

Efforts to Increase Diversity on College Forensic Teams

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Forensic programs are found "in all 50 states and range from rural high school programs with few participants to urban university programs that may sponsor a hundred or more competitors" (Bartanen, 1994, p. xiii). But within that broad range of programs, researchers criticize college and university teams for being elitist, homogeneous and, therefore, unrepresentative of societal demographic trends. Koslowski (1993) finds "many programs exhibit an elitism that discourages widespread participation. . . . Tournament qualifications, judging idiosyncrasies, entry level criteria, and specialized styles of presentation have created barriers that hinder total student involvement" (p. 2). Derryberry (1989) suggests "the total forensics program must remain sensitive to the problem of access in admission, theory, and practice" (p. 12). He notes "forensics programs have not escaped the harsh red pens or the annual conference tables where deliberations determine what programs remain and grow and which activities meet diminution or deletion" (p. 1). Swanson sees elitism and ethics as the two major crises facing forensics and warns that by 2001 the field may "create an elite group of people whose key skill is to talk 'forensics' to each other" (1989, pp. 22-23).

In light of the argument by some that forensics is fundamentally a pedagogical activity, a lack of diversity also may limit the effectiveness of forensics to educate scholars

(Derryberry, 1989; Kay 1990; Preston, 1991). Loge (1990) says the lack of opportunity for all to compete in forensics deprives some students of a valuable educational experience, and that the "lack of cultural diversity means that issues are not explored completely" (p. 5). The criticism assumes greater significance when viewed in light of the growing numbers of culturally and racially diverse students involved in higher education. By the mid-1990s, approximately 30 percent of all community college students were classified as non-white, while approximately 25 percent of all students attending four-year universities and colleges at that time were classified as non-white (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1996).

This study focuses directly on diversity, defined here as the contrast between the established norm traditionally held by the forensics community in terms of sex, age, and race of competitors and coaches and the norms of the outside society. The purpose of this study is to examine the current level of diversity in forensic programs and the extent to which forensic programs have made efforts to increase the diversity of their participants and coaches. It also examines the techniques used in encouraging diversity and what factors help explain the variance between programs that made such efforts and those that did not. In terms of debate, the forensic norm has been identified by Loge (1990) as a white male domain; in terms of individual events, the forensic norm has been identified by Koslowski (1993) as a maintenance of the white status quo despite an expressed positive attitude toward diversification.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF FORENSIC PROGRAMS

In the long, 140-plus year history of forensic activities at American colleges and universities, there was little discussion of diversity until the last 10 years. Preston (1991) focused on the issue by developing a forensic philosophy geared specifically to

urban commuter colleges. He argued that for these educational institutions, an ideal forensic program "combines doing the greatest good for the greatest number with cultural diversity and effective and ethically sound forensics pedagogy" (p. 12). Preston's philosophy was not unprecedented, yet his call to incorporate an emphasis on cultural diversity within a forensics program was innovative. Beyond Preston, the subject of diversity within forensics has not been widely researched. Two studies that addressed the issue are Loge's 1990 examination of "Black Participation in Intercollegiate Debate" and Kosloski's 1993 study, "Considering the Role of the Physically Challenged Student in Individual Events Competitions."

Loge's survey, based on responses from 64 of the 201 CEDA schools, found only 40 of 692 debaters (5.7 percent) were black. Loge noted, "many directors of forensics expressed concern over the lack of black participants—yet only nine reported making special efforts to increase the ethnic and racial diversity of their teams" (p. 3). Loge concluded, "if we are to educate all of our students to the best of our abilities, then the lack of cultural diversity in CEDA clearly is a problem" (p. 7). Loge's study (1990) did not include non-CEDA forensic activities, such as individual events and National Debate Tournament debate. It focused exclusively on blacks and, therefore, excluded other diverse groups, such as women, Hispanics, Asian Americans, Native Americans, reentry students, and handicapped students.

Koslowski (1993) examined the demographics of physically challenged competitors in individual events. He surveyed 113 directors of individual events, drawn from the membership of the National Forensic Association and the American Forensic Association. Fifty-two schools responded; eight (or 15 percent) had at least one physically challenged student. Koslowski argues that diversity in forensics is not merely an ethical or pedagogical concern, but is also an economic one: "With ever-increasing budget cuts and ever-

decreasing administrative support, the forensics community must secure its future by working to reflect within its ranks the diversity and uniqueness of the community it serves" (p. 8).

The limitations of the Loge (1990) and Koslowski (1993) studies, especially in their focus on a single part of the forensics community, highlight the need for additional research in the area of diversity within forensics. While the forensic community has voiced some concern about the lack of diversity in its ranks, no study to date has provided comprehensive data that describes what efforts have been made to increase diversity across many types of forensic activities.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study seeks answer to the following questions:

- RQ 1. How diverse are college forensic programs in terms of the sex, age and race of their participants and coaches?
- RQ 2. To what extent do coaches make efforts to promote diversity on their teams?
- RQ 3. If diversity efforts have been made, what methods were the most common?
- RQ 4. To what degree is the effort to increase diversity explained by the variance in the age, sex, and race of its competitors and its coaches and the variance in the institutional characteristics of the teams?

Derryberry (1989) reminds us that "we who believe in the activity of forensics must continually ask important questions, queries which examine our programs and give direction for existence in the following decades" (p. 19). Additional research is warranted as the forensic community struggles with two significant issues: evidence of a lack of diversity and the general lack of quantitative research in the field

(Logue & Shea, 1989; also Scott & Birkholt, 1992; Porter, 1990; Kay, 1990; Logue, 1988; McBath, 1984). By examining these questions, this study hopes to provide evidence of whether forensics has indeed become an activity devoted to doing "the greatest good for the greatest number," as Preston suggested in 1991, or if a lack of diversity remains a problem for forensics.

