there had been one. A clear message is being sent that good competitors are ones who get qualified and good teams qualify massive amounts of people. (respondent 11)

Another respondent echoed these concerns regarding national tournament qualification procedures stating, "Legs are corrupt and lead to poor forensic practices. Same for at-large bids for the NDT. Too much focus on winning at specific tournaments rather than on entire experience" (respondent 15). Simply put, many of the survey respondents felt there is currently, "too much emphasis on winning" (respondent 12), which has led them to harbor negative feelings about the current state of forensics.

When asked to consider reasons that might explain why many forensic programs are failing, several respondents linked their responses to issues tied to the pressures related to building and maintaining competitive success. When discussing why some potential supporters of forensics might perceive maintaining a team as an either/or dilemma, one respondent argued "there is no middle ground to occupy if they like the activity but don't want to make it their life" (respondent 21). Either those involved commit full force to maintaining a highly competitive program, or they choose to not have a program at all. Should a program choose to pursue a high level of competitive success, there is still room for criticism from some survey respondents who argue, "It is all about individuals winning, rather than contributing to the culture of the local community. Forensics serves no purpose for the general public" (respondent 29). This participant went on to speculate that this focus on competition has alienated those not involved in the activity and "as a result people on or off campus don't care what happens to forensic programs and they die away as the dedicated people who kept them going retire or finally tire." Although we as current forensic educators do wrestle with the issue of the role of competition within our activity, perhaps we need to consider more carefully how an emphasis on competition may be eroding support from possible alumni allies.

Scarcity of Resources

In times of tight academic budgets and a growing economic down-turn, the presence of scarce resources as a theme is not surprising. None of the comments connected to resources were particularly positive or optimistic. Generally comments centered on how there simply are not enough resources to easily sustain forensic programs. Often when we think of resources we limit our focus to finances. Certainly those responding to our survey did discuss the monetary cost of forensic programs as a possible drawback, but many of the comments focused on less obvious areas where resources are sparse. Specifically, respondents discussed resources in terms of three key areas: inadequate time; the lack of Ph.D. trained forensic professionals; and a cost/reward balance

Initially, many respondents discussed the issue of time. Specifically, how when one is coaching there simply is not enough time to meet the needs of the program, one's professional responsibilities as well as nurture one's personal life. As one respondent admitted, "I was worn out from travel, financial concerns about the program, using my own funds to help support the program (respondent 37). Another complained "I tired of the sheer amount of work required to coach a successful program" (respondent 24). When answering the question "what were your reasons to stop being involved with a forensic program" more than 10 individuals mentioned the amount of time forensics takes, specifically the travel

commitments. Respondent 9 confessed, "it is simply exhausting to keep up the schedule year after year". This time pressure helps explain the high rate of burnout among forensic professionals, which in many ways relates to the second key scarce resource discussed by survey respondents.

Several individuals mentioned that there simply are not enough forensic coaches who have earned their doctorates. "Having disciplinary trained coaches who can ground their coaching in rhetorical and communication theory" (respondent 45) was mentioned as being vital to program health, as was the ability "of program directors to argue for the pedagogical benefits of the activity over the competitive component" (respondent 12). The perception seemed to be coaches at the MA level or who serve as adjuncts cannot provide the professional and intellectual support a program needs. One respondent suggested, "Quality has gone down with adjuncts and MA instructors as the director (respondent 34). Another added there are "diminished tenure track directors who fight for programs when budgets get tough. Only having staff or MA people doesn't hold sway for many departments (respondent 15). In some cases program leadership has been delegated to graduate students, which to some survey respondents is equally as harmful to the activity. One such former graduate coach explained:

> A large and successful program that I led for many years is one that has since disappeared. The reason in that case, I believe, is that the program was run by graduate students as opposed to a full-time member of the faculty. The rest of the department failed to see the benefits of the program, and without an advocate among the faculty, it was lost. (respondent 27)

Granted, there are few active coaches who have their doctorate degrees and are in tenure track positions. Yet in many ways this has become somewhat of a cyclical problem. Some respondents pointed out that there are fewer and fewer options for people to seek solid forensic training while pursuing a doctorate degree and once they complete their training there is a "lack of tenure-line DOF jobs in the field (respondent 35). This is resulting in what one person called, "The erosion of training of forensics directors in graduate programs (respondent 25). Another added:

> Fewer colleges that offer graduate degrees have forensic programs. When students get away from forensics during the graduate years, they are less likely to return to it…At the time I coached, there were a number of coaches that stayed with the activity for a long time. The maturity and expertise that they brought to the activity are hard to replicate with a coaching pool that has a critical mass that is starting to be much younger and less experienced. (respondent 45)

Further, the fact that many of the current coaching professionals are in non-tenure track positions contributes to significant turnover. As explained by one individual, "You look at most programs without a 'lifer' it's a position in constant flux. This makes the DOF position (and fielding a team) a constant headache for administrators… each time we lose someone (because of burnout or lack of pay) we must justify hiring someone new; lose that battle once and your program no longer exists (respondent 35).

The scarcity of long-term, well-trained coaches is a problem of which current forensic professionals are aware. As much as we appreciate colleagues in our discipline who also recognize the need for active coach advocates in departments, we do find their expressed concern somewhat ironic. All the people we directly invited to complete our survey had completed their Doctorate degrees. One can assume, then, that since 90% of our participants did coach at one point in their career, the majority of our survey respondents have in some way contributed to the exact scarcity of human resources that they are critiquing.

The final area around which comments related to resources centered is the issue of a cost/reward balance. Respondents recognize the financial commitment an institution must make to support a forensic program and believe there needs to be a measurable balance between that financial cost and the benefits gained. Some expressed the opinion that a program "takes a lot of funding and does not typically generate credit hours" (respondent 30). In academics, credit hours are the magic measurable marker of value and any department, program or course which doesn't "carry its weight" is perceived as the first to the chopping block. Additionally, some respondents argued forensics "can be a huge drain on time and resources of a department with only a small body of students really being served" (respondent 9).

The drain on resources which seemed to cause the greatest concern was once again related to the *time* forensics takes away from the faculty involved. When expressing reasons why it might not be good for forensic programs to be associated with Communication departments, one respondent stated, "they take a lot of time of the faculty members that coach. Those faculty members could be working with students on research or other projects to help mentor rather than forensics practice (respondent 3). Perhaps respondent 9 explained the tension best writing, "It is more expensive to travel to regional and national tournaments, to have a number of faculty and graduate assistants who can serve as coaches, etc. The costs are no longer worth the limited return

to most departments. That same money can serve a greater number of students if put to different uses". Many of our survey participants seem to think like administrators, perhaps because several of them are.

Disciplinary Identity

Most of the comments which fall into the theme of disciplinary identity appeared in response to the question "what are the positive and/or negative aspects of a forensic program being associated with a Communication Department". Although this theme is not as developed as others, these reflections reveal some interesting tensions. Respondents identified both benefits and disadvantages of linking forensics to the discipline. In terms of benefits the more frequently cited were, "recruitment to the major and minor, positive public relations, alumni support, and national recognition (respondent 41). Others added forensics can "be the public face of the department" (respondent 19) and it "can be a highlight of an otherwise undistinguished discipline (respondent 15). Although several cited the advantages of recruitment and positive public relations, some respondents were not as supportive of the historical attachment of forensics to communication departments.

The concern seemed tied to a larger argument in the discipline regarding to what degree should the field hold onto its public address origins. Many departments have dropped the term "speech" from their titles now preferring Communications Studies as a more accurate name. How this relates to the role of forensics within communication departments is explained when respondent 9 writes:

> The nature of communication departments themselves has changed. Interpersonal, organizational, intercultural etc, areas mean that rhetoric/debate/public speaking no longer define a department. As such, the activity no longer accurately reflects a department's academic activity and lead to the same old belief across campus that all the Comm. Department does is teach speech.

Another respondent counters this arguing, "too many departments are indicating that forensics is not 'central' to what they do, while simultaneously offering countless public speaking classes for profit and graduate assistantships" (respondent 35). Perhaps one of the key tensions revealed in this study is found in this basic debate. We cannot both simultaneously praise and shun our history.

Conflicting Goals

This same conflicted relationship with history is also found in the theme which explores respondents' professional and personal goals. The number of respondents who directly attributed their decision to choose a career in academics to their experience as a forensic competitor was exciting. Comments such as, "I majored in communication because of forensics and this experience contributed to my going to graduate school to get an MA and PhD. I trace each degree back to forensics (respondent 9) and "Forensics influenced my choice to pursue graduate school. My scholarship and pedagogy for the first half of my academic career was largely shaped by forensics" (respondent 32) were common. Respondents also reflected on the networking advantages forensic provided as well as the positive impact of mentoring. One individual wrote, "It definitely opened the door to graduate assistantships and to networking contacts that are still vital to my academic career today" (respondent 41). The desire to stay connected with forensic professionals led others to the field. Respondent 17 admitted, "Absent my intercollegiate debate experience I would have gone to law school. The chance to work closely with several gifted forensic educators led me to pursue a graduate degree in communication". "My mentors were my coaches" wrote another, "I would not have earned a doctorate unless I was in forensics" (respondent 20).

Despite this initial passion for forensics, survey respondents are *past* forensic participants. All eventually chose to leave the activity. One particularly eloquent statement best summarizes the transition from forensic past to the present. "The activity took me from one place in life to another. Then it seemed over. To this day I have friends in the forensics community but on the whole the community seemed a different sort of club than I wanted to be a part of long-term—BUT, I'm very glad I was in for awhile. It did change my life for the better (respondent 22). The reasons cited for leaving the "club" were varied, but most were related to a desire to pursue new professional and personal goals.

Given the unique skill set Directors of Forensics develop, it comes as no surprise that many survey respondents left forensics because they were asked to take on administrative roles. Several made comments such as, "New opportunities were developing for me career wise in terms of moving into senior faculty responsibilities and moving into administrative roles" (respondent 45) and "After a decade of directing our forensic program it was suggested by colleagues and by my dean that I would make a good department chair" (respondent 17). Some, however, were concerned with basic survival in the university. These respondents wrote of fears related to receiving tenure and the lack of respect they received from non-forensic colleagues. One individual confessed he/she left forensics because, "I saw many of my colleagues who were prevented from achieving tenure and promotion because of the different (or lack of value) placed on coaching and directing forensic programs" (respondent 41). Another explained the origin of this bias:

> Forensics used to be an entry into the discipline. People with debate and IE backgrounds commonly populated departments of Speech, Speech Communication and the like. Graduate programs in the discipline commonly recruited graduate students with backgrounds in forensics. As the emphasis increasingly shifted to more publications in both the graduate institutions, but increasingly undergraduate programs, the emphasis in hiring and promotion made it difficult for forensic-oriented faculty to be valued in their departments. (respondent 32)

When one reflects on these comments in light of the observations made with respect to the lack of Ph.D. level coaching professionals, the reasons explaining the exodus from forensics becomes more apparent.

In addition to a desire to meet professional goals which seemed to conflict with forensic participation, many respondents also mentioned the need to pursue personal goals that appeared unattainable while coaching. Family, specifically parenthood, was frequently cited as a reason for leaving forensics. Many reported a need, "to watch my children grow" (respondent 14). A respondent explained, "I was torn by the growing sense that my own children (aged 10 and 7 at the time of leaving) were not going to be there for me if I continued not being there for them" (respondent 32). Another joked, "it is difficult to explain to a young child that Dad will be gone for three days because Johnny needs a prose leg" (respondent 35). Although many active forensic professionals do successfully parent children, they would be the first to confirm that it is a difficult juggling act to perform.

For others the desired personal goals were not as specific. In some cases, an individual simply felt he/she had nothing left to give to the activity and in turn was ready to move on. One respondent described his/her reasons for leaving the activity as "I wanted to do other things with my life. The realization that I'd accomplished all I could" (respondent 15). Perhaps the best way to ensure former forensic participants will continue to maintain the positive feelings that initially lead them to the field is to create an environment where people leave because they are fulfilled, not because they have been drained by the stress of the job.

Concerns with Organizational Culture

This final theme addresses some of the common concerns respondents mentioned regarding the organizational health of forensics. This section of the paper is revealing in that the comments discussed here provide us with the perspective of informed observers looking in on our culture which was at one time their culture as well. What they see is not always positive.

Initially several expressed concerns with what they perceive to be the "politics" of the organization. One individual commented, "I dislike the politics (especially as a coach and DOF). I feel that some programs mimic some of the negative practices of athletic programs" (respondent 32). An even stronger critique was offered by Respondent 7 who argued, "Competition favors elite teams and those with resources. The politics of forensics is sickening…culture of elitism". The concerns with politics were not always linked to a perceived disparity in resources. Some critiqued forensics for being too insular. One wrote, "I do believe forensics is its own little world. Critics talk of its 'cult like' quality and there is something to this critique" (respondent 22).

Some respondents also expressed concern about perceived ethical violations within the activity. Coaches writing speeches for students was the most frequently mentioned offense, but respondents were generally bothered by any actions where it seems coaches are doing the work for students. For many, these ethical violations link directly back to the perception that competition has destroyed the educational value of forensics. As one person stated, "I firmly believe that there are unethical coaching practices done in some programs (writing PA speeches, 'creating' literature for interp, etc) that are stains on the activity" (respondent 9). Another adds, "Forensics needs to strengthen its ethics. Too much is allowed to slide because you don't want to upset coaches/programs" (respondent 23). As forensic professionals we must recognize that these negative perceptions of our activity exist and be diligent in our attempts to ease interpersonal tensions between programs and also hold ourselves to high ethical standards.

The presentation of the data from our study is simply a first step in a larger project. Our hope is that as a community we can reflect on the insights offered by former forensic participants. Such reflection will not only help us better align ourselves with these potentially strong allies, but will also provide us with the opportunity to see ourselves from a new perspective.

The Liminal Graduate Student

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The purpose of this paper is to expand individual event (IE) terminology. Expanding the terminology in which our IE community uses is essential to the growth of the IE community. This paper was inspired by people in the IE community who have realized how important it is to expand IE research and academic publications.

There is a strong need for IE members to remain academically conscious. Self-reflexivity and self-referentiality are terms graduate IE coaches in should understand. Understanding these concepts will work toward a positive growth in the IE community. Anthropologist George Marcus argues that "liminality [is] sparked during the process of understanding self-reflexivity and self-referentiality where one [...] questions the ways in which power and structure articulate identity (Marcus 70)." Before further development of the terms self-referentiality and self-reflexivity, I would first like to expand on the idea of liminality.