METHOD

Sample

The study was based on a survey of the entire population of forensic directors at universities and colleges registered as members of the American Forensics Association (AFA), Phi Rho Pi, and the Cross Examination Debate Association (CEDA). To account for possible duplication, forensic programs registered in more than one association received only a single survey. The final population of the study was 566.

To aid in attaining an adequate response rate, the researchers initially sent an introductory letter and survey on November 1, 1996, to the 566 schools. The letter requested that the director of forensics at each institution complete and return a survey questionnaire with no name or identifying mark attached, thus assuring respondents of anonymity. A stamped addressed postcard was included with the survey. Respondents, if they so chose, could give their name and use the postcard to request a copy of the research. Beyond offering an incentive to participate in the study, the use of these postcards made it possible to monitor survey returns while maintaining participant anonymity. A second mailing was sent November 25, 1996, to those schools that still had not returned the postcards and yielded an additional 98 responses.

Of the 566 survey questionnaires mailed, 208 were returned. However, 10 were disallowed upon discovery the respondent was not involved with a speech and debate program,

but rather was responding on behalf of a criminal or medical forensic program or reporting the dissolution of a previous forensic program. Consequently, 198 valid responses were received, yielding a response rate of 35 percent.

The population parameters of the sex, race, and age of all forensic participants and coaches at colleges and universities in the United States are not known. However, the researchers were able to compute the population parameters in terms of (1) the type of school, and (2) the region of the country for the 566 schools initially surveyed (Appendix A). An analysis of the returned surveys showed the responses from two- and four-year schools in the sample approximated the percentage of each type school in the population; responses also reflected the general geographical breakdown of the schools surveyed. The sample, therefore, appears to be an accurate representation of the population for at least these two variables.

The responding schools were fairly evenly distributed across each region of the country, except for a lower number from the Northeast (Appendix B). Almost half the programs (44 percent) offered both individual and debate events, with the balance split fairly evenly between the two types of activities. (For a more comprehensive discussion of the demographic data, including a breakdown of two-year vs. four-year programs, see Valdivia, 1997).

Survey Instrument

The survey also assessed the level of diversity among the student participants and coaching staffs. Respondents were asked to list the number of student participants by sex, age level (17-20, 21-25, 26-30, 31-35, 36 and older), and race (white, black, Asian American, Hispanic). Respondents were asked to identify coaches in the same categories. The respondents were asked to describe, in terms of their overall team, whether their program was at a two-year or four-year school, the state in which it was

located (later recoded into four regions of the country), whether the team took part only in debate, individual events or both, and to which national forensic organization(s) they belonged. Finally, the survey asked, "Since 1991, has any special attempt been made to increase diversity levels in your forensics program? . . . If yes, what has been done to increase forensics diversity in your program? Please be specific." (Despite the work on handicapped team members done by Koslowski (1993) and growing interest in the rights of gay students, this study does not focus on those two groups because of its broad scope and the presumed low percentages of participants.) The final survey instrument was pretested by directors of forensics and coaches at Butte Community College in Oroville, California, and the University of the Pacific in Stockton, California.

Analysis

In the first stage of analysis, the percentage of schools stating they had made an effort to increase team diversity over the past five years is reported. The schools that reported making such efforts then were asked what specific steps they had taken. In the final stage of analysis, multiple regression was used to better understand which characteristics of forensic participants, coaches, and programs explained why some schools undertook diversity efforts. Multiple regression allows the researcher to analyze the impact of each independent variable on a dependent variable while holding a set of additional independent variables constant. It also allows the researcher to gauge the collective impact of all the independent variables and see how much of the variance they explain in the dependent variable.

The dependent variable in the study centered on whether respondents said they had promoted diversity on their teams. The characteristics of student participants and coaches and information about the teams in general served as independent variables. Since the dependent variable is dichotomous (0 = no

diversity effort, 1=yes diversity effort), the Logit multiple regression procedure was used. Logit is more efficient at analyzing a dichotomous dependent variable from a set of independent variables than other forms of regression (Aldrich & Nelson, 1984).

A hierarchical regression format was used to better understand the impact of participant, coach, and team characteristics. Variables representing the sex, age and race of the participants were entered into the first regression model. The corresponding variables for forensic coaches were added in a second regression model. Finally, team characteristics were added in a third regression model. This procedure allows the researcher to see more clearly the impact of the participants' characteristics, the coaches' characteristics, and the teams' characteristics.

Results

The 198 schools varied greatly in terms of the sex, age and race of participants and coaches (see Table 1). Each team had an average of seven female and six male students. The average team had nine participants between ages 17 and 20, three from age 21 to 25, and one who was age 26 and older. Each team had an average of 10 white participants and two minority group members. (The large standard deviations for such subgroups as females, males, and whites showed teams varied widely in terms of these variables.)

Table 1
Profile of Forensic Participants, Coaches, and Teams

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Efforts to Increase Diversity	0.31	0.46
<u>Team Participants</u>		
Female	7.21	4.91
Male	6.12	4.47
<u>Age</u>		
Age 17-20	8.54	6.39
21-25	3.22	3.31
26-30	0.58	1.54
31-35	0.17	0.51
36+	0.19	0.57
<u>Race</u>		
White	10.14	6.59
Black	1.19	2.02
Asian	0.50	1.11
Hispanic	0.64	1.20
<u>Team Coaches</u>		
Female	0.39	0.49
Male	1.32	1.21
20-25	0.64	1.12
26-30	0.48	0.72
31-36	0.51	0.68
37-45	0.37	0.66
46-50	0.15	0.37
51+	0.16	0.38
<u>Race</u>		
White	2.08	1.51
Non-white	0.16	0.47

NOTE: n=198. However, the 198 coaches supplied data on a total of 2,760 students and 463 coaches.

A male was three times more likely to be a head coach or assistant coach than a female. Most coaches were under age 37 and white.

Despite the call by forensic researchers for greater efforts to promote team diversity, coaches at more than two-thirds of the programs surveyed said they had made no effort to increase diversity in student participation in the past five years (Table 2). Only 31 percent of coaches (n=62) said their program had made such an effort, compared to 69 percent which said they had not. A comparison of responses from four-year vs. two-year schools showed no statistically significant difference; 67.4 percent of four-year colleges and universities answered that no effort to increase diversity had been initiated, while 70.5 percent of two-year schools responded in like manner.

Table 2
Efforts by Forensic Programs To Increase Diversity,
by Type of School

	All	<u>2-Year</u>	<u>4-Year</u>
Effort made	31.3%	29.5%	32.6%
Effort not made	68.7%	70.5%	67.4%
Total	100%	100%	100%
(n)	(198)	(61)	(135)
		$X^2 = .18, df=1, p > .05$	

The survey asked the 62 active coaches what specific steps they had taken to increase diversity in the past five years

(Table 3). More than one-third (37.1 percent) said they used general promotional strategies to increase the diversity of forensic participants. Other coaches cited efforts to target specific types of students (minority students, 19.4 percent; women, 9.7 percent; reentry students, 8.1 percent; women and foreign students, 6.5 percent; foreign students, 4.8 percent). Coaches also mentioned efforts to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of their coaching staffs (6.5 percent), holding activities fairs (3.2 percent), recruiting at high schools (1.6 percent), and general recruitment workshops (1.6 percent).

Table 3
Specific Efforts To Increase Diversity

<u>Activity</u>	<u>% Cited</u>
Promotion	37.1%
Recruit Minority Students	19.4%
Recruit Women Students	9.7%
Recruit Reentry Students	8.1%
Recruit Women & Foreign St.	6.5%
Hire Racial/Ethnic Staff	6.5%
Recruit Foreign Students	4.8%
Hold Activities Fair	3.2%
Recruit at High School	1.6%
Recruitment Workshops	1.6%

Note: Multiple responses were recorded from the 62 coaches who said they had made efforts to diversify in the past five years.

The final stage of the analysis focused on factors that might help explain why some forensic programs made efforts to promote diversity and others had not. (Table 4). The first regression model shows that characteristics of the student

participants explained 10 percent of the variance ($r^2 = .10$) in the dependent variable of whether any diversity effort had been made. Several variables were significantly related to diversity. Teams that already had larger numbers of women participants in 1996 were less likely to have made an effort to diversify ($r = -.16$). However, those teams with younger student participants, aged 17-20 and 21-25, were more likely to undertake diversity efforts ($r = .14$, $r = .19$, respectively). Teams with larger numbers of students of age 36 and higher also reported making more efforts to further promote diversity. Race and ethnicity were not significantly related to diversity efforts; whether teams already had large or small numbers of minority participants did not significantly explain whether the team made efforts to further diversify.

Table 4
Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Variables Associated with Efforts to Increase Diversity (Logit coefficients)

Participant	Regression 1	Regression 2	Regression 3
Male	+	+	+
Female	-.16*	-.24**	-.33***
Age 17-20	.14**	.22***	.29***
21-25	.19**	.27***	.35***
26-30	.10	.05	.13
31-35	-.19	-.13	.30
36 +	.78*	.92*	.92*
White	+	+	+
Black	.07	.06	.11
Asian	-.10	-.19	-.30
Hispanic	-.00	-.03	.08
Coaches			
Male		+	+
Female		.67**	.97***
20-25		-.38*	-.42*
26-30		-.83**	-.94**
31-36		-.32	-.57
37-45		-.11	-.06
46-50		.15	.44
51 +		-.30	-.34
White			+
Non-white		.07	-.01

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<u>Program</u>				
2-year			+	
4-year			1.44 [#]	
West			+	
Midwest			.10	
South			.30	
Northeast			.15	
Both individual and debate			+	
Individual only			1.01 [#]	
Debate only			1.59 [*]	
CEDA			+	
AFA			.42	
NFA			1.03 [*]	
PRP			1.68 [#]	
PKD			-.36	
NPDA			.86	
NDT			-.86	
Constant	-1.72***	-1.89***	-5.33***	
X ²	21.68**	35.46**	52.57***	
Pseudo r ²	.10	.16	.22	
n	195	192	189	

NOTE: ⁺omitted control category (needed for nominal independent variables).

*p < .10; **p < .05 ***p < .01 ****p < .001

Pseudo r² = x² / x² + n

The second regression model adds the coaching characteristics to the student characteristics, increasing the variance explained from 10 percent to 16 percent. All of the variables that were significant in the first model remained so in this expanded environment. Several characteristics of coaches

also were significantly related to diversity efforts. A very strong, positive relationship existed between the number of women coaches and diversity efforts ($r = .67$); the more women coaches, the greater the effort by the team to promote diversity. Teams with younger coaches, in the 20-25 and 26-30 age range, were significantly less likely to make efforts to promote diversity. The race of the coaches was not a significant factor in explaining diversity efforts.

The final regression model adds team characteristics to the student and coaching characteristics. Together, the independent variables in Regression 3 explain 22 percent of the variance in diversity efforts. All of the variables significantly related to diversity in the first two models remained significant. Teams sponsored by four-year schools, those with just individual or debate events, and those affiliated with NFA and PRP were positively related to efforts to promote diversity. The region of the country where the program was located was not significantly related to diversity efforts.