The term liminality is used in various academic fields (i.e. performance studies and anthropology). Most fields refer to liminality as an *in-between space* or *being in between*. Feminist theory argues that liminality possess a positive meaning. Liminality refers to a transformation in which one solidifies their identity at a time in which their identity is in between two points (Andermahr, Lovell and Wolkowitz 150). Cultural theory refers to liminality as "a state of transitioning in identity (Brooker 150)." Jon McKenzie argues that we come to understand the effectiveness of our own societal positions terms of liminality—"that is, a mode of activity whose spatial, temporal, and symbolic "in-betweeness" allows for social norms to be suspended, challenged and perhaps even transformed (McKenzie 27)." I believe the key word in McKenzie's argument is *transformed*. To put it simply, liminality is sort of like crossing a bridge. One enters a bridge from a particular area of life and eventually crosses over to a completely new position. Liminality is the transformation that takes place during the journey across that bridge. Victor Turner describes 'liminal entities' as people living in-between the societal positions fashioned by law, convention and ceremony (Turner 89). During the time working in a program that offers graduate assistantships in coaching IE, one's social identification as a performing competitor crosses over to that of a coach and mentor.

In her book, *The Vulnerable Observer: Anthropology that Breaks Your Heart*, Ruth Behar recognizes herself as a "women of the border" living betwixt "places, identities, languages, cultures, longings and illusions with one foot in the academy and one foot out (Behar 162)." Graduate student coaches pass through a liminal site, where boundaries maintaining academic goals are set and liminal lines are crossed into. Cultural theory defines a site as a place where "meaning is produced by an interaction or conflict of forces focused at a particular point (Brooker 234)." Coaching IE for two teams in the same year may be a liminal site, where values, morality and cultural codes of conduct conflict. According to cultural theory a "site is an intersection or conflict of forces focused at a particular point." In other words, a site is a place where knowledge derives (Brooker 234). For example, graduate school is a site for knowledge.

Jackson Miller suggests that teams create a strong sense of communal identity through their cultural codes (Miller 3). Once confrontation is resolved or a rite of passage has occurred, individual constructs of identity are fashioned. Every team has its own traditions or 'rite of passage' which create identification with their team (Kelly 98). Moving from one team to the next could be seen as a liminal experience. Victor Turner argues that all rites of passage or 'transitions' are marked by three phases; separation, threshold and reincorporation.

Brinden Kelly has recognized the relationship between symbolic convergence theory and forensics teams. Kelly says that "over time, teams develop a collective consciousness with shared feelings, motives and meanings" which take part in the development of team identity (Kelly 98). Group story telling also adds to the collective consciousness of a team. Narratives by current team members about previous competitors and coaches make up the history of the team (Croucher, Thornton and Eckstein 2). My exroom and teammate Brandon Wood is a great example of someone who uses narratives the past to construct my identity as a roommate and crazy team member.

Teams create codes that give themselves (and others) cultural meaning to identify with. Robert Westerfellous might argue that forensic lingo, as outlined by Charles Parrott, can be seen as semiotic code constituting the content of our cultural forensic practices (Westerfellous 107). Cultural rites of passage usually imply that there is an acceptance or promotion in societal perspective within their culture. Graduate students experience this upon gra-

duating with a degree in higher learning. More interestingly they may experience it when transferring to be on another forensics team. The assimilation of one's identity into a new team may be initiated in rites of passages or team traditions.

Graduation marks their separation from their previous positions in society. The time spent between the first and last semester of graduate school, puts graduate students in a liminal position, where they float between being a student and an official forensics coach. Reincorporation can be seen as positioning one's self once more with a solid identity in society. Getting a job as a coach stabilizes cultural identification in forensics. Having the official job as a forensic coach in the circuit positions you as a mentor, leader, boss and worker of the state.

In her article "Performing Autoethnography: An Embodies Methodological Praxis," Tami Spry argues autoethnography is a valid form of academic work carrying "a method and a text of diverse interdisciplinary praxes" (Spry 710). Autoethnography as a micro-narrative resist "Grand Theorizing" and opens up new ways of analyzing cultural life. Micro-narratives, autoethnography and self-reflexivity (when done well) has the potential to keep the growth of cultures in motion, shake up hierarchies and keep 'academic disciplines alert and on the edge' (Maddison 282). Personal narratives construct group identity. Autoethnographic structuring of academic work in forensics reflects the semiotic expressions gained from one's experience with their forensic circuit. Understanding the growth of our activity can come from analyzing micro-narratives. If a body of narratives in forensics was to grow in collaboration, then a better understanding of the cultural codes that make up different team identification can be accomplished. Geroge Marcus argues that multi-sited ethnography is a cultural formation of a 'world-system' and cannot be understood only in terms of conventional single sited representation (Marcus 83). Forensics as a whole, exist in multiple pieces. It is not a culture made up by one *mis en scene* provided by the award ceremony at nationals. Forensics activity during regular season competition is a site that plays out the inner workings of forensics micro-cultures and how they effect the whole.

Depending on one's experience with forensics and their graduate institution, recognition of a liminal experience can lead to personal growth in academia. There are different ways one can become "aware" of effective routes to take as a graduate student coach.

Experience with crossing geographical boarders (or district regions) in forensics can give way the personal experience of Miller's 'culture shock.' Moving from one team to another and then to another, having experienced the extreme differences in each teams micro-cultural conduct, I would argue graduate student coaches can benefit immensely from a multi-sited approach to coaching forensics and completing the academic task of a graduate student learning. With this said, I feel that I have benefited a great deal from the experiences I've gained from working with three entirely different districts (1 5 and 4).

Because mentoring can be mutually beneficial for both "mentor and mentee, as each moves toward increased self-actualization" (White 89) it is essential that graduate programs with forensics assistantships focus on maintaining the effective traits that can be used to mentor graduate student coaches. Mentoring graduate students is essential to gaining a positive experience in forensics.

Ironically enough, I entered into graduate school between the fall and spring semesters of 2006 and 2007. Having just moved from my previous school, I was still very much indebted in the cultural codes that made up my identity as a competitor and as a member of a specific team in the Midwest.

Geographically, I did not experience too much of a culture shock, but in terms of values, goals and expectancy a lot changed. At this point I felt responsible for the success of both teams I was on that season. At the end of the competitive season I had come around to accept my position as a coach only for my current team and not for another this could be proven by the departments records of coaching hours I enthusiastically committed myself to. Turns out I put in hundreds of extra hours I was not suppose to put in. But, hey nobody told me I was doing too much work. As a result my grades for the first semester kinda' sucked. After I was told that my hours had been abused things started to change a bit. The biggest change was my focus toward my academic experience.

I experienced culture shock the most when I transferred from my community college to the four year university I attended. There were tons of conflicts that arose from this transformation. Arguments over the individual event titles of Communication Analysis and Rhetorical Criticism was among the conflict, right next to the beverage labeling battle of pop and soda. Four students including myself transferred out to the Midwest to compete in district 5. Only two of us stuck through to graduate. Yeah, going from the place where all the movie stars live, to a place known most for its speech teams and corn was pretty rough.

As a long term aid meant to heal the pain of culture shock and balloting problems, graduate students are most likely to face, I propose that all graduate IE coaches consider learning the terms examined in this paper. Positive growth in IE forensics is in the hands of those who care about the activity most. It is essential undergraduate, graduate assistants and coaches work together to create and spread knowledge about the IE community. Teaching new members and current members about past forensics

research is essential to the growth of the IE community. If we do not spread already existing knowledge and apply it to new terms and personal experiences then we will be trapped in a stagnant activity— pastiche at its best.

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Relating to Publics
An Additional Role of the Director of Forensics

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Abstract

Without fostering effective relationships with students, departments and administrators, a forensic program can easily succumb to budget cuts. This paper attempts to analyze the relationships that must be managed for a director of forensics to run a successful program. To this end, a review of the literature is given, an analysis of this literature is conducted and research questions are given that will further enrich future inquiry into the public relations role of the director of forensics.

Introduction

Over the past twenty years over forty schools that previously competed in intercollegiate forensics at the National Forensics Association national tournament have lost their teams. Even forensics programs that found incredible competitive success at a national level such as Indiana University, as high as third at NFA and a perennial top ten school, have lost funding and cease to exist. Unfortunately for Indiana University the administration was unable to see the value of such an expensive co-curricular activity. Many programs share the same fate or die when a coach leaves or is cut for budget reasons. As many in the forensics community know well, most programs live and die by their coaches. Because it was run by graduate students, the forensics program at Indiana University had no director to build and manage relationships with the publics it depended on for survival. At many of the schools that no longer participate in collegiate forensics the director could have avoided the budgetary chopping block if stronger relationships with the department and administration had been established. While some seasoned directors have even added scholarly material on relating to administrations (Cunningham, 2005; Paine, 2007) and departments (Dreher, 2007), many new directors have no idea where to start or focus on coaching rather than managing the program's other relationships. This is understandable when the short term needs of the twenty students with five events each is obvious and the public relations role of the director appears far off, even more so when the team is run by graduate students who must also teach and take classes. Yet, without strong connections with departments, administrations, and student government, forensics programs are unable to grow and have no defense from being deemed fat that needs to be cut from budgets. The most important task for directors of forensics is to recognize how these relationships can be established and how to maintain them in relation to one another.

The immense value of forensics for all parts of the college or university system has been clearly documented (Cunningham, 2005; Dreher, 2007; Hinck, 2005; Holm and Miller, 2004; Littlefield, 1991; Mcmillan and Todd-Mancillas, 1991; Morris, 2007; Paine, 2007). The challenge for the director remains communicating that value to the forensics program's publics and demonstrating the need for each public to maintain a positive relationship with the program. This paper is an attempt to help directors to maintain those relationships and to balance their role as coach with their role as a public relations professional. To this end, a review of the literature is organized by important publics. An analysis of this literature is given from which research questions are established that can help to commence further inquiry into the role of public relations in directing forensics.

Managing Relationships with Students

As the figurehead of the forensics program the director is responsible for maintaining a relationship with students who are currently on the team as well as any new recruits who are looking to join. It is important that directors maintain open two-way symmetrical communication with students. This everyday interpersonal level of communication is vital for maintaining a productive team. Also, it is important for new members to feel wanted and appreciated and to keep the team from splitting into fragments.

Paine and Stanley (2003) explore this level of team management by searching for ways that directors can make the team fun. Their article suggests that by keeping the team fun students will stay in the activity longer and coaches will be able to prevent burn out. Paine and Stanley (2003) surveyed 106 students and found that students have fun when they are with other members of the forensics community, play the game of forensics and view the activity as educationally beneficial. Students are unhappy when they perceive that the activity punishes risk-taking and when the activity seems too professional. With this in mind, directors need to incorporate elements of fun into team life in order to sponsor a healthy learning environment. By communicating the playful nature of forensics and by explaining the educational

value of the activity to students the director of forensics and students can find mutual benefit. Furthermore, it is necessary for directors to facilitate risk taking and to work with students to incorporate new ideas that keep the activity fresh and enjoyable. Through actions such as this a director can establish a culture that is positive, fun, and educational.

This type of culture can be positive for recruiting as well. Dean and Dean (1985) describe the process of recruiting within the university. For many schools that do not have the funding for scholarships or recruiting trips this can be an excellent team building method. Dean and Dean (1985) explain that the team needs to interact with potential recruits early because the forensics program will have to compete with athletics, Greek life, and other organizations for potential students. It is also important to strategically market to students who have interest in public speaking. This can be done by developing relationships with the admissions department so when students receive a questionnaire asking for their interests, public speaking can be one of the options. This information can be given to the director of forensics and a mailing list can be started at the beginning of the school year. Also, Dean and Dean (1985) discovered that returning students can help with recruiting by calling potential students or by performing at an informational meeting. Student newspaper advertisements can also be an inexpensive and very effective means of recruiting. Furthermore, when potential recruits come to a team meeting with returning members who demonstrate a positive team climate as described by Paine and Stanley (2003) the recruits are more likely to join. In order to keep new and returning members informed Dean and Dean (1985) suggests holding a weekly team meeting so students can ask questions and maintain involvement in the team. Also, any possible recruits who surface during the year can be directed to these meetings for more information.

Managing Alumni

The alumni of a program can be a powerful ally for a forensics program. The alumni of many programs, especially the predominately competitively successful ones, utilize their alums for coaching, funding, and moral support. Also, for many programs their alumni are the first stop gap when a program is in danger of budget cuts or entire elimination. Letters from years worth of alumni whose lives were forever improved because of forensics can be a very persuasive tool.

It is easy for forensic competitors who do not find competitive success to view their experience as unrewarding. Dyer (2007) notes that alumni can be an effective instrument for reminding students about the real benefits of the activity because in an activity where the intense fear of public speaking is almost entirely forgotten and some competitors give twenty speeches in a day, it is easy to see why the average person is shocked when they find out about forensics. Yet, for the competitors this becomes the norm and they often forget that by simply participating in the activity students gain skills that will place them in the highest percent of public speaking ability. By bringing alumni to team meetings to discuss how forensics has helped them or by using alumni testimonials on team flyers, students can be reminded of the educational value of forensics and new recruits can become new team members. Alumni can also be used as quality judges, additional coaches, and financial sponsors. Directors need to utilize this pool to develop and protect their organization.

Many universities expect forensic directors to participate in fundraising for the team as well as all of their other duties. Hink (2005) offers suggestions for developing an endowment that can keep a team functioning and possibly independent of administrative funding. Hink (2005) argues that directors need to understand the history of their program in order to use that history with alumni. By knowing the history directors will know the stories that keep alumni supporting the team. The internet can be used to develop an alumni website that can explain the current team's successes and what the team needs are for the year. This website can later become a report that will be a record of the history of the team. Also, a website can be used to contact alumni that have been lost. Hink (2005) explains that such a website can be used by alumni to convince other alumni to help with the current team. Hink (2005) also suggests coordinating with the college development office to use development officers who are experienced at cultivating contacts with financially successful alumni. This method can be used to significantly increase an endowment. Finally, Hink (2005) recommends directors develop alumni events such as an era versus era debate or a golf outing that can bring past students and coaches together, reminding them that they are still part of the team.