In summary, the study found a majority of college forensic participants were young and white students, but there were more women participants than men and two of every 12 students were from minority groups. Coaches were far more likely to be white men under age 37. Less than two-thirds (31.3 percent) of forensic programs reported efforts to promote diversity. Several characteristics of forensic participants, coaches, and teams were significantly related to efforts to increase diversity: teams with female coaches and those with larger numbers of young forensic competitors were more likely to have undertaken diversity efforts.

DISCUSSION

A lack of baseline data makes it impossible to conclude whether today's college and university forensic teams are more diverse than those of the recent or distant past. Women, who

now constitute a majority of college students overall (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1996), constitute a majority of the forensic participants studied here. The percentages of forensic participants from minority groups and the over-26 age group trail the comparable percentages among all college students (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1996; Chronicle of Higher Education, 1995). Yet any stereotype of all forensic participants as young, white, and male finds little support in this study.

Most teams report making no effort to further increase diversity in the ranks of student participants, despite repeated calls in the literature to do so. The lack of effort may be a result of the time demands inherent in forensics, rather than antipathy toward such changes. As Boylan (1994) notes:

Forensics may place a greater demand on students and faculty than any other college or university course. Even when students and faculty are not traveling to a tournament, their free time is usually spent writing, revising, and practicing for the next tournament. Furthermore, forensics coaches often have other classes to teach, professional obligations to meet, administrative responsibilities to fulfill, and personal commitments to consider. (49)

The high stress level accompanying forensic involvement, in combination with a low compensation level (Gill 1990), may also contribute to the small percentage of coaches actively involved in increasing diversity levels in forensic programs. Whatever the reason, this study shows the warnings that the current system has not encouraged diversity and has limited the ability of quality students to compete (Derryberry, 1989; Loge, 1990) remain relevant today.

One avenue for further research lies in discovering what motivated 31 percent of coaches to invest their time, energy, and money in promoting forensic diversity, and what, if any, were

the returns on their investments. Were these programs successful (or not) in increasing diversity, and if so, what worked (or did not work) in their attempts at diversification?

In light of the study's findings that most coaches made no attempt to increase diversity, a second unanswered question arises: Why not? Does the forensic community no longer believe—if it ever did—that increased diversity is an important aim? Is it satisfied with current levels? Specifically, what are the forensic community's attitudes toward diversification?

The regression analysis shows both the complexity of the diversity issue and the need for additional work in this area. This study does pinpoint some variables closely associated with increased diversity efforts, such as programs with female coaches and younger participants, and some variables negatively associated with diversity, such as programs with younger coaches and those that already have more female competitors. Yet most of the variance in diversity efforts remained unexplained in the final regression model.

The issues of homosexuality and physical disability also deserve further study as components of diversity within forensics programs. Although not reported in this study, some respondents self-identified as homosexual, asking why a separate category addressing homosexuality had not been included. Although this number was low, the issue highlights another potential avenue for future research. A second area not reported by this study was the participation of disabled competitors and coaches. Although responses were limited, their very existence reveals the potential for future research, perhaps replicating and extending Koslowski's 1993 study.

Finally, any effort to increase cultural diversity in forensics might consider what impact the communication patterns in minority cultures might have on participation in such activities. A minority culture that has a strong oral tradition but emphasizes discussion rather than persuasion, or one that tends not to draw attention to oneself, might complicate well-meaning

efforts by coaches to increase that culture's diversity in forensics.

This study notes some diversity in the composition of the average college forensics team, despite the fact most coaches are not increasing efforts in this area. Whether current efforts meet Preston's call (1991) for "doing the greatest good for the greatest number with cultural diversity, and effective and ethically sound forensic pedagogy" is likely to remain an ongoing debate in the field.

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**Appendix A Comparison of
Population and Sample Characteristics**

	Surveys sent to population	Surveys received from sample
Type of school		
2-year school	40%	34%
4-year school	60%	66%
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TOTAL	100%	100%
(n)	(566)	(198)
Region		
West	25%	27%
Midwest	32%	28%
South	32%	34%
Northeast	10%	11%
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TOTAL	100%	100%
(n)	(566)	(195)*

*Three schools did not identify their state.

Appendix B
Profile of Forensic Teams Surveyed

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Overall programs		
2-year	0.31	0.46
4-year	0.69	0.46
West	0.27	0.45
Midwest	0.28	0.45
South	0.34	0.47
Northeast	0.11	0.31
Both individual and	0.44	0.50
Individual only	0.27	0.45
Debate only	0.29	0.45
CEDA	0.51	0.50
AFA	0.65	0.48
NFA	0.24	0.43
PRP	0.25	0.44
PKD	0.19	0.39
NPDA	0.17	0.37
NDT	0.17	0.37

NOTE: n=198. However, the 198 coaches supplied data on a total of 2,760 students and 463 coaches.

Collegiate Lincoln-Douglas Debate and High School Champions: Implications of a Survey of Participants in the Tournament of Champions

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Forensic activities are deeply rooted in the traditional power of public address, and are richly diverse in their practice. At both the high school and collegiate levels, coaches and students have the opportunity to be involved in individual speaking events and debate. In addition, debate options at both levels have become increasingly diverse. High school debaters can compete in policy-oriented team debate, value-oriented Lincoln-Douglas debate, and regional and state variations of each. At the collegiate level, students may choose to compete in a variety of policy, value, and parliamentary debate options sponsored by the National Debate Tournament, the Cross-Examination Debate Association, the National Educational Debate Association, the National Forensic Association, and many other organizational entities. This diversity offers not only opportunities for students and coaches, but also challenges. Many of those challenges warrant greater attention from forensic educators and scholars.

From many forensic topics ripe with possibilities for investigation, we select one, the relationship between collegiate Lincoln-Douglas debate and high school Lincoln-Douglas championship debaters. First, we explore the literature regarding the high school and college forensic connection. Second, we offer a research method to guide the present investigation and then we report the results of the research. Finally, we discuss the implications for strengthening the relationship between high school and collegiate Lincoln-Douglas debate programs.