Involving the Department

Forensic programs are unique in their role as co-curricular competitive activity. Unlike most athletic teams, few departments exist solely for the support of a forensics program. Hence, many directors can feel like the team is funded by but not actually a part of their department. Many forensics teams are located in a communication department but this is not always the case. Some teams are supported by the honors department, political science, business, education or at times by no actual department at all. Regardless, the department can become a valuable asset or the beginning of the end; therefore, it is vital that a director learns how to manage this relationship.

At some colleges and universities forensics is still part of the curricula. Dreher (2007) describes

how students in Argumentation and Debate at Bethel University were required to participate in at least one policy debate tournament and one Lincoln-Douglas debate tournament. Students in the Persuasion course were required to write and memorize a persuasive speech for competition at one or more tournaments. As faculty changed, the requirement was eliminated from the Persuasion class but students in the major are still required to participate in at least one tournament. As the major has grown exponentially Dreher (2007) notes that this has become much more difficult on the department but the original process was effective at involving all students and faculty in forensics. Not every program can participate in such activities but it is important to note that a forensics instructor can have a quantitatively as well as qualitatively large impact on students. Dreher (2007) also argues that directors should suggest that the department reexamine the traditional model of scholarship. Involvement in forensics means that directors are constantly reevaluating their teaching and working to improve, researching new material, synthesizing that material with students and improving the overall quality of the discipline in general. Dreher (2007) advocates for a system where directors are not required to publish or perish when their common activities are equally beneficial. If such a change can occur than directors would have more time to spend on teaching and with their families, resulting in less burnout and a better education for students.

Morris (2007) also describes the incredible time commitment facing a director of forensics but notes that many directors feel as if they are an anomaly. More importantly Morris (2007) points out how few directors of forensics with competitively successful programs have tenure or a PhD. Of twenty-three directors of nationally ranked forensics programs only four had a PhD. and fifteen had an M.A. Only one was tenured and fourteen were on renewable contracts. Morris (2007) suggests that departments and directors need to work together to re-evaluate the tenure process because one possible reason for such a discrepancy may be the lack of time directors have to publish. Also, Morris (2007) notes that some departments do not view forensic publications as equivalent to other publications. Furthermore, eighteen of the twenty-three directors have seriously thought about leaving the activity. With such findings in mind it is vital that directors work to develop a two-way symmetrical relationship with their department faculty in order to communicate these difficulties with departments. Directors should also work to incorporate other faculty into the coaching process in order to save time, gain valuable insight for students, involve the department in the team and demonstrate the workload required of a director of forensics.

Managing a Relationship with Administration

Administrators come from decidedly different backgrounds, many with no experience with forensics. This can be especially challenging when administrators are looking at budget cutbacks and see forensics as unnecessary. At the same time, administrators who are supportive can perpetuate a thriving program. Because of the differences in administrators it is vital for a forensics program to have an open relationship with administration. Only when both sides know what the other wants can the two find mutual benefit.

Paine (2007) notes that many instructors including directors of forensics feel as if they are misunderstood by administration and not given the credit they deserve. However, the same can be said from the perspective of the administrator. Paine (2007) points out that commonly administrators must jump through endless hoops and maneuver through internal politics to scrounge up a small amount of funds in an under funded college. Good relationships between directors and administrators take a great deal of time, patience, and care. Paine (2007) describes two paradigms that must be recognized, the traditional view of the university as the "seat of learning" and the contemporary view of the university as a "business." If administrators come from the "seat of learning" perspective directors should focus on the critical thinking, enhanced performance, and research abilities developed by forensic students. Paine (2007) recommends justifying the forensic program to administrators by pointing out how well it fits with the institution's mission statement. When administrators view the team from a business perspective it is important to point out how many students the university recruits for forensics, the positive press coverage gained by the team, how the university can market the team's success to build departmental reputation and other ways the program fits in from a monetary standpoint.

It is also important to get to know the university administrators from the ground up (Cunningham, 2005). Cunningham (2005) notes that by working up the administrative ladder no one feels left behind and each person feels involved in the process of building a forensics program. When coming in to a program with an already existing relationship with administration Cunningham (2005) suggests ignoring the hearsay from the outgoing director. Making new ground with administrators can impress them and gain allies. Cunningham (2005) also notes, by positively impacting the campus with community involvement and campus programs a new director can quickly gain the attention of administrators. Cunningham (2005) recommends teams develop welcome week activities for students and a performance series. Also, directors should have students volunteer to perform at administrative functions and

host high school tournaments so that administrators can see all of the prospective students that the forensic team can cater to.

It is important to maintain this relationship after it has been built. This can be done by keeping administrators informed about the team's successes and the on campus activities. Cunningham (2005) advises directors to ask a public relations student to volunteer to help with the team. This can often be a member of the team who can make flyers, press releases, or just send an e-mail to administrators. Also, directors should become involved in national organizations. At the University of Indianapolis in 1990 the program was in danger of being cut. A first place finish in Division III sweepstakes at NFA that year was the only national championship in the school's history and the team budget was quadrupled that year (Cunningham, 2005). Finally, Cunningham (2005) suggests doing little things like sending thank you cards to administrators for supporting the team. Through methods such as these, directors can begin the slow process of bonding the institution administration with the forensics team.

Preempting Legal Crisis

After countless hours on van rides, staying together in hotel rooms, and meeting for outside of school activities, many coaches become good friends with students. This can become a unique challenge because legal boundaries separate coaches from simply being fellow competitors.

Frank (2005) explains common legal issues facing directors of forensics as well as ways to keep coaches from crossing legal lines. Frank (2005) points out that directors must first take into account the private or public status of the institution because a public institution affords more rights than a private, where the school by-laws become the rules. Also, coaches need to recognize that when traveling they must act on behalf of and in accordance with their institutional standards and sexual harassment must never be allowed. Even coaches who know that a student on the team is being harassed by another student and do nothing about it are liable for harassment themselves (Frank, 2005). Frank (2005) explains an array of legal concerns when directing a forensics program but most notably argues that directors should always use common sense first. Directors must always have the well being of the students as the most important priority. A coach supplying alcohol to minors, sexually harassing a student or breaking an array of other laws can immediately result in the termination of the coach and possibly the end of the program. Directors should make the ramifications of such actions clear to all coaches and students because directors of forensics must be able to be trusted by their departments, administrations, and most importantly, students. A legal crisis often has no recourse or possibility of management other than the termination of a coach or banning of a student.

Limitations and Analysis

The literature surrounding the public relations aspects of forensics is clearly limited. Almost all of the literature is contained to the university or college setting and there is little research exploring how forensic programs can or should interact with the communities outside of campus. This includes the interaction between intercollegiate forensics and high school forensics. This element is essential for recruiting purposes and for developing students when they transition from the high school to intercollegiate program. Furthermore, more research needs to be done to determine how programs participate in service activities in the community off-campus. The forensics community must also further research the prospect of marketing to off-campus communities to bring awareness and a larger audience to forensics competitions. There is a nearly endless list of possibilities for future research on the relationship between public relations and forensics and the forensics community should be concerned with this because it is indicative of a lack of forensics research in general. Directors and coaches should use the limited time they have to work on publishing to develop forensics literature rather than other topics. With this analysis and limitations of the current literature surrounding the intersection of public relations and forensics in mind, the following research questions are asked in order to prompt future research.

RQ 1: What are effective ways that directors of forensics can manage their time in order to further study the role of public relations in forensics?

RQ 2: Should the forensic community attempt to market forensics to an audience outside of the forensic community? If so, what is the best way to market to this audience?

RQ 3: How can intercollegiate forensics strengthen the relationships between high school and intercollegiate forensics programs?

RQ 4: How can the forensic community work together to defend programs that are in danger of being cut by departments or administrations?

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Understanding the Hyphen
Addressing the Debate-IE Divide

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Abstract

At the 2008 National Forensics Association National Championship Tournament, a special meeting was held for the coaches of Lincoln-Douglas (LD) debaters. At this meeting, those in attendance attempted to voice concerns about both the perceived "slights" and the actual structures in place (like sweepstakes formulas, awards, and qualifications) from the larger NFA community, made up of individual events (IE) coaches. Issues like limited judge strikes or mutually preferred judging, changing the schedule so that debaters did not go first and last on competition days, and allowing for oral comments by judges were all discussed. But at the heart of this "rift" is the notion that maybe the LD community and the IE community have different, possibly incommensurate, objectives. It is with that thought in mind that I propose some community, both LD and IE, objectives that could lead us to address this growing divide in one of three ways: Leaving things alone, separating the two groups, or merging the groups into one. This paper will explore the implications of these options for addressing the debate-IE divide.

Introduction

Some time ago, I had a conversation with a colleague of mine about debate at the National Forensics Association (NFA) National Tournament. At the time, the team I coached did not have any Lincoln-Douglas (LD) debaters. With no debaters entered in the tournament, I was not going to judge LD at the national tournament. When I said this, my colleague asked me why I wasn't going to judge LD anyway. He argued that I would be helping the LD community by judging, since I was familiar with the event having competed in and coached the event. I told him that I had an obligation to my own team. He countered by saying that I had an obligation to the LD community, because if I didn't judge, someone less "qualified" would take my place. In essence, I owed it to the debate community to judge. I ultimately declined, deciding to focus on my team of IE competitors, but that conversation stuck with me.

It was a bit shocking for many of my friends and colleagues involved in competitive forensics for me to not have any debaters at the national tournament. You see, I began my career as a debater. In fact, when I was competing, I regularly referred to myself as purely a debater and not someone who did Individual Events (IEs). The team I competed for was predominantly an IE squad, regularly placing in the top twenty at the American Forensics Association National Individual Events Tournament. But I was a debater. I traveled exclusively to debate tournaments and only did IEs to meet minimum travel requirements. As I transitioned into coaching, I still thought of myself as a debater, or rather a debate coach. I began my coaching career on a team that had traditionally done well in LD and prided itself on its debate background.

Now that I have been coaching forensics for approximately five years, I have started thinking more about conversations like the one mentioned above. My debate friends have been somewhat hostile to the notion that I have transitioned to a more IE focused team. They have told me that I should go back to my debate roots. Yet, I constantly wonder why there is such hostility between debaters and their IE counterparts. At its national tournament, NFA now has four public address events (persuasion, informative, rhetorical criticism, after-dinner speaking), two limited preparation events (extemporaneous speaking and impromptu speaking), four interpretation events (dramatic duo, dramatic drama, prose, poetry) and LD. On the surface, it appears as if there is more than enough room for debate and IEs to peacefully coexist under the umbrella of NFA. But the differences in awards, qualifications, resources, popularity, and perception have created an environment where debate and IEs are divided.

This paper will examine the realities of the debate-IE divide. For this examination, I will explore the history of NFA LD from its inception at the 1988 National Developmental Conference to the present. I will also look to the structures of tournaments, including scheduling, sweepstakes tabulations, and awards, to understand the created difference between debate and IEs. Finally, I will propose some options for addressing the debate-IE divide.

The History of NFA LD

While there were many national tournaments held at the end of the academic year including the annual National Debate Tournament and the Interstate Oratorical Association tournament, it was not until 1971 that the first IE national tournament was held (Fryar, 1984). Under the direction of Dr. Seth Hawkins, the National Forensics Association held the first IE national tournament at Ohio Northern

University in the spring of 1971. For nearly 40 years, the NFA has held its national tournament every spring. But it was not until 1991 that LD was offered at the NFA National Tournament. In fact, LD was not even considered until the 1988 National Developmental Conference.

At the 1988 National Developmental Conference, Dr. Roger Aden proposed an event that combined the argumentation and research skills typically associated with academic debate and the delivery skills associated with individual events (1989). Arguing that the forensics as laboratory metaphor may be problematic, Aden (1991) countered with forensics as a liberal art that "is designed to produce individuals who are able to think independently rather than solely relying on existing knowledge" (p. 101). In essence, a format of debate that would allow competitors to actively engage each other in critical discussions and arguments about real world policy decisions would be a valuable skill that NFA should promote (Aden, 1989).

A special edition of the *National Forensics Journal* focusing on LD was published in 1996. From that edition, Minch and Borchers (1996) argued that LD was an event that "emphasizes traditional aspects of academic debate" including "evidence, reasoning, cross examination, and refutation" but that LD was also "dedicated to communicative performance in which high standards for presentation are encouraged" (p. 19). Howard and Brussee (1996) saw LD "not as a competitive end, but as an educational means to develop communication, argumentation, persuasion, and analytical skills" (p. 59). In the years between LD's inception in 1988 and the special edition in 1996, LD "significantly expanded opportunities for students to experience the benefits of educational debate" (Bile, 1996, p. 37).

As LD has grown in popularity, some have wondered how LD should be viewed by the greater forensics community (Billings, 2002). Billings (2002) noted that LD was not combined with the IEs in sweepstakes tabulations, instead having the top five LD schools receiving separate national awards. Billings (2002) credited Williams with being the only scholar to argue for competitors doing both LD and IEs, but also posited a coming "sink-or-swim" decision about the future of LD. The time for that decision is rapidly approaching.

Structuring Division

When Aden suggested a debate event at the NFA, the suggestion was couched in educationally sound, pedagogically valid terms (1989). The intent was an event that combined the best of the debate skills with the best of the presentation skills NFA had to offer. However, between the inception and the application a few years later, a division between debate and IEs was formed. While most would consider this division to be more perceptual than anything, the division is actually fostered by the structures on tabulation formulas, awards, and tournament practices. The structure of this division has facilitated an environment of difference that has pushed LD and IEs away from each other.

At the NFA National Tournament, the top five LD schools are awarded team sweepstakes trophies. The awards, large silver cups, closely resemble the overall team sweepstakes awards given to the top ten IE schools. And the recognition is nice, showing the NFA community that those top five LD schools have excelled in that event. Yet, those same points the LD schools earn are not counted toward the overall sweepstakes tabulation (Billings, 2002). Interestingly, students entered in Pentathalon (five or more events) may count LD as a limited preparation event. It seems clear that LD could count toward the overall sweepstakes trophies, but it is kept separate by the formula itself. By excluding LD from the overall sweepstakes formula, the structures of the national tournament encourage a division between LD and IEs.

While LD is only one event, it has received far more awards and qualifications than the other IEs. For example, at the NFA National Tournament, LD awards five sweepstakes awards, ten speaker awards, and thirty-two elimination round awards. Compare that to any IE that is awarded twenty-four elimination round awards. The next closest IE to LD in terms of number of awards given is dramatic duo which has twenty-four duos or forty-eight trophies. Duo might give out one more award than LD, but there is no team sweepstakes trophy for the best dramatic duo school. Additionally, the qualification system for the national tournament creates difference. For an IE, six competitors qualify for nationals if there are at least 11 entries in that event from seven different schools. To qualify seven, there must be at least 70 competitors in the field. For LD, up to 16 debaters can qualify for nationals as long as there are 31 debaters from at least three schools. To qualify 16 IE slots in one event, there would need to be 160 competitors in that event, which is larger than some events at the national tournament.

Even the national offices foster a sense of division. The IEs are governed by the Executive Council, made up of coaches elected to seats. LD has its own committee with an Executive Council representative and three at large members elected by the membership. No other IE has its own committee to propose legislation, address membership concerns, or hold special meetings. The LD committee, on the other hand, has that power. At the 2008 NFA National Tournament, the LD committee called for a meeting of the LD coaches to address some concerns of the coaches. The meeting was designed to stimulate discussion about any changes that the LD coaches would like to see NFA make to the practice of LD. In that meeting, coaches discussed ideas like changing

the restriction of oral critiques after rounds, considering the possibility of limited judge strikes, and reworking the schedule so that LD was not both first and last each day. The committee promised to take those suggestions to the Executive Council for consideration. This type of meeting is unique to LD, since the IEs do not have the same level of committee representation.

The structures of the tournament also contribute to a sense of difference. At the NFA National Tournament, LD is often the first and last event of the day, with IEs spread throughout. The rationale is that LD requires more space and judging, so it should be separated from the IEs. And yet, there are also more elimination rounds in LD than there are in IEs. At the national tournament, IE break to quarterfinals, while LD breaks to double octafinals. During the regular season, LD may be relegated to Friday afternoon before the IE tournament begins so as to free up rooms and judges for the IEs.

It would be easy to dismiss many of these differences as attributable to the inherent difference between debate and IEs; I don't want to be that hasty. The truth is that there *are* differences between debate and IEs. The time the events take is different, with IEs taking 10 minutes and debate lasting 42 minutes. IEs have six competitors per section while LD is one-on-one. But the real difference comes from the structures we have created to keep LD and IEs separate. Billings (2002) noted that LD exists by being fragmented from other NFA events, mostly for "fear of backlash from a larger segment of the forensics community which hopes to keep debate separate from individual events" (p. 32).

Options for Addressing the Debate-IE Divide

Given the differences between LD and IEs, it is apparent that something must be done to address these differences. I say this not to argue for one side of the divide to change in order to placate the other side. Rather, I argue that the NFA forensics community as a whole must decide what we want for both LD and IEs. That being said, I foresee three distinct options for the community to pursue: sticking to the status quo, separating the two, or bringing both sides together. Allow me to further explain each option so the differences between each option are made clear.

Sticking to the Status Quo

Any conversation you would have with coaches, regardless of the events that coach oversees, about the LD-IE divide would result in that coach saying that the debate and IEs are "just different." That answer may be given with a shrug or a shake of the head, but the consensus is that the two sides are different enough that you cannot lump the two together. That being said, since its inception in the fall of 1990, LD has been offered throughout the regular forensics season at a myriad of tournaments as well as at the national tournament. As previously stated, LD was created as an event where forensics students could engage in debate as well as hone public speaking skills (Aden, 1989).

And since those early days, LD has grown. At the 2008 National Tournament at Tennessee State University, the number of competitors entered in LD was over 100 debaters, the largest the field had ever been. As new programs are coming to LD and other programs are coming back to debate, it stands to reason that LD will continue its growth. Part of that growth is due to LD competitors and coaches that come to the event after having competed in other formats of debate. Many collegiate LDers began their debate career as high school policy debaters. Several coaches have links to collegiate policy debate but have switched to LD for reasons like the relative ease of entry into the activity, the low cost of travel and competition, and the decreased research burden compared to other iterations of policy debate.

The growth has been good. Increasing numbers of competitors, critics, and coaches has made the event more robust and more competitive. But this same increase has also helped to foster the perceived debate-IE divide. As the number of debaters increase, the louder the voices calling for change become. The LD coaches meeting at the 2008 NFA National Tournament demonstrates this best. In the meeting, LD coaches publically voiced their fears that the IE community does not care about the concerns of the debate community, even though the head of the LD committee assured those gathered that the meeting itself demonstrated the Executive Council's commitment to LD. The perception is that the IE schools do not care what the LD teams do so long as it does not interfere with the schedule, tabulation, or sweepstakes formula. In response, the LD teams feel that the IE schools will veto any proposed changes because they do not understand the differences between debate and IEs.

The reality of the situation is nowhere near as bleak as some would contend. At the national tournament alone, LD is the smallest event by the number of entrants, yet receives a separate flighting, a team sweepstakes award, individual speaker awards, and trophies for the top 32 competitors, those advancing to double octafinals and beyond. Additionally, LD has a separate national level committee with one member of the Executive Council and three members selected at large by a vote from the NFA membership. Needless to say, LD has been given many resources to succeed. But more telling is the fact that many competitors do more than just debate. At the 2008 National Tournament, between one-quarter and one-third of the LD entrants also entered at least one IE and 11 LDers were eligible for Pentathalon. In fact, of the 32 debaters qualifying for elimination rounds, 14 were entered in at least one

IE. And for the past two years, the LD National Runner-Up was also the National Champion in Impromptu. The truth is that many students are doing both LD and IEs, and doing them well.

Given this state of affairs, one option for addressing the debate-IE divide is to do nothing. The system, while certainly not perfect, has worked for nearly 20 years now. Students have been given the opportunity to compete in both IEs and debate and coaches can make strategic choices about the direction of their own programs. So the solution is to stick with the status quo and make no major changes. By making the decision to maintain the status quo, the only real change would be the mindset of those involved. LD coaches and competitors would have a say in the shaping of their activity and the IE coaches and competitors would recognize that debate is different. This perceptual change would have the benefit of maintaining a familiar and tested qualification system and tabulation method. The only real change would be that the community as a whole would decide that we like things the way they are and do not want to change. This decision to maintain the status quo could alleviate negative perceptions and foster a community of cooperation.

Separating Debate from IEs

Perhaps the community does not want to stick to the status quo. Instead, the community might decide that debate and IEs are different enough that there is no reason to keep them combine in one tournament. Over the years, I have heard a number of debaters and debate coaches complain that the NFA National Tournament is too long for those only doing LD. In the years where the national tournament is on a five day schedule, the debaters have six round spread over three days, with elimination rounds starting on the fourth day. In fact, there is only one round of debate on the third day of competition in the five day schedule. The complaint levied by the debate only programs is that they spend large amounts of money on hotels, food, and travel for a national tournament that features a lot of waiting around for the next debate round to occur. And perhaps these coaches and competitors have a point. For the past several years, LD has been the first and last round of the day on day two with another round occurring over the lunch break period. For those debate only programs, they get up early, compete, wait until lunch, compete again, wait until the end of the day, and compete a third time.

When asked about the scheduling of debater rounds first and last, members of the tabulation staff explained that LD, while being smallest in number, also required the most judges and rooms. To ensure that there was enough space and judges, the LD rounds had to be scheduled with the fewest other things going on at the same time in the schedule. The pragmatics of the schedule aside, some critics have wondered, aloud, if it might be more beneficial to have a separate national tournament for LD only. This tournament could increase the number of preliminary rounds while still ensuring a shorter tournament. One proposal called for eight preliminary rounds with all winning records advancing to elimination rounds. The arguments for a separate LD national tournament include the shorter schedule, the ability to modify the tournament to be more in-line with other debate national tournaments, and have a more exclusive judging pool. The shorter schedule is obvious, with no IEs to wait for, the debaters could increase the number of preliminary rounds while also keeping the tournament to three days. This change would save those debate only schools money on hotels and meals. Being that there are a plethora of other formats of debate, there are a number of ways to run national tournaments. That being said, some debaters feel that things like judge strikes or mutually preferred judging, disclosure (revealing decisions at the end of the round), and warm rooms (postings of results on a round-by-round basis) are vital to a “real” national tournament. And if the tournament is LD only, those that come to the tournament to judge will likely be more familiar with debate than those hired to judge an IE-debate tournament.

From the IE side of things, a separate LD national tournament would mean that the NFA National Tournament would end each day around dinner time. Because LD is run in a separate flight with the experimental event, no other real changes would likely occur. The only other area where time could be saved would be the awards ceremony where there would no longer be the LD elimination round contestant awards, speaker awards, and LD team sweepstakes awards.

But before we start packing bags and saying goodbye, I would like to offer a word of caution. In 2008, an LD only “national” tournament was held in Topeka, Kansas. This tournament used the 2007-2008 NFA LD resolution and time limits to guide competition. The tournament was originally scheduled to last two and a half days, ending at noon on the third day. Since 2008 was the first year for this tournament, less than 30 debaters entered the tournament, compared to the over 100 LDers at the NFA National Tournament. Clearly, this LD only national tournament is possible. But we should be cautious, especially considering that most teams had to make a choice between this LD only tournament and the NFA National Tournament. The result was a smaller number of schools chose to attend this LD only national tournament.

Additional concerns are that if NFA held a separate LD only national tournament, some schools would not have the financial resources to attend both the NFA National Tournament and the LD national tournament. This could result in a smaller

number of entrants in both LD and IEs. Beyond the financial concerns, some coaches may decide not to travel their team to both NFA national tournaments, especially if those teams attend other state, regional, and national tournaments in the spring. The students are expected to be students and attend class. More tournaments would only serve to increase the number of classes missed by competitors, which is not a big selling point to departments and institutions. Maybe this isn't the best option.

Bringing Everyone Together

I have already talked about maintaining the status quo and having a separate LD only national tournament, but I'm not convinced either of those options would be the best for the community. That is why I have saved my boldest, most extreme option for last: merge LD and IEs together in the overall sweepstakes formula. Now before I field your questions and concerns, let me further explain my proposal. In its inception, LD was intended to be debate for the IE competitor (Aden, 1989), which blended the research and argumentation skills of traditional debate with the delivery skills of IEs (Minch & Borchers, 1996) and that "emphasized both substance and style" (Diers, 2005, p. 45). Derryberry (1991) noted that many administrators have pushed for a "total forensics program" that offers students an opportunity to compete in a wide range of forensics activities, since this broad focus would be both educationally valid and administratively pleasing (p. 20). Since that initial idea, LD has become increasingly technical, relying more on debate theory, strategy, and research (Bile, 1996). The push to be more technical has fostered the perception that debate is drastically different, if not incommensurable, from IEs. But that does not have to be the case.

During the 2008 NFA National Tournament, at the LD coaches meeting, several LD coaches asked if a limited number of strikes would be possible at future tournaments considering the tournament started with more LD judges than were needed. The tabulation staff quickly noted that most years, LD started with a judging deficit and that even though the 2008 tournament started differently, many hired judges did not pick up ballots for LD after the first round. The reason is likely because LD is scary to the uninitiated. If you were to ask IE coaches about LD, many would say they don't like judging the event because the debaters talk "too fast," the arguments are "too technical," or the judges don't feel confident rendering a decision. The speed and technical nature of the round depends on the debaters, but is fostered by a community of debaters that like that style of debate. As for the decision, debate is far different from IEs. In a typical IE round, the judge is asked to rank the six competitors. But in an LD round, there is a winner and a loser. With so much at stake, it can be intimidating for the novice critic to render a decision, especially if they do not fully understand the more technical aspects of the debate.

On the debate side, most debaters would likely rather have a "flow" judge, one who is familiar with debate terminology, jargon, rules, and practices. These debaters dread having the "lay" judge, who is not familiar with debate practices. The lay judge is often associated with the IE coach because the IE coach does not teach LD to his/her students. The debaters feel that they have to "dumb down" their cases and arguments so that the lay judge will understand what is going on in the round. This reaction to the lay judge is both demeaning to the critic and based on the perception that debate is more complicated than other events. But at its heart, debate is about making good arguments that compel a critic to take one side over another.

So with so much difference, hostility, and confusing, why would I suggest merging the events together? To make the LD better and more representative of the NFA community as a whole. The current structure of the sweepstakes formula separates LD and IEs more than any perceptual barrier could. LD has its own sweepstakes formula and IEs have their own separate formula. Yet if LD was included in the overall sweepstakes formula, things would change drastically. For starters, it would be a bit redundant to have a separate LD sweepstakes award. When we consider LD as the now eleventh IE, it would make no more sense to have a separate sweepstakes cup for debate than it would to have a team sweepstakes trophy for Dramatic Duo Interpretation or Extemporaneous Speaking. And yet, by adding LD to the overall team sweepstakes formula, schools that have been IE only might make a foray into debate to earn sweepstakes points. This would have a ripple effect.

When IE only school enter LD, the former IE only judges now become regular debate judges. This means that these "lay" judges would soon outnumber the "flow" judges and require more adaptation on the part of the debaters. Additionally, the "lay" judges would be able to use their ballots as tools to endorse or discourage particular arguments and debate practices. And the rounds would move away from the extremely technical and more back toward an event that merges substance and style. For the debaters, there would be many new debaters that were pulled from the ranks of IE squads. The debate practices would likely favor the well informed speaker who had some familiarity with argumentation theory.

By merging debate and IEs into the overall sweepstakes formula, there would instantly be more competitors and judges in LD. This would change the way debate is done at NFA tournaments, by bringing in new debaters and critics that are not as familiar with the more technical aspects of debate. As noted above, many debaters also do IEs well. It only makes sense that the skill of the IE competitors

would translate to success in LD as well. By merging the two, LD would grow. Additionally, the entire NFA community would have a greater say in the development of LD. While initially shocking, I contend that a merger is the best possible option for the NFA community. In fact, over ten years ago, David Williams (1996) suggested that the most educational benefit for the students came from doing both debate and IEs, not from choosing one over the other. By changing the structure of the sweepstakes formula, perhaps the NFA community can promote such dual competitive endeavors.

Conclusion

The debate-IE divide exists both in perception and in reality. The structures of tournaments, awards, qualifications, representation, and practices have created an environment where LD and IEs may be deemed incommensurable. It is my contention that the only way to foster a cooperative environment is to merge LD with the IEs in the overall sweepstakes tabulation at the NFA National Tournament. The resulting ripples of change would affect the judging pool, the number of competitors, and the way debate is practiced. But the change would be in the organization, where the membership as a whole, LD and IE, could come together to decide the future of NFA LD. In 2002, Billings foresaw a “sink-or-swim” mindset where NFA members would have to take a hard look at the way LD is done (p. 32). The time for decision is now, and the best option is to merge together, not fracture apart.