THE HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE CONNECTION

Snider (1995) stressed what has been recognized by many for years: "high school and college forensics have common interests and a common fate" (p. 24). Many students begin their forensic endeavors in high school and continue their participation when they enter college. Most coaches, both high school and collegiate, have either competed in collegiate forensics or have been instructed in forensic education at colleges and universities around the nation. Similar policy and value debate resolutions have been employed at both levels. In addition similar issues, concerns, and challenges cut across both the high school and college forensic communities. Research interest, outreach efforts, student populations for potential competitors, and a host of other features tie the two communities together.

Students who participate in forensic activities, particularly debaters, have long attracted the interest of researchers. For example, over half a century ago Howell (1943) evaluated the effects of high school debate participation on the development and refinement of critical thinking skills. More recently, Colbert (1993) assessed the role of high school debate participation on students' verbal aggression and argumentativeness. Forensic researchers at both the high school level (Shelton & Shelton, 1993) and collegiate (Bruschke & Johnson, 1994) explored the possible influence of gender bias on success in debate competition. Anyone who has attended a speech communication convention or conference at the state, regional, or national level can attest to the fact that forensic researchers see the student competitor population of high school and college debaters as an appealing and informative source for investigations.

College and high school forensic programs typically engage in a number of interconnected activities. One of the most obvious interconnections relates to coaching and judging. As noted, most coaches at both levels have either competed in college forensic activities or have been trained at institutions that sponsor debate and

individual events programs. The coaching connection is often more direct. College coaches and debaters work actively with high school programs. Additionally, college competitors and coaches are often called upon to judge at high school tournaments. High school debaters also draw upon college programs for valuable resources. Most handbooks for high school debaters are researched and packaged by college debaters and coaches.

Another longstanding interconnection between high school and college forensics has been the summer institute or workshop. Virtually every summer debate and individual events workshop is sponsored by and hosted at a college or university. College competitors and coaches provide the staff personnel for these workshops. Scholars, such as Pruett (1972) and Matlon and Shoen (1974), recognized the importance of this interconnection nearly a quarter of a century ago. More recently, Balthrop (1984) assessed the overall value of summer debate workshops and Chandler (1987) developed a series of recommendations to assist sponsors in the operation of these summer programs. These summer workshops often contribute to the establishment of both personal and professional relationships between high school and collegiate competitors and coaches.

High school and college programs have other, more pragmatic, ties. College debate and individual events programs are heavily dependent upon harvesting student competitors from high school debaters and speakers. Colleges often go to great lengths to recruit high school competitors to their programs. The recruitment process is sometimes intense and problematic. College programs often need to convince high school students that it would be beneficial to continue their involvement in forensic activities at the collegiate level. Although they were specifically interested in female forensic participation, Griffin and Raider's (1992) observation is germane: "Because most college debaters were first exposed to the activity in high school, examining participation at the high school level is a necessary first step" (p. 8). The high school level is certainly a necessary first step, as it is the most frequent introduction

to forensic activities for students and it often measures their long term interest in the activity.

Scholars at the collegiate level have recognized the importance of the high school forensic community to the health of college programs. The first Developmental Conference on Forensics (McBath, 1975) pleaded with college programs to encourage high school debate. Snider (1995) announced the establishment of a formal high school outreach program by the Cross-Examination Debate Association. Although generally critical of current developmental relationships between high school and college forensic programs, Brand (1996) acknowledged the existence of some "community service" outreach programs and encouraged their expansion.

Despite the existence of similar research interests, the sponsorship of summer workshops, and the development of outreach efforts, the actual strength of the connection between high school and collegiate forensic programs has been questioned. Indeed, some observers criticized the nature of this relationship. Snider (1994) noted: "The reality is that there is a strict division between forensics at the high school and college level" (p. 28). Brand (1996) expressed a similar view when he stated, "The collegiate forensic community lacks effective ways to reach out to the high school speech and debate community" (p. 37). Misunderstandings and complications also plague the high school and college connection in forensics. In a discussion of "myths" that frustrate the development of connecting ties, Snider (1995) observed: "High school and college debate are not separate entities, but a continuum through which students and coaches move. For too long the high school and collegiate debate communities have acted as if they existed in separate worlds, unaware of the reality of the continuum" (p. 24).

It would be difficult to identify the extent of the specific relationship between any single collegiate forensic activity and its high school counterpart, and to measure the level of disconnection between the two. It is possible, though, to discuss the relationship of Lincoln-Douglas debating in high schools and colleges. Lincoln-

Douglas debate is sponsored at both the high school and collegiate levels with some common ties. The National Forensic League [NFL] at the high school level and the National Forensic Association [NFA] at the collegiate level, initiated Lincoln-Douglas debate as a response to perceived excesses in traditional policy-oriented team debate. Bile (1996) explained that "The development of NFA Lincoln-Douglas debate has significantly expanded opportunities for students to experience the benefits of educational debate" (p. 37). Many of those students were initiated into L-D debate at the high school level. Indeed, Morris and Herbeek (1996) noted that NFA L-D has served to "accommodate an influx of interested and talented students. . . ." (p. 1).

The relationship between NFL and NFA Lincoln-Douglas debate can be assessed and then strengthened more thoroughly. The literature, as reported here, suggests that greater attention should be assigned to the high school and college connection. The potential value of expanding and strengthening that connection would be particularly compelling for the NFA. High school and NFA debate are similar stylistically, they share many theoretical underpinnings, and they attract students who have decided, for whatever reason, not to participate in traditional team debate. Further, the linkage between successful high school L-D debaters and NFA collegiate programs warrants greater investigation. Although writing about gender issues, Griffin and Raider (1992) stressed an important general point that applies as well to males: "It is unlikely that a female who has not experienced some competition and success in the activity while in high school will remain, much less begin, debating in college" (p. 8). The competitive success of high school debaters, both males and females, often colors their outlook on competing in college. Additionally, those L-D debaters who have been successful at the high school level represent a trained and talented pool for NFA L-D programs to draw upon.