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Facilitating Dual Service Programs
Imperatives for the Future of Forensics

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I do not recall the last time I was at any sort of gathering of directors of forensics for any length of time when the discussion did not at some point turn to the issue of program mortality. Everyone has a story to tell of a program that recently ended, or is at risk of doing so. The most difficult moment in my own forensic career came only three years ago, when secret political maneuverings by a couple of self-aggrandizing administrators (who have since flown from their positions) put an end to a forensics program that was over 100 years old and had produced an average of two national champions over the previous twenty of those years. My story is not unusual; Derryberry (1991, p. 19) cited similar concerns as he reviews the literature and argues that forensic programs are always at the risk of the budget pen. In the current economy, I am convinced that only a few programs—those fortunate enough to be funded by major endowments or alumni/donor agreements—are more than one new administrator away from elimination. In an activity with so many clear educational benefits that I am not even going to bother to review the pertinent literature, it is astonishing to me that this situation endures. Having won every argument made to save my previous program, refuting every single false claim made by the administration for the "unfortunate necessity" of its elimination and even winning the battle in the local press, I am convinced that we can no longer rely on the argumentation techniques of presenting our evidence and assuming a rational audience. We won the popular vote of the community in my situation; but the two administrators at the foot of the program's elimination were in no mood for rationality. Shrewd deal-making and power-playing won the day, and forensics lost. Instead, I will argue in this paper that we need to embrace some of the movements in contemporary education and link forensics to them. Forensics can win these battles just as successfully as it can demonstrate its educational benefits, and by doing so, will have a chance to survive. I will also argue that the best way to reach this goal is to support the dual purpose, or "full-service," forensics program. I will begin by defining what I mean by a dual purpose program. Then, I'll look at the justifications, both historical and potential, of such a program. Finally, and in the spirit of this developmental conference, I will suggest some possible ways to encourage dual purpose programs.

Dual purpose (and I will use the term "full-service" interchangeably) forensics programs are most commonly described as "emphasizing participation in numerous individual events along with one or more types of debate competition" (Derryberry, p. 21). I would add one factor to the definition: the program must exist under the guidance of a single director of forensics or be coordinated by a department chair or similar official who sees the program as a whole. I have worked in programs where the debate program and individual events program were entirely separate, with different directors, different budgets, and students who never met one another. This is not a dual purpose program; it is two programs. Interestingly, the debate side of that particular pair of programs no longer exists. While I know of several institutions where separate debate and individual event programs operate, I know of very few where both flourish. I know of more where even outstanding previous support for each of the separate programs has now diminished to the point that one is in danger. Fortunately, today offers more opportunities than ever to engage the full-service program concept. A program no longer needs to work with individual events at the same time they compete in policy debate over a year-long topic. Parliamentary debate offers an alternative that is extremely friendly to many individual event students. National Forensic Association Lincoln-Douglas debate is also available. With no slight to that activity intended, I will argue in this paper to define dual purpose programs as offering individual events with a type of *team* debate. My sole rationale is that such a definition will offer more opportunities to more students, and more opportunities for forensic programs to make the type of arguments I am suggesting to prevent program attrition.

The benefits of dual purpose forensics programs have historically been linked to the "more is better" breadth of education philosophy. In a previous publication, I have pointed out the resource tensions and pedagogical decisions that lie within such a philosophy (West, "Breadth," 1997). In that article, I explained my own educational preferences for the full-service program, but did not condemn those directors who made decisions to specialize in either debate or individual events based on their own expertise or their evaluation of available resources. I will not condemn those choices in this paper; however, I do believe that those programs risk extinction in an

era of "enrollment management" and "fiscal responsibility." Much of the remaining scholarly discussion of dual purpose programs has dealt with the logistical issues that confront directors. Managing resources (West, "Breadth") and strategies to build team unity (West, "Cohesion," 2000) are among the most common subjects discussed.

In this paper, however, I want to concentrate on justifications for dual purpose programs that I believe make even stronger arguments for forensics in general. The first of these arguments is that of academic rigor. All of us have made arguments for the educational value of forensics. Wood and Rowland-Morin (1989, p. 81) list more than thirteen studies that document benefits of forensics, including communication skills, critical thinking, and pre-professional training. Kuster (2002, p. 50) argues that educational value is essential to protecting programs during times of budget cuts, and takes individual events to task for failing to provide as strong an argument as possible for grounding itself in theory rather than competition conventions. Indeed, most of the articles cited in Wood and Rowland-Morin's review pertain to academic debate—primarily team policy debate. But individual events have similar arguments to make; our public speaking events are ostensibly laboratory extensions of the classroom, and oral interpretation is designed to explore the human condition through rigorous analysis of written texts. We need to make those arguments for academic rigor. Another panel at this developmental conference is discussing ethical issues in individual events; I contend that overcoming the influence of convention is one of those ethical issues. Only through our pedagogy can we claim the academic accomplishment that our peers in other departments claim for their own existence. Other scholarship has suggested that we make more use of tournaments themselves as research laboratories (Harris, Kropp, & Rosenthal, 1986, p. 13); dual service programs will have more to study and more benefits to offer. I think many would be interested in discovering, for instance, whether parliamentary debaters enjoy the same increased skills in critical thinking that have long been associated with policy debate. What about extemporaneous speakers? Those who enter impromptu speaking? We need to look for links. I will revisit the "research" idea later in this paper. For now, I simply ask any doubters to question tenure track faculty; I believe most will attest to the fact that "academic rigor" is now inextricably linked to research. Forensics cannot escape this linkage, nor does it need to. Dual service programs give us more opportunities to do so.

Another potential area of argument for forensics, strengthened by full-service concepts, is to link forensics to the college or university's "core curriculum." One of the significant movements in contemporary higher education is the shift from "smorgasbord" menu-driven general education programs to the idea of a core curriculum (Inderbitzin & Storrs, 2008, p. 48). Interdisciplinary courses, or departmental courses that appeal to a variety of disciplines, link themselves to a list of learning goals the institution has deemed important to all its graduates. I have been personally involved with this movement, assisting our department chair in linking our department's basic public speaking course to Eastern Illinois University's then-new core curriculum as far back as the 1980's. Individual events should happily join with debate to establish itself within the core curriculum. "Critical thinking," clearly supported by research in debate, and individual event specialties such as communication competence (Jensen & Jensen, 2006), and appreciation of literature, should be easy to link. We should also be able to make the interdisciplinary nature of our activity work to our advantage; long gone are the days when more than 90% of our forensics students majored in speech education, theater, or pre-law.

The core curriculum has been used as a tool to link to another movement which I also believe holds great potential for the dual purpose forensic program—the call for accountability and assessment. Some institutions, for instance, have used the core curriculum as a "first step" toward accountability (Jordan-Fleming, Klabunde, & Zane, 2005, p. 25). Nelson (2007, p. 24) has noted that the call for instructional accountability in higher education is increasing and at its highest levels ever. Nonetheless, there is still controversy; one scholar argues that higher education accountability has been a "myth," with institutions manipulating definitions and public relations to avoid actual assessment (Carey, 2007). But the assessment issue is here to stay, and it should be. As educators, we need to know if what we are doing is working. Are we teaching what we say we are teaching? I think the full-service forensic program gives us a marvelous opportunity to put our profession at the forefront of the movement. When I interviewed for my current job, the committee discussion turned to what I believed to be among the values of a forensics program. When I listed critical thinking among those benefits, one member of the committee challenged me. His argument was that he taught critical thinking in all of his classes, and believed that other faculty in every department did so as well. As tactfully as possible, I assured him that I believed he taught critical thinking; however, I also noted that we are in an age of accountability and assessment, and we need to be able to prove that we are teaching what we think we are teaching. I have in my personal collection over a dozen different studies, including my own dissertation, that make a strong empirical case for forensics and its ability to produce quantifiable results in critical thinking. My point is that we in forensics can not only say we are teaching certain concepts—we can prove it. Again,

we should further our research, but I believe we can use our links to core curricular components and key issues in education in a way that meets assessment demands much better than other departments who are still in the "well, our students are doing well in our courses" mode of evaluation. I am not alone in this belief; Littlefield (2006) calls for balancing the competitive and educational aspects of our activity to emphasize and enhance forensics' epistemic function to meet calls for accountability. McMillan and Todd-Mancillas (1991, p. 1) specifically call for working with individual events to make a clearer link between accountability and program support. Our students accomplish great things; many of our speeches and debates create new knowledge. I love to tell colleagues in my department and others stories of my first-year student who discovered the details of stem-cell research in an informative speech long before President Bush thought to address the issue. Our public speakers, properly taught, can create new ideas and new solutions for myriad social problems. Debate, of course, is built for this purpose. Oral interpretation, properly taught, should give us new insights into the human condition. Again, the only thing we lack is more research proving these outcomes. I will propose solutions to this problem below.

Finally, I think forensics, and particularly individual events, has done less than it could to publicize and use its advantages in linking to the movement for diversity and inclusion in higher education. Here, individual events may have some advantages over debate. Chemerinsky (2001, p. 63) notes that policy debate has historically been a white male activity. Since Chemerinsky debated (in the 1970's) much progress has been made. Women constitute a much larger portion of the debate community, and there are major minority race and ethnicity voices among coaches and competitors. Initiatives such as urban debate leagues, the Becky Gallentine Award for women in debate, and a general awakening of consciousness continue to achieve progress. Individual events, in my experience, provide enhanced opportunities for inclusion. Siegel (2006, p. 465) notes that the diversity movement is expanding to link colleges and universities with business and professional constituencies. Any forensic coach with a few years of experience probably has a "brag list" of former students and what they are doing in their careers. Those of us who have been involved with forensics for a long time could likely make strong arguments for the diversity of our students in these successful occupations. Jensen and Jensen (2006, p. 24) support the epistemic function of forensics as a way of increasing intercultural awareness in our students. The full-service team concept is an excellent way of achieving heightened interaction between vastly different types of students.

If dual programs give us additional opportunities to link to major educational movements which administrators embrace, we should do what we can to encourages such programs. One way to do this is to use competition incentives to increase the visibility of the full-service program. Derryberry (1991, p. 19) mentions Dr. Seth Hawkins' *Intercollegiate Speech Tournament Results* publication. As I remember it, this was a pre-internet era print attempt to compile tournament results and rank programs based on their year-long results. Dual purpose programs were ranked, and some used those rankings as appeals for continued administrative support. The advent of internet and e-line based data accumulation would make it easy for a joint debate-individual events project to revive such a recognition. Of course, there would be details to work out, and I would suggest different levels of award status for programs of different size or resources, something we already do to some degree with different levels of team awards in NFA and Novice Nationals. We would have to decide how much weight we give to each area, how many tournaments count, what type of tournaments count more (or less) than others, etc. But if we are really the critical thinkers we claim to be, this ought to be possible. There are other competitive incentives that can be used. Research awards could be used to link individual event scripts with case briefs from debate co-workers. Perhaps programs could use the internet more effectively through websites to display what we do. I believe we need a major initiative to involve the media in providing more coverage for our activity; we must challenge journalists rather than begging them.

Second, we can make tournament formatting and scheduling more conducive to the dual purpose program. I remember one of my last years as a CEDA debate coach, sitting in the coaches' business meeting at the national tournament. The national executive committee of CEDA had just decided to move the date of CEDA's next national championship tournament and place it squarely upon the date of the AFA-NIET (a date which had been on the calendar for quite some time). My objection as the sole coach of a program devoted to full-service was met with sarcasm by one of CEDA's national officers, stating that "those people will just have to make a choice, won't they?" I was, for a while, ashamed of my profession in that it would elect to leadership persons with such a callous attitude toward forensics students. But I have come to realize that this was one person's view. There is now a web-published "national tournament calendar." While CEDA broke this calendar that year, I hope that the leaders of the national organizations could remain in communication with one another to avoid such unfortunate overlaps in the future. In regular season tournaments, "swing" tournaments provide an opportunity to combine two individual events tournaments and one

parliamentary debate tournament for both students and programs (policy debate's time limits make it virtually impossible for a student to do both, but programs could participate in each). Swing tournaments should be viewed with caution; there are wellness implications. But if one of the individual events tournaments is held on either the day before or the day after, programs can make a choice if they need to do so. I also call for rethinking the trend toward running parliamentary debate all the way through to finals prior to the joint IE/Debate awards assembly. While many would argue that this tactic enhances the dual service program, it can also serve to their detriment. Again, wellness and safety are at issue. A program that has completed its individual events competition and been eliminated from parliamentary debate must often wait hours—even most of a day—before students can travel home. This puts tired coaches and students driving vehicles long distances, often late at night. An earlier awards assembly after debate preliminary rounds, or perhaps the first out round, have been completed could accomplish dual program recognition and cohesion goals. Dozens of speaker awards and first-round elimination awards could accompany the individual event awards for such recognition. Regional coordinators of individual event and debate organizations should maintain contact with one another to, as much as possible, assure that debate tournaments and individual event tournaments spread out along the schedule to facilitate travel by full-service programs.

National organizations might consider using a program accreditation process to recognize and reward full-service programs. Beyond the public relations benefits of competitive rankings, accreditation as a program could provide further evidence directors of forensics might use in making arguments for program funding or continuance. No hierarchy need be established to insult directors who continue to choose one-dimensional forensics programs; they can receive a different accreditation. But some professional standards sort impetus might help us link toward the core curriculum and accountability movements.

Finally, we should encourage programs to use cyberspace to increase the intercultural interaction made possible by the dual purpose program. Schwartz-DuPre (2006) writes about the use of cyber communities to enhance the benefits of debate for women. Similar use could overcome the geographic obstacles of communication for students in dual purpose programs. Available instruments such as Facebook or YouTube could serve goals of team cohesion and mutual understanding.

These solutions are rudimentary ideas that need much "development"—not necessarily a bad thing at a "developmental conference." I don't want to over claim their possibilities. I sincerely doubt that anything could have prevented the destruction of my former program I mentioned in the beginning of this essay. That action was taken in secret, made use of falsified data, and was couched in outright dishonesty. Forensics money was taken for pet projects designed to bolster the resume of an administrator seeking . million public relations machine to overwhelm truth. But for most of us, I believe our survival is a matter of finding arguments administrators will accept. Movements such as academic rigor, core curriculum , accountability, and diversity give us new opportunities, and I believe the dual purpose, full-service program is best equipped to undertake those efforts.