Many questions come to mind in regard to the connection between high school and NFA L-D. For example, do successful high school L-D debaters continue their interest in competition as

they prepare to enter college? Do factors, such as the amount of high school competition and years of experience, influence a successful high school debater's interest in collegiate competition? Do the factors that influence the development of championship L-D skills at the high school level also inform competitive success at the collegiate level? The present investigation is an initial effort to help find answers to such questions.

METHOD

A twelve-item survey was constructed for use among participants at the 1997 high school debate Tournament of Champions (see Appendix). All Tournament of Champions participants were asked to complete and return the survey, although only results for the Lincoln-Douglas participants are reported here.¹ Seventy-six L-D debaters participated in the 1997 Tournament of Champions. All participants had to meet a double qualification standard at selected national L-D tournaments. Fifty percent (38) of the L-D participants completed and returned the survey.² Eleven female participants and twenty-seven male participants were represented by the returned surveys. Twenty-five of the respondents were high school seniors, twelve were juniors, and one was a sophomore. Number of years of tournament competition ranged from four to two; and there were no first year L-D debaters among the respondents. The mean number of years of competition for respondents was 3.45, with a distribution of twenty who had competed for four years, fifteen who had competed for three years, and three who had competed for two years. L-D participants were asked to respond to a number of substantive items, in addition to providing basic demographic information. These items included questions about the number of tournaments the student had competed in that academic year, attendance at summer debate workshops, plans for debating at the collegiate level, whether this student competed in other forensic activities, and information regarding the student's perception of factors influential in his or her success.

RESULTS

L-D participants at the 1997 Tournament of Champions were asked to report the number of tournaments in which they had competed during the past year. Most students had participated in more than ten tournaments. The mean (average) number of tournaments in which students had participated was 11.42. The mode was close to the mean as ten students reported they had competed in twelve tournaments. The range was from a low of three tournaments of competition to a high of twenty tournaments.

The L-D participants were asked to respond to two survey items regarding attendance at summer debate workshops. The first question asked if the student had attended a debate workshop the previous summer. Fifteen students reported that they had attended a workshop that summer and twenty-three students reported that they had not attended a summer workshop. L-D participants were also asked to report the total number of summer workshops that they had attended during their high school debate careers up to that point. The mean (average) number of workshops attended was 1.21. The mode, however, was zero as fifteen respondents indicated that they had never attended a summer debate workshop.³ The range for attendance varied from one workshop to as many as four: eight reported attendance at one workshop, nine had attended two, four had attended three, and two students had attended four.

L-D participants were queried as to their plans for competing in debate at the collegiate level. Students were asked to indicate if they did plan to compete in college, if they did not plan to compete, or if they were uncertain regarding their collegiate debate competition plans. Only three students responded with a definite "yes" to competing in college debate. Another sixteen students reported that they definitely planned not to participate at the collegiate level. Nineteen students indicated that they were uncertain about collegiate competition.

The L-D participants were given two survey items regarding their participation in alternative forensic activities during high

school. Students were asked to report whether they had ever participated in individual speaking events or in team (policy or cross-examination) debate. Twenty-three of the respondents indicated that they had participated in individual events. Another fifteen students reported that they had not participated in individual events. Although two students did not respond to the question concerning team debate, ten did report that they had participated in that form of debate as well as L-D. Twenty-six students reported that they had not participated in an alternative debate format.

L-D participants were asked an open-ended question seeking to determine what the students perceived to be the most important factor in their ability to qualify for the Tournament of Champions. Several students indicated multiple factors that they felt accounted for their competitive success. The responses of students could be sorted into eleven overall categories as reported in Table I. Four factors seemed to predominate the responses: thirteen students attributed their success to team effort and preparation, twelve reported coaching as being most important, eleven indicated that individual effort and qualities were most important, and ten reported experience as the key to their success.

DISCUSSION

Collegiate forensic scholars and educators could potentially glean a host of variable information from these data, but some of the most important implications are particularly germane to those who sponsor and coach NFA Lincoln-Douglas debate. The participants at the Tournament of Champions represent the most successful high school L-D debaters and as such they should be of general interest to the collegiate L-D community. Obviously, the most important question that a collegiate L-D coach might wish to consider is whether these high school champions plan to debate in college. Although sixteen of the survey respondents reported that they did not plan to participate in debate at the collegiate level, a close examination of the other responses provides much more promising

and insightful information for college coaches.

Although only three students reported that they would definitely compete in debate at the collegiate level, another nineteen reported that they were uncertain for a total potential of twenty-two college competitors from among the participants at the 1997 Tournament of Champions. It is most illuminating to tie this survey item to questions regarding attendance at summer debate workshops. Of the three respondents who reported that they planned to compete in college debate, all had attended a workshop the previous summer. Overall comparisons are also striking. Of the twenty-two students who were either definitely planning to debate in college or who were uncertain, seventeen or 77% reported that they had attended a summer workshop at some time. These results are nearly reversed for those who reported that they definitely did not plan to debate in college. Of the sixteen who did not plan to compete, 62.5% had never attended a summer workshop. These data suggest a number of important implications for NFA L-D debate.