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Challenges and Opportunities for Forensic Programs Offering Debate and Individual Events

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Introduction

It is difficult to identify with some precision, the date that forensic programs began to specialize in debate or individual events. However, it was a concern over three decades ago when the first developmental conferees met at the Sedalia conference in 1974. Back then, arguing for broad based programs Scott Nobles (1975) said: "Let me challenge all of us to strive to conceptualize the optimum educational program, one with the fullest range of forensics training" (p. 57). His challenge reflected a degree of consensus held by the forensics community at that time. John C. Reinard and John E. Crawford's (1975) "Delphi" study found that forensics programs should be constructed to ensure the provision of a full range of activities: "Individual and debate events should receive equal emphasis in forensics programs and tournaments" (p. 73).

Ten years after the first developmental conference, the consensus regarding broad based programs was less clear. Reading Chapter II, "Rationale for Forensics," one can discern a clear commitment to the educational purposes served by the range of forensics events including debate, public address events, and the oral interpretation of literature. However, in Chapter V, "Strengthening Educational Goals and Programs," the conference participants offered little guidance regarding whether programs should specialize or offer the fullest range of opportunities. In fact, the report of the second national conference on forensics considered recommendations for individual events in a separate chapter. Whether this enhanced the status of programs that specialized in individual events, widened a growing divide between debate and individual events, or both, is not clear. However, since the first and second national developmental conferences, although I am not sure any official records exist, it seems that some programs have continued to feature a primary commitment to a form of debate or individual events, and the number of programs that can claim to serve the vision of offering the full range of forensics training envisioned by Professor Nobles remains limited.

The purpose of this paper is to inquire into the forces that might account for this shift in the focus of programs, to consider some of the values served by broad-based programs, and identify some of the challenges faced by directors of programs that strive to offer opportunities in both debate and individual events. Despite some sentiment that narrowly focused programs deliver the greatest degree of educational impact for the resources invested, in some instances broad-based programs might play a central role in the educational mission of a department or college. On these grounds, the forensic community should embrace diversity in program development, respect the multifaceted purposes that forensics programs serve, and support a vision of forensics that balances a focus on competitive success with a concern for educational outcomes.

Factors Accounting for Competitive Focus

Three reasons might be considered for program specialization. (1) Programs might have shifted to a primary area of emphasis based on the training and experience of the director. Not every student participates in debate and individual events in high school and college, or receives graduate training from programs that feature both debate and individual events. So some students who choose careers as program directors focus on what they know best based on their experience and training. Generally, programs seem to reflect the training and interest of the director.

(2) Programs are also limited in terms of resources. Tournament travel grows more expensive each year. Traveling students to appropriate tournaments regionally and nationally is costly. Additionally, assuming there is unlimited supply of financial resources, enough coaches or assistants need to be available for coaching or travel. Generally, assistants are working toward a graduate degree so that tournament travel cannot be excessive that progress cannot be made toward one's degree. However, with unlimited financial resources, it would be possible to hire enough coaches to travel extensively. Since few programs have unlimited resources, such a scenario does not reflect the situation for many programs, thus choices must be made about what kind of program to offer.

(3) Academic departments of communication studies shape programs in terms of the control they exert over the evaluation of the director. If a department wants debate opportunities over individual events (or *vice versa*), the director is required to serve that mission. If the department has no expectation other than that the director offer competitive opportunities, the director has far more freedom. Departments that expect competitive success might

encourage programs to narrow their focus while departments that expect directors to ensure that opportunities for competition are available for any interested students including novices, should be pleased with programs that are broadly constructed.

The foregoing discussion yields some questions that help frame an assessment of whether a director should pursue a narrowly focused program versus a broad-based program. What kind of program does the department (or department chair, or any other relevant administrator) want? What kind of a program is the director trained to provide? What kind of a program can a director reasonably provide given the nature of one's duties and obligation as a faculty member or coach? What kind of program can the department or college afford? What kind of an educational experience is intended for students at the institution? These questions suggest that it is less of a conflict between whether broad based programs are desirable compared to narrowly defined programs and more of a question of what makes sense given the resources and constraints of program development within the departmental or college mission statement for the program. Before addressing these questions directly I offer a comparison of what is gained and lost with specialized versus broad-based programs.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Specialized vs. Broad-based Programs

Focusing on either debate or individual events can often maximize the potential for competitive success. Specialization can lead to more detailed preparation in a given area of competitive endeavor. One risk of enhancing competitive preparation is a misplaced overemphasis on competitive success at the expense of other potential educational outcomes.

Focusing on either debate or individual events also can hold off burnout, an on-going challenge for program directors (see McDonald, 2001). Directors and coaches can limit their coaching efforts to one debate topic, one style or format of debate, or to focusing on individual events. Doing so means fewer hours in preparing for and judging at tournaments. Focusing however deprives students of either debate or individual events opportunities. And one could argue that a narrowly focused program focuses demands an intensity of effort that leads to burnout in the same degree as a broad based program.

Focusing on one purpose holds the possibility of creating camaraderie, unification of team purpose, and potentially fewer cultural conflicts between those students who identify with debate rather than individual events (or individual events rather than debate). Students can be motivated by team leaders, can be mentored by varsity competitors as they join the team, and can learn the detailed intricacies of successful competition in focused programs. Similarly, assuming that a program has a director and some assistants that must divide resources between program goals, singularity of competitive purpose means that there is less conflict over resources devoted to debate or individual events. However, camaraderie is not uniquely developed with an exclusive commitment to debate or individual events. With leadership from directors, team-building exercises can still develop *esprit de corps* for broad based teams. And the cultural differences between debate and individual events can serve as important opportunities for learning about intercultural and interdisciplinary communication practices not to mention pride in the accomplishments of both components of the program.

The development of multiple debate communities poses another set of choices for directors. Presently, a director of forensics has the option of subscribing to team debate focusing on policy propositions by participating in the National Debate Tournament and/or Cross Examination Debate Association debate communities, in team debate over varying forms of propositions in the National Parliamentary Debate Association debate community, in a Lincoln-Douglas debate format on a policy proposition in the National Forensics Association community, and in other forms of debate associated with the National Educational Debate Association and International Public Debate Association (among potential other organizations). Focusing on one form of debate might be necessary given the detailed research and knowledge needed to coach and judge. Tournament travel circuits might impose limits on resources to ensure competitive success. However, while it would seem that debate communities share an interest in the principles of research, case building, refutation, strategy and tactics, important differences might exist between the NPDA, NFA, and NDT/CEDA debate communities. Different topics, formats, preparation time, research burdens, and educational vision might be vital enough for students to benefit from participating in NPDA debate along with NFA LD debate or even possibly team policy debate in NDT/CEDA. Still the travel, coaching, and expenses might make such an extensive commitment difficult for programs.

Most directors have a sense of what is gained and lost from focusing on one form of competition; not all department chairs or administrators always do. What is important to take from this cursory review of advantages and disadvantages is that the gains and losses are important only in relation to whether a program's vision, and by implication, a director's educational vision, is aligned with the interests and needs of the department, college, and university where the program resides and from which it draws support. When a director's educational mission and purpose is at odds with that of the department or college, applying criteria for evaluating program success and the director's contribution

to the educational mission of the department will, presumably, yield an unfavorable judgment.

In summary, limiting the focus of a program can maximize competitiveness, avoid burnout, yield team dynamic benefits in the way of assimilating novice students and uniting a team in a common purpose, strengthen an element of the larger forensics community, and provide administrators and directors with a relatively clear set of criteria for evaluating the level of activity and success in meeting a program's goals. Limiting the focus of a program can misplace an emphasis on competitive success potentially undermining educational outcomes of participating in different events with a team of diverse interests, deprive students of participating in other events that serve their educational interests, perpetuate cultural divides between students of debate versus individual events, and create financial difficulties for a director trying to participate in multiple communities, traveling multiple circuits, and attending multiple national tournaments to close the season.

What advantages and disadvantages are uniquely served by these two types of programs or are the benefits only reflected to a degree by a program? Are the advantages and disadvantages important for the larger forensics community to consider or is this a concern that should be left with a director or department chair? A director that has no interest or expertise in debate will probably not pursue debate activities; the same goes for a director interested only in individual events. A department chair that has no interest in, or knowledge of benefits that a broad based program might offer, or has a limited budget to offer a director, and/or leaves the decision up to the director regarding the nature of the program, might forego a broad based program. Given these circumstances it seems unreasonable to think that a broad based program would be a good idea. So under what circumstances does it make sense to pursue a broad based program?

A Case for Broad Based Programs

(1) Broad-based programs are necessary when communication studies departments tie resources to a forensics program's educational mission. We might assume that presently, or in the future, at some colleges, in some departments, a broad based program would be vital to a department's mission, that the speech and debate program offers important opportunities for students to learn about principles of speech through a competitive format and showcase a college's most dedicated and talented students (McBath, 1984). If that is a reasonable assumption, we should ensure that there are models where such a program exists so that directors hired to serve that departmental mission have access to experiences in directing broad based programs, that there is some body of professional literature that addresses the concerns as well as the benefits of broad based programs, and that the professional organizations continue to work on documents that describe criteria for evaluating program directors with varying responsibilities.

(2) Additionally, broad based programs are essential to providing training to individuals who choose careers in secondary education. Programs that specialize reduce options for participating in some events. While that can maximize the competitive success for some students, not all students are able to compete at such a level of intensity. Not every student who joins a forensic program can win a national championship with enough hard work. Some students have family, social, employment, and academic interests and obligations that compete with tournament travel. Some students prepare their events in earnest because of what they learn about the process of preparing for competition so that they are better prepared for directing their own speech programs. In these circumstances, emphasizing competitive success through focused effort on only individual events or debate can limit the experiences, the training, and hence the quality of preparation for a student who might take on the job of directing a broad based program at the secondary level. Broad based forensic programs provide a vital element of training for those who will recruit and train succeeding generations of forensic competitors as they transition from high school to college competition. And this training might be essential to the curriculum and program offerings in secondary education for some departments.

(3) Broad-based programs maintain a healthy diversity of speech event offerings to students. Novice students who try debate and find it less than optimally satisfying can try limited preparation events. After trying limited preparation events, students might decide they prefer speaking in situations where they have greater control over the message and take up informative speaking, persuasive speaking, or rhetorical criticism. If they are not terribly interested in platform events, they can try interpretation events in studies of poetry, prose, or dramatic literature. None of these options precludes a student from specializing at some point in their career to maximize their competitive potential. Without the options, however, students are left with either fitting in to the debate world or not, fitting into the individual events world or not. Perhaps they might find their way to the Model United Nations group or a university's local chapter of the Roosevelt Institution or enroll in a Theatre or English literature course or audition for a production, or find some other organization where communication skills are essential. I am not arguing that resourceful students with some sense of initiative cannot find a student organization or a program on campus to address their interests. What I am concerned about is that if we neglect to

accommodate students' interests due to continued specialization, we risk an on going contraction of the forensics community. Can the probability of this risk be estimated reliably and can the impact of specialization be calculated with some degree of precision at this point in a survey of the forensics community's health? Probably not. Yet given my more than thirty years of experience in speech and debate activities, I think the concern is worth expressing and that the leaders of the forensics community consider how program design and development might affect the overall health of forensics activities for the future.

(4) Broad based programs also seem more conducive to nurturing an interest in experimentation with new events. Recommendations from the second national developmental conference concluded that new events, formats, and other innovations were important to consider (see recommendation numbers 24, 26, & 29, pp. 44-45). The National Forensic Association has been committed to this idea over the last couple of decades in trying new events (Argument Criticism, Biographical Informative, Argumentative Interpretation, Editorial Impromptu, are examples among others). Pi Kappa Delta has offered a national comprehensive tournament that offers almost every kind of debate, individual, duo, and group event that has some degree of interest in the forensic community, as well as experimental events (for example, "To Honor Women," "To Honor Native Americans"). The breadth, innovation, and novelty of conceptualizing, discussing, and trying new events is important for the educational mission of the forensic community. It might be the case that broad based programs are more adept in adapting to these opportunities and seem to reap greater awards from these opportunities than the more narrowly circumscribed programs that focus on either individual events or debate exclusively.

(5) Broad based programs would seem to serve career needs of students who choose to major in communication studies at the undergraduate level. For example, consider the skills employers seek in Appendix A. One could argue that debate activities serve the broad category of communication skills in the areas of presentation skills, verbal skills, writing skills, reading skills, and data analysis skills. Also, one could reasonably argue that debate contributes to the development of interpersonal influence skills. Finally, one could argue that debate contributes to the development of problem-solving skills in the areas of reasoning, analysis, research skills, and decision-making skills. However, if a student also participated in individual events, some of these skills might be developed while others might not. For example, in some debate communities, presentation skills seem less valued than research, reasoning, and reading skills. Interpersonal skills might be only minimally considered in the development of a team; and although not necessarily excluded from consideration in a program devoted solely to debate activities, might not receive the same degree of emphasis in a program that offered opportunities for students interested in both debate and individual events. It might be very difficult to say with some degree of exactitude which skills and to what degree each are developed by a program strictly devoted to debate or individual events. Evidence exists for both the value of debate training (Littlefield, 2001; Matlon & Keele, 1984; Williams, McGee, & Worth, 2001) and for the value of forensic participation, in general, as having the greatest impact in developing communication skills compared to other various methods of communication instruction (Allen, Berkowitz, Hunt, & Louden, 1999). Whether a broad based program would deliver more return on a variety of the skills listed than an investment of resources devoted to only one half of the forensic world in the way of either debate or individual events is still an open question.

(6) Broad based programs seem important to maintaining the diversity of knowledge of forensic educational practices. However, this claim is difficult to assess since there are risks and benefits to a vision of forensics that emphasizes specialization as well as broad based opportunities; and neither vision seems possible to evaluate empirically without overcoming substantial challenge in research design. If graduate programs specialize in debate or individual events, they are best positioned to produce graduate professionals whose experience, training, and formal graduate education reflect a decision to focus on either debate or individual events. That presents little difficulty for graduate students who seek to direct programs upon graduation if they have had undergraduate experience in the side of forensics that their graduate programs ignored, and seek jobs where the department had indicated an interest or commitment in a broad based program. However, from the standpoint of professional training, if programs tend to specialize at the undergraduate level, and at the graduate level, one result might be a relatively narrow set of options for graduate school training, a kind of narrow path of program options for graduate school after the undergraduate experience. This might not necessarily be an undesirable development, however, in the sense that professional training might become more rigorous, more sophisticated, and more specialized due to the narrow focus on the graduate training experience. What might become problematic, however, is the fact that such an evolution of professional training opportunities detracts from a consideration of preparation for directing broad based programs. Again, this effect in only negative if available jobs ask for training in broad based programs.