High school L-D debaters who have attended a summer debate workshop tend to be more favorable toward the possibility of continuing their debate careers at the collegiate level. A number of potential explanations may inform this tendency. Many high school debaters who attend summer debate workshops are exposed to the vitality of college debate activities, extensive research, and organizational efforts. High school students often establish bonds with the college debaters and coaches who comprise the staffs at most summer workshops. And, those high school students who attend summer workshops are simply in a more convenient position to receive both formal and informal recruiting information by those individuals attempting to attract them to collegiate competition. Regardless of the specific causative factor for this heightened tendency to consider participation in collegiate level debate, the obvious implication would be for college programs to use this knowledge to inform their plans regarding summer workshops.

The implications regarding summer workshops are several fold. More NFA L-D programs may wish to consider sponsoring a

summer workshop. Such sponsorship could potentially have positive consequences for both the sponsoring institution and NFA L-D as a whole. Sponsors may garner the practical benefit of enhancing their own recruitment efforts. The NFA L-D community would benefit from expanded sponsorship by potentially increasing the overall pool of trained and skilled high school debaters who might consider competing at the collegiate level. Further, college L-D programs could further capitalize on the operation of existing summer workshops. The staff and sponsors of summer workshops might do even more to create a positive image of collegiate L-D debate and to stimulate interest in future competition. This might include making more information regarding admissions and scholarships available, as well as establishing more formal liaison efforts between collegiate summer workshop sponsors and the high school programs that send students to those workshops.

Nearly sixty percent (59.09%) of the twenty-two students who were either definitely planning to debate in college or were uncertain about future debate plans reported that they had also participated in individual speaking events at one time. This might also be illuminating data for NFA L-D programs. Many of the persuasive and delivery skills that are necessary in NFA L-D are also important to individual events competition. More important, as Minch and Borchers (1996) reported, most NFA L-D competitions are held in conjunction with individual events tournaments. The students who are favorable toward participation in collegiate debate also possess some level of skill in individual events, and college programs might maximize recruitment by targeting these students. Such efforts might contribute to the overall health of a forensic program in debate and individual events.

Gender data related to plans for potential collegiate debate competition are remarkable. Of those sixteen students who reported that they definitely did not intend to debate in college, fifteen were male and only one was female. More importantly, ten females reported that they were either definitely planning to debate in college or were uncertain about doing so, and there were only eleven female

respondents in the entire population of respondents to the Tournament of Champions survey. This suggests that virtually all of the females who had qualified for the Tournament of Champions were open to the possibility of debating in college. This may well confirm Griffin and Raider's (1992) contention that female debaters required some level of high school success to consider competing at the college level. Additionally, this may suggest generally that more females are considering participation in debate at the collegiate level. If this is the case for female L-D debaters then the NFA has a wonderful opportunity to combat further the gender bias that Brusckie and Johnson (1994) and others contend is so pervasive in college debate ranks.

Data regarding those factors that high school L-D champions perceive as playing an important role in their competitive success are illuminating. Although only four respondents attributed their success to attendance at a summer workshop, these students spoke very positively of the workshop experience. One student simply noted that "my lab leaders contributed to my qualifying [for the Tournament of Champions]." Another said, "I found institute extremely beneficial in my preparation for competition." A student elaborated on the value of the summer workshop experience by stating that "my summer experience...gave me the reputation and relationship with students and coaches that I needed to compete on a national level." Such remarks reinforce the efficacy of sponsoring summer workshops by NFA L-D programs.

Some of the other factors reported for success in L-D competition might also be important to NFA L-D programs. A large number of students attributed much of their success to their coaches. Many students reported "good coaching" or "my coaches" as significant factors in their competitive success. This suggests that NFA L-D programs might do even more to expand efforts related to the training and development of high school L-D coaches. NFA programs that sponsor summer workshops might include a program for coaches. NFA L-D programs might take steps to increase information and resource options to high school L-D coaches in

order to establish a greater bond and to enhance cooperation, research, recruitment, and other ends.

A number of respondents attributed their success to team effort. Many students reported that "superior team preparation" was important to their competitive success. This could be important to NFA L-D programs. These data suggest that many students are accustomed to an organized team effort that often contributes to successful collegiate competition. Further, these data speak to the positive potential benefits in team collegiality that these students might bring to NFA L-D programs. Unlike so many high school students who have fallen victim to the negative consequences of a "star system," these L-D champions recognize the essential value of team work and might easily be integrated into competitive collegiate programs.

Although not particularly germane to the focus of this work, some comments are in order regarding other survey responses of L-D participants at the 1997 Tournament of Champions. Preliminary calculations suggest that none of the other factors examined through this survey—number of tournaments attended, years of high school competition, or any other—had the same relationship with a favorable attitude toward potentially debating in college as did attendance at a summer workshop. Thus, "burnout" from years of competition, nor any other factor examined here, can explain attitudes toward college competition as strongly as summer workshop attendance. This strengthens the importance NFA L-D programs' sponsoring workshops for this may be one of the most important recruitment and outreach options to consider.

Future forensic researchers might harvest some important implications from this project. NFA L-D coaches and researchers might wish to explore the attitudes and qualities of championship-level high school L-D debaters. Such research might reveal the best way to assure long-term debate involvement of students who have already developed highly refined competitive skills. Additionally, researchers may also wish to garner information of the type reported here from students at general competition tournaments. This might

provide further data regarding the role of summer workshops, potential for female recruitment, and the development of ties between the high school and college L-D communities. Indeed, the most significant contribution of the present investigation might be to draw attention to the possibility of researching and extending the bonds between L-D debate sponsored by the NFL at one level and the NFA at the college level.

NOTES

¹The survey instrument was distributed to team debaters as well, but fewer than fifteen percent of the participants returned the survey.

²Fifty percent is a generally healthy return rate for a survey instrument. Indeed, Shelton and Shelton (1984) have reported that forensic survey results that approach such a return rate are quite good.

³Some of the students who had never attended a workshop held very negative views of such summer programs. One student said "I wouldn't be caught dead at one" and another said "debate camps are for losers."

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TABLE 1

Most Important Factors in Tournament of Champions Qualification

Factor	Responses
Team work/effort	13
Coaching	12
Individual effort/qualities	11
Experience	10
Travel Schedule	4
Workshops	4
School	2
No Response	2
Luck	1
Previous Qualification	1
Space Availability	1

**APPENDIX
SURVEY**

1. Gender Male Female
2. Year in high school _____ .
3. Number of years you have debated
4. Number of tournaments you have competed in this year _____.
5. Did you attend a debate workshop last summer?
 Yes No.
6. Total number of workshops you have attended during your debate career _____ .
7. Have you also competed in individual events?
 Yes No.
8. Do you anticipate participating in debate during college?
 Yes No Uncertain
9. Do you compete in Lincoln-Douglas _____
 or team debate _____ ?
10. Have you ever competed in another (L-D or team) format of
 debate? Yes No.
11. If a team debater, mark all speaker positions which you have ever
 performed. 1st Affirmative 2nd Affirmative
 1st Negative 2nd Negative
12. What do you believe was the most important factor contributing to
 your ability to qualify for the Tournament of Champions?

When Criteria Becomes Formula: The Search for Standardization within Competitive After-Dinner Speeches

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When students are introduced to competitive individual event speaking, they are often presented with the rules and guidelines for each event. Although these descriptions of events are perhaps adequate, many people in forensics believe that the guidelines are not always accurate or complete. An event's functional definition is often much more narrow than the written one. Every individual event seems to have a formula or "cookie-cutter" that must be followed in order to be successful, except after-dinner speaking. Countless researchers, such as Swanson & Zeuschner (1983), Mills (1984), Hanson (1988), and Holm (1993), have attempted to offer after-dinner speaking guidelines in an attempt to establish uniform judging criteria. Yet, a decade later, judges and students alike are frustrated by the inconsistencies. Dreibelbis & Redmon (1987) argue that while the rules for after-dinner speaking are very clear, "what is not clear are the reasons for so many different interpretations of the national rules for after-dinner speaking" (p. 95). They claim, because of inconsistencies in the event, "coaches and competitors...may eventually come to the conclusion that never have so many been entertained by so few" (p. 95).

Although after-dinner speaking is designed to be a breath of fresh air amidst more serious events, the lack of parameters for a successful after-dinner speech hinders the event. Rather than accepting the lack of a standardized criteria, judges often supply their own "cookie-cutter" formula for the successful after-dinner speech. These different formulas often bear little resemblance to one other and, most problematically, a judging *criteria* and a winning *formula* are often used interchangeably in after-dinner speaking. This study makes two arguments. First, the use of judging *criteria*

is integral to assessing after-dinner speeches. Second, *a. formula* for the successful after-dinner speech is not necessary. This study argues that after-dinner speaking criteria and formula have often become hopelessly mixed and that this confusion is one of the main problems in assessing competitive after-dinner speeches. This study's goal is not to take sides on the current dispute regarding the contents of a proper after-dinner speech; rather the study illuminates differences in order to establish that after-dinner speeches can be performed in many ways and forms, which argues that diversity is a positive good.

The proper formula of an after-dinner speech is debatable, for theorists disagree over what the event should or should not be, often defaulting to textbook definitions of after-dinner speaking. Osborn and Osborn (1994) offer persuasion and humor as the two integral elements that an after-dinner speech should contain. They believe that after-dinner speeches are inherently persuasive for they "leave a message that can act as a vision or guide and inspire future events" (p. 438) and humor, they argue, arises from this inspirational situation. Anderson and Martin (1983) agree that after-dinner speaking is persuasive in nature and that humor should be derived from the situation or topic that is presented. Contrastingly, Mills (1984) divides the after-dinner speaking criteria into two main categories: content and style. Humor, he states, can be located within each of the facets of the speech through the use of various humorous techniques.

Hanson (1988) questions the criteria used in all public address events. Ultimately, he argues that after-dinner speaking can adhere to the same standards as other written speeches, yet after-dinner speeches are likely to have other genre-specific standards as well. He builds upon the notions of Swanson and Zeuschner (1983) who list four elements that should be included in an assessment of after-dinner speeches:

1. Was the subject suitable?
2. Did the speech reveal originality and creativity in the development of the subject?

3. Was the speaker's use of language appropriate to the audience and the occasion, and did it enhance the ability to compel attention and secure interest?
4. Was the speaker's delivery adapted to the nature of the materials? (1983, p. 45).

Consequently, it is easy to identify many different approaches offered by researchers of after-dinner speaking. Some fail to mention the role of the audience, while others, such as Mills (1984), state that audience reaction is an integral element of the after-dinner speaking experience. In essence, the difference between the judging criteria for after-dinner speaking and the criteria for other written speeches lies within debates of which of the criterion should be emphasized. Holm (1994) even goes as far to state that proof is not always a necessary component of after-dinner speaking judging criteria, while Klopff (1994) and Perella & Brydon (1994) both argue that while the after-dinner speech should contain the same structural elements as other written speeches, after-dinner speaking should place its emphasis on entertainment for Brydon notes: "Public entertainment is the most obvious defining feature of this event" (p. 115).

In an attempt to unify where most judges place emphasis, Holm (1993) conducted a survey that asked the question: "What types of evaluative criteria do you apply when judging A.D.S.?" Responses were:

70 %	Structure and organization of the speech
65 %	Delivery and style of the speaker
53 %	General use of humor
41 %	Significance of topic
35 %	Amount of humor
29%	Thematic unity
24%	Use of evidence

While the survey helped to clarify judging emphasis placed on certain areas of an after-dinner speech, respondents were allowed to list more than one option. Consequently, a respondent could list six of the criteria, but there was no way to tell which of these six

received the highest emphasis.

Researchers indicate different stances