(7) Broad based programs also serve to check, to some degree, the development of self-contained cultural practices that tend to disconnect some forensic

practices from real world communication practices. In some debate communities, presentation skills seem less valued than research and verbal reading of evidence. In some individual events communities, nonverbal elements of appearance or vocal qualities seem more valued than a well-researched argument. Representatives from either community can deny these general criticisms (among others than are occasionally leveled), but in too many instances, the competitive culture of either emphasis can place greater value or less value on practices that would be regarded as somewhat limited in the real world, the one that exists beyond our tournaments after our students graduate. Both the first and second national development conferences condemned competitive debate practices that James McBath (1984) argued, "subverted the essential character of the activity."

> The first Developmental Conference, concluding that "tournament debate should be an enterprise in the comparative communication of arguments," noted that debate is not an exercise in the rapid recitation of bits of evidence,erroneously known as "information processing." Sedalia conferees condemned such practices as the presentation of material at a rate too fast for most listenersto comprehend, the tactic of deliberately presenting more pieces of information or minor points than opponents can absorb, the use of verbal shorthand that obfuscates the clarity of argument; the infrequency of explanations among evidence, inferences and conclusions; and the relative rarity of discussions of value assumptions. It is noteworthy that the volume reporting the conference was entitled Forensics as Communication. Not as logic, or evidence, or gamesmanship, and certainly not as information processing--but as communication. Now, ten years later, the Evanston conferees reaffirmed the primacy of communication in forensics, sharply criticizing tournament practices that subvert the essential character of the activity. (p. 8)

Similarly, the second conference offered a number of recommendations for individual events programs in an attempt to prevent tournaments from becoming closed enclaves of narrowly constructed competitive experiences (see Chapter V, pp. 37-48). Assuming directors can maintain the conversation between students who choose to participate in either side or both of the forensic worlds, the communication practices of both cultures might inform the other in positive ways. For example, the sophistication of research practices shared by debaters might enhance the logical appeal of a persuasive speech while a sharing of delivery skills might help a debater to convey a more professional image as an advocate. In this respect, I am not arguing against specialization only against the cultural practices that seem to have little use beyond the tournament format and would seem silly in the real world, and for the appropriate rather than caricatured application of practices that each type of program holds dear and refines in great detail in the pursuit of competitive success.

Challenges Facing Broad Based Programs

Challenges facing broad based programs might be grouped into three basic categories: (1) resources; (2) educational mission; (3) informed professional practices. These are probably not the only challenges facing the forensic community but they should serve as a starting point for framing discussions about how to maintain the option of offering broad-based programs should they be justified. The following sections identify these challenges and offer some potential solutions.

Resources

Broad based programs are always strapped for resources. They need money to fund an extensive travel schedule, time to coach, and people to coach those students the director cannot find the time to coach. To address this problem, colleges should increase resources or clarify the goals and expectations of the program so that there is not a mismatch of resources with program activities. Additionally, it is up to us, the "professionals" to continue to work on documents that detail the professional expectations of directors so that they might be evaluated fairly in their pursuit of tenure and promotion in the academy. Impoverished programs cannot sustain the professional commitment to high quality educational experiences, risk disappointment on the part of students who are deprived of national travel schedules, and risk burnout on the part of directors who seek to do more with less time and resources.

Educational Mission

A number of folks have recognized the tension between the educational objectives of forensics and the effects of the drive for competitive success (Burnett, Brand, & Meister, 2001; Burnett, Brand, & Meister 2003; Hinck, 2003). When the balance between education and competition is disrupted, participation becomes focused almost exclusively on winning. Students and directors can easily forget that the purpose of hosting tournaments is to create motivation for preparing excellent messages; the tournament becomes an end to itself. When this imbalance occurs, conversations about forensics get framed in terms of competitive success rather than educational outcomes and students as well as directors seek approval and acknowledgement more in terms of competitive success than educational outcomes. A kind of elitism arises that serves to instantiate some programs and practices with more status than others. While it is impossible to avoid hierarchy given the role of competition in our practices, re-

maining mindful of the tensions might minimize some of the more dividing effects.

Not every program can offer scholarships, recruit the best high school competitors year after year, and have what appear to less well-funded programs, unlimited resources. Some programs are funded in very modest ways by universities already facing budget cuts serving some students who are novices, are participating in forensics as a program requirement for a degree in secondary education, or simply elected to compete at the college level because their high school experience had been a positive one. If competitive success overshadows our vision of forensics, broad based programs will seem to be suboptimal investments of resources. As an educational community, we should remain mindful of the role broad based programs play in serving students who seek to gain the educational benefits of forensics.

Additionally, we should be clear about what we are trying to accomplish in terms of designing an educational experience for our students. Obviously, if the only criterion for evaluation was competitive success, we could neglect other measures of evaluation, add up the awards won by our students, and call it an education. Evidently, that was less than adequate as a statement of purpose leading up to the 1974 developmental conference on forensics. Scott Nobles (1975) identified three purposes for conference attendees over three decades ago:

1. We must develop a better notion of who we are and of our central purposes. We must answer such basic questions as: What is forensics? What are its educational goals? What is the role of the forensics professional?
2. We must develop and encourage the best approaches possible to filling our most constructive professional roles and for achieving our central educational goals.
3. We must develop ways to explain and promote our work, both within and without the academic establishment.

Ten years later, the forensics community was still confronted with the need to describe and explain what its mission was as evidenced by the need for an opening chapter in the conference proceedings that offered a "Rationale for Forensics." Education remains an overarching rationale for speech and debate activities. However, the problem now—thirty-four years later—seems more an issue of clarifying values, aligning them with educational practices, and pursuing a well articulated vision of communication education through forensics activities. Therefore, program directors need to consider the relationship between the practices pursued in preparing for competition and the values their practices serve.

Assuming we are trying to design an educational experience--as opposed to a merely competitive experience with some potential educational outcome--we might continue to strive to bring to the forefront the values and objectives we hold for students who participate in debate and individual events, and to demonstrate the ways in which forensic activities achieve these goals. More specifically, to the extent that different forensic communities exist if not only in the way of travel schedules, but also in the way of what count as acceptable practices, we should strive to identify and respect the practices that are unique to or at the core of an educational community's vision. Forensics communities organize around practices and values. To clarify the need for matching values and practice, I would like to turn to an example of how values and practices can conflict when students, judges, coaches, and directors are distracted from an educational purpose by concerns with competitive success.

At its inception, NFA Lincoln-Douglas debate was envisioned as a style of debate that balanced research with communication skills. NDT and CEDA debate practices had evolved to feature highly technical argument strategies that seemed to be valued more than delivery skills that might appeal to a less specialized audience (and a set of practices that some conferees at the first and second conference criticized as undermining the communication emphasis of forensics). Although I cannot document in any kind of systematic way the degree to which debate practices from other communities have found their way into NFA Lincoln-Douglas debate, the rate of delivery and complexity of the debates have increased so much that I fear the NFA debate community is losing its identity as an educational community of students interested in a form of debate that balances argumentation and communication skills. The result is a process of evolution in practices that resemble the NDT and CEDA debate communities' practices. I am not sure this is a desirable result despite the fact that fourteen years ago at the Northwestern conference, conferees were concerned about the fragmentation of the forensic community with the increasing number of forensic organizations (Ziegelmueller, 1984). It is difficult to assess how problematic the fragmentation might be at this point in the history of forensics education. However, if forensic educators are organizing around distinct educational values and practices, and if those values offer something in the way of an educational experience that cannot be addressed as well in other forensic communities, fragmentation might be greeted as a positive way in which differential values are actualized in practice.

Rather than defending any one community or set of debate practices as more desirable than others, I prefer to argue that the more choices we have regarding what educational values are emphasized in a

given forensic community, the stronger the larger forensics community will be for the variations in skills each community offers. However, to maintain some degree of variability, coaches, judges, and directors need to be aware of the differences, willing to value the diversity in community advocacy practices, and most importantly, dedicated to respecting those differences as one moves among debate and/or individual events communities. Under such circumstances, competitive success would be subordinated to educational values in the respective sub-communities of the larger forensics community.

Informed Professional Practices

The question of what kind of program is best will remain a difficult one to answer until we have more data to assess the kind of educational experience each provides. Toward that end, the forensics community needs a renewed effort to document the type and range of programs offered in the United States, degree of participation, and achievements over each academic year and season. The larger forensics community is composed of a number of organizations that have established traditions and historical records of educational activities. While some attempts have been made at self-study (Matlon & Keele, 1984; Stepp & Gardner, 2001), the occasional surveys can often be distracting when conducted at tournaments, are not always sponsored by the leadership of organizations, are not consistently conducted over the years, utilize varying methodologies and measurements, and do not always seem to reflect coordinated efforts between the various forensic organizations. Thus, it is difficult to ascertain with consistent data and criteria over the last few decades whether the number of programs--specialized or broad based--are increasing or declining, whether the number of student participants are increasing or declining, whether the number of novice students served by collegiate programs are increasing or declining, or whether the number of students attending national tournaments is increasing or declining. Nor can forensic community leaders determine how many programs engaged in service activities on campus, service-learning activities in the community, or what the range of those service activities was, or how many students participated—features that might normally be associated with broad-based programs versus specialized programs. An on-going collection of program data regarding the nature of programs, degree of participation, range of activities including service, collected across organizations, and conducted in a way that would describe accurately the extent of our activities, would provide forensic professionals with data needed to assess the health, diversity, and achievements of forensics in the United States. Such data would also complement claims that forensic programs constitute value added experiences for student participants interested in pursuing a high quality education at any given institution of higher learning. In the discussions that ensued in the plenary session of this conference, it was noted that some efforts are currently underway in addressing these concerns. It is my hope that these efforts continue, are supported, and adapted to the needs of the forensic community in the future.

Conclusion

This paper has considered the pressures that push programs to specialize in speech and debate activities, identified some of the issues directors and administrators face in developing specialized or broad-based programs, and advanced a rationale for broad-based programs based on an educational mission for forensic activities. Specialized and broad-based programs have advantages and disadvantages for students and directors. The central question facing directors concerns what kind of an educational vision they have for their students and how well that educational vision fits the program needs of the department or college they serve. Regardless of what kind of program a director chooses to develop, at this point in time, given the concerns advanced in this paper, it seems important to ensure that training opportunities, professional literature, and model programs remain available for directors who are charged with providing broad-based programs to their students.

Appendix A
Top Ten Skills Employers Seek

Awareness of Organizational Purpose
- Business Acumen
- Commercial Awareness
- Role of the Non-Profit Organization in a Community

Communication Skills
- Presentation Skills
- Verbal Skills
- Writing Skills
- Reading Skills
- Data Analysis Skills

Interpersonal Skills
- Negotiation
- Persuasion
- Influence

Teamwork and Group Interaction Skills

Leadership and Management Skills

Organizational and Planning Skills

Problem-Solving Skills
- Reasoning

Creativity
Analytical Ability
Research Skills
Decision-making Skills

Flexibility and Adaptability

Knowing How to Learn
Willingness to Learn New Tasks
Curiosity About Your Job, Organization, and Business
Ability to Grow in Your Knowledge of Your Job

Self-management Skills
Confidence
Internally motivated
Responsible
Capable of Setting Priorities
Ability to Meet Deadlines
Ability to Work Under Pressure
Committed to Your Job
Multicultural Sensitivity
Ability to Handle Personal Problems

The list was derived from the following sources obtained from the internet on 5/16/08:

https://intranet.londonmet.ac.uk/studentservices/careers/current/becomemoreemployable/uwew.cfm
http://www.psychwww.com/careers/skills.htm
http://www.quintcareers.com/printable/job_skills_values.html
http://www.backtoworkcoaching.com/EmployersWant.htm

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RESOLUTIONS

The resolutions listed below were a product of the various panel sessions that met during the conference. A number of sessions produced resolutions similar in nature. The redundant resolutions were combined into this list. The resolutions were discussed during the general assembly and voted on by the participants in attendance. All resolutions are non-binding on state, regional, and national associations. All resolutions were passed along to the appropriate associations for consideration and deliberation.

Assisting New and Declining Programs

Resolved: The college forensics community should actively explore stronger connections to high school forensics *PASSED*

A. Justification: High school forensics is well established and has developed a myriad of resources for high school coaches and students. It is easy for us to lose sight of our external stakeholders. To ensure the growth of collegiate forensics we must be sure to appreciate and utilize the resources that high school forensics offers.
B. Examples include: online resources, state associations, national organizations, local schools, publications, etc.

Resolved: Tournament management should make every effort to focus on wellness/health initiatives within forensics. *PASSED*

A. Creating tournament schedules that allow for rest, rejuvenation and educational development
B. Ensure healthy options are available for sustenance.
C. Specific suggestions include but are not limited to:
    1. Having a quiet room where students can rest during their off rounds,
    2. Having ten to twelve hours between the end of one day and the beginning of the next;
    3. Having healthy snacks and/or meals available on campus.

Assisting New and Declining Programs

Resolved that forensic organizations should be encouraged to develop and disseminate basic pedagogical goals for each event. *PASSED*

In order to clarify expectations and expand options, forensic organizations and individual programs are encouraged to develop behavioral guidelines which support pedagogical goals. Guidelines might be enacted as either binding or voluntary, as either long-term or short-term in application, and in relation to one or more events at any given point in time. *PASSED*

Definition of Competition

Resolved: Forensic educators ought to value competition as a way to teach. Forensic programs should look for opportunities to erase the perceived dichotomy between education and competition by synthesizing education and ethical competition and by practicing forensic education through means including, but not limited to, competition. *PASSED*

Putting the Public Back into Forensics

1. In order to create a stronger connection with the community, whenever possible, forensic directors should communicate that tournaments are open to the public. *PASSED*

2. In order to increase community engagement and diversity of perspectives, tournament directors should include more non-traditional judges from the community who are informed about rules and procedures. *PASSED*

3. In order to further educational opportunities, the forensic community should experiment with alternative forms of evaluation and adjudication. *NOT PASSED*

4. In order to enhance community relationships and to provide a broader educational experience, the forensic community should encourage experiential and service learning projects. *PASSED*

Incentives for Non-Competitive Activities

Local, state, regional and national forensic organizations are encouraged to publicly honor and promote civic engagement that is grounded in forensic education: *PASSED*

1. Activities: performances/speeches; teaching/mentoring; speaker's bureaus; moderating campaign debates, student forensic research

2. Incentives: State awards for service; a national civic engagement award; publicize winners.

Community Cohesion

In an effort to engage in building cohesion between forensic educators and participants, we encourage students, critics and coaches to embrace epistemic humility.

Such humility is demonstrated when forensic educators remember their educational obligation to all students. To that end, students, coaches and critics need to be willing to be educated, to listen and discuss and to be held accountable for their behaviors.

Behaviors supporting these goals might include: blogs, judges providing an e-mail contact; ballot writing training; more frequent forums for open dialogue between different coaches of all experience levels and students. *PASSED*

Code of Standards

1. We encourage the AFA to revisit and revise their Code of Standards to ensure that they reflect sound ethical standards regarding judging restrictions, and recommend that all forensic organizations do the same. *NOT PASSED*

2. The codes of ethics and/or standards for national forensic organizations should be periodically reviewed for revision. *PASSED*

Civic Engagement

1. In order to sustain and grow both the discipline and individual programs, students and coaches must celebrate their role as ambassadors. Ambassadorship encompasses involvement in local communities, campus communities, alumni outreach, the communication discipline, and competitive forensics. Ambassadorship entails virtuously informed and ethically obligated civic/political engagement, active learning and citizenship. *PASSED*

2. In addition to traditional competition, forensics educators should promote non-competitive aspects of their programs in non-competitive formats. *PASSED*

Resources

1. Professional organizations should facilitate and coordinate providing educational resources for tournament directors, coaches, tab staff and hired judges. *TABLED*

2. A document with a mentor contact list and supporting materials on directing forensics should be made available to all new coaches. *PASSED*

3. Judges' Preference and tie-breakers need to be explicitly defined in all national forensic organization by-laws. The definition needs to include a step-by-step process explaining tie-breakers and an example of how to break a tie. *NOT PASSED*.

4. Comprehensive data needs to be published defining the typical forensics educator and summarizing various aspects of programs throughout the nation, including, but not limited to, budget, staff size, release time, scholarship, and other duties. *TABLED*

5. Resolved: The Council of Forensic Organizations needs to establish a committee to provide support to new and declining programs. *PASSED*
    a. The duties of this committee will include, but are not limited to, centralizing materials in order for these teams to have access to them. (i.e. A website), and appoint new program development ambassadors.
    b. To establish this committee by NCA 2009.
    c. To establish a PR packet for forensic organizations.

Ethics and Forensics

1) Plagiarism, distortion, and falsification must be opposed by the community and by individual coaches who model the highest possible standards. *PASSED*
   a. The community should take additional steps to ensure that speeches are genuinely the work of the students presenting those speeches, noting the ethical threats posed by over-involved coaches and peers.
   b. The community should educate students about the nature of plagiarism and should take steps to enforce plagiarism standards.

2. Specific steps taken at the national and/or local levels to combat plagiarism might include: *PASSED*
   A. Require all students in public address and interpretation events to submit performance manuscripts and copies of adequately detailed excerpts of original source materials at the beginning of each tournament. Tournament directors would be responsible for collecting these materials and overseeing the spot-checking of randomly selected speeches performing in the finals.
   B. Periodically remind all judges of existing ethical codes which apply to the tournament being hosted and seek to have students individually read and agree to these codes.

3) In order to enhance student responsibility for making ethical presentations, the community should encourage the use of in-round dialogue between contestants and/or judges (including but not limited to the use of in-round questions) concerning the content and delivery of performances in all events. *NOT PASSED*

4) We should invite students, coaches, and judges to question the unwritten rules of forensics competition and encourage the expansion of paradigms in order to allow for a wider array of choices. *PASSED*

7) The community should develop a long-term development plan. *TABLED*

Systematic Look At Events

1. ADS should be defined as an original speech by the student that promotes multiple types of humor as a vehicle to persuade, inform, critique, inspire or otherwise approach a significant subject. *PASSED*

2. Poetry
We should coach poetry in a way that values the prosodic aspects and other poetic devices in the literature. *PASSED*

3. Duo
The forensics community should propose to change Dramatic Duo to Duo Interpretation, allowing material of any genre to be used in competition. *PASSED*

4. Big Picture Ideas
Resolved: Instruction in all Individual Events should begin with a clear statement of learning outcomes and suggestive criteria derived from these outcomes. *TABLED*

Resolved: For Dramatic Interpretation we should consider redefining dramatic texts to go beyond plays and to allow any form of performance text not classified as prose or poetry. *PASSED*

Research

1. Forensic organizations should encourage their membership to pursue and present research at their individual conventions. *PASSED*

2. Establish formal and informal mentoring programs to encourage submission of convention papers to journals. *PASSED*

3. Forensic journals/editors are encouraged to participate in the Online Index of Forensic Research *PASSED*
   a. Add index editor to permanent mailing address lists
   b. Catch up on back issues (responsibility of journal editors)

4. Encourage tournament directors to elevate the visibility of forensic research. *PASSED*
   a. Awards for researchers
   b. Listing publication and conference citations in tournament schematic/booklet
   c. Providing journal subscriptions as awards at tournaments
   d. Facilitate distribution of research papers to the community

5. Encourage forensic organizations to sponsor research through the awarding of grants, etc., and to present research at local tournaments. *PASSED*

Debate and IE

1. National forensic organizations should be encouraged to explore a web-based recognition system for forensic programs that include individual events and at least one form of team debate. *PASSED*

   Explanation: team debate was used not to offend LD programs; however, LD has a separate set of issues that seem to be NFA-specific, and need to be resolved by the NFA. Once those issues can be resolved, then LD could potentially be resolved into this.

   Recognition could be in the form of announcements at national tournaments and/or web-based, and/or certificates. This recognition is not intended to compete with other national program recognitions; this would be in addition to other national recognition programs.
2. National organizations should encourage individual teams to annually submit information to a central database to include participation data for students who have attended at least one tournament. *TABLED*
3. The NFA should release the LD resolution in mid-July.
4. Synthesize, collate and extend research into the benefits of forensics programs and participation into one easily available document. *PASSED*
5. Identify, create and support forums to advance dialogue about the issues that confront forensics as a community. *PASSED*
6. Student leaders in forensics should be encouraged to use web resources to enhance communication and cohesion between individual events and debate competitors. *PASSED*

   Explanation: Encouraging the student district reps from NPDA, IE, NFA, etc. to chat.
7. Graduate programs with forensic programs should seek opportunities to promote training in both individual events and debate. *PASSED*

8. The NFA should ideologically support the idea of Lincoln-Douglas as an individual event by merging LD into the overall team sweepstakes formula calculation.

    1. To discourage the "culture of qualifying" and the hunt for legs, we propose that the AFA-NIET eliminate its current leg system in favor of an alternative form of qualification. *PASSED*

    2. We expect that all programs will ensure that each and every judge they provide, either as tournament hosts or tournament entrants, are fully trained, objective, and aware of their role as educators. *PASSED*

    3. We encourage tournament hosts to recognize that hosting is a general service to the forensic community, and as such, priority should be given to assuring there are appropriate judges, accommodations, and award recognition. *PASSED*

Growth of Forensic Programs

1. In order to sustain and grow the discipline of forensics and individual programs, the administration of forensics programs should emphasize the function of program stewardship. Stewardship emphasizes nurturing and strengthening the programmatic legacy, management of resources (i.e., time, staff, space and monetary resources), and, most importantly, celebrating the pedagogical traditions of the communication discipline. *PASSED*

2. Advocacy for forensic programs needs to be institutionalized by preserving and/or installing secure (tenure-track/professional) Director of Forensics lines and pursuing active alumni involvement on university governance boards and advisory committees. *PASSED*

3. Related to the management of resources for forensics programs: we encourage the use of the term *program budget*, rather than *travel budget*. *PASSED*

Potential topic for further discussion: how forensics travel and tournaments espouse a "green" philosophy.

The Role of a Director of Forensics

1. A document needs to be created, which provides tenure and promotion criteria for directors of individual events programs. *TABLED*

2. Forensics educators are encouraged to establish a Forensics Advisory Board at their respective institutions, strategically creating a support network to advocate on behalf of the forensics program. The advisory board should consist of alumni, administrators, students, and non-forensics faculty and staff. *PASSED*

3. Forensics educators should promote student leadership within their programs by encouraging collaborative program management and coaching. *NOT PASSED*

Program & Judging Philosophies

1) The community should encourage the articulation and sharing of judging philosophies. (This may involve the use of COFO, the internet, etc.) *NOT PASSED*

2) Forensics educators should document their co-curricular judging philosophy. *PASSED*

3) We encourage an open community-wide dialogue to promote understanding and prevent ill will focusing on the varying philosophies programs use to justify competitive practices. *TABLED*

4) This conference supports the right and responsibility of each school's director of forensics to design a program that fits the values, educational philosophy, and needs of the particular school she or he represents. We affirm our support for the primacy of educational objectives in the making of these choices, and encourage inter-squad respect for these choices. *PASSED*

National Developmental Conference

1. Resolved: Encourage regions to host an annual workshop to foster the education and continued development of forensics. *PASSED*

2. The developmental conference should be a biannual event. *PASSED*

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* = Student Participants

Schedule of the 2008
NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTAL CONFERENCE ON INDIVIDUAL EVENTS

THURSDAY, JULY 31

7 – 9 p.m.	Registration/Conference Check In at the Pere Marquette Hotel

FRIDAY, AUGUST 1

7:15-8:15 a.m. 8:15 a.m.	Breakfast – Pere Marquette Hotel (covered in room cost if staying at the hotel) Leave for Campus
8:30-9:15 a.m.	Opening Session at Bradley University: Perspectives on Forensic Research Edward Hinck, Daniel Cronn-Mills, Adam Weightman-Gonzales
9:15-10:45 a.m.	**Session 1** 1. Role of Director of Forensics: Chair, Dawn Bartlett Joel Hefling, Scott Jensen, Michael Dreher 2. Growth of Forensic Programs: Chair, Brendan Kelly Megan Houge, Ray Quiel, Brian Klosa, Ryan Lauth, Brendan Kelly 3. Systematic Look at Events: Chair, Craig Borwn Amber Kuipers, Michael Chauinard, Chad Kuyper, Brandi Lawless, Bobby Imbody 4. Ethics and Forensics: Chair, David Gaer George LaMaster, David Nadolski, Anthony Caviani, Richard Paine, Terry West, Josh Randall 5. Forensic Tournaments: Chair, Karen Morris Dan West, Ken Young, Karen Morris
10:45-11 a.m.	Break
11-12:30 p.m.	**Session 2**
12:30- 1:45 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)
1:45-3:30 p.m.	**Session 3**
3:30-3:45 p.m.	Break
3:45- 5:15 p.m.	**Session 4** 1. Education/Competitive Duality: Chair, Leah White Scott Jensen, Brendan Kelly, Randy Richardson, Richard Paine, Scott Wells, Michael Stuedeman 2. Awareness of Forensics & Growth of the Activity: Chairs, M'Liss Hindman & Dan West Christopher Fenner, Janis Crawford, Leah White, Larry Schnoor, Grant Anderson, Adam Weightman-Gonzales, Ryan Lauth 4. Debate & IE Relationships: Chair, Glenn Prince Glenn Prince, Brian Swafford, Terry West, Ed Hinck

SATURDAY, AUGUST 2

7:30-8:30 A.M. 8:30 a.m.	Breakfast – Pere Marquette Hotel (covered in room cost if staying at the hotel) Leave for campus
9-10:30 a.m.	Session 5
10:30-10:45 a.m.	Break
10:45-12:15 p.m.	Session 6
12:15-1:30 p.m.	Lunch (on your own)
1:30-5:00 pm.	Group Assembly: Legislative assembly with recommendations/resolutions that have been forwarded by the various group sessions for the entire conference to discuss and vote upon.
6:30-7:30 p.m.	Cocktail Hour at the Pere Marquette Hotel
7:30 p.m.	Closing Banquet at the Pere Marquette Hotel (Included in Conference Fees)

SUNDAY, AUGUST 3

Morning	Breakfast – Pere Marquette Hotel (covered in room cost if staying at the hotel) People leave the conference

Conference Notes

1. Remember, this is a working Conference. It is not like presentations at the NCA or Regional conventions. We are hoping for lots of discussion out which will come some possible recommendations and/or resolutions that we can take back to our various forensic organizations for consideration. Possibly some changes we can make in how we run our programs or even coach our students.

2. The topic areas have been divided into the two groups. The first group will have 3 sessions on Friday, and the second group will have 1 session on Friday and 2 sessions on Saturday. In the first meeting of each topic area, the papers/presentations will be made. If time allows, discussion can begin. The following two sessions allow for the continued discussion on the topic area - and other items that might grow out of the papers and discussion.

3. The final session on Saturday afternoon is when each group will be able to present a brief summary of their discussion and put before the entire assembly, any recommendations and/or resolutions for everyone to consider and discuss. Each group will have a certain time period and then after discussion, a vote will be taken to accept and pass the recommendations and/or resolutions. The passed items will not have any binding force, but can be used for further discussion and consideration by various forensic organizations and/or programs as noted in Number 1 above.

4. All of the papers and presentations, along with a summary of the discussion and anything considered at the final assembly will be put together and published in the Proceedings of the Conference. Each person attending will receive a copy of the Proceedings, and they may also be placed on the web page along with the past Proceedings from Developmental Conferences on Individual Events.

5. Dress Code for the Conference: This is a working conference - no need to dress up. Come and be casual. We are not here to impress anyone with how we are dress. LOL Being comfortable is a key. It is summer, and in the summer, Peoria can be quite warm. Dress accordingly. Of course, if you want to go out at night - say to the casino then you might want to bring something for that occasion. LOL

6. Banquet on Saturday Evening: This is included in your conference fee. It will be held at the Pere Marquette hotel. It gives us all an opportunity to round out the conference, to have a nice relaxing social evening together before we head home, be it later that evening or on Sunday morning. I think you will enjoy the dinner.

7. Papers/Presentations: Remember, if you are a presenter in a topic area, please bring a hard copy of your paper/presentation and also have it on a DV to turn in. This will help in making sure we get it all into the Proceedings. If you make some last minutes changes, time will be allowed to make those adjustments.

8. If you are not staying at the Pere Marquette, please let me know so we can have a packet for you at your hotel/motel. If you arrive after 9:00 p.m., and have not paid your fees, you can do that on Friday morning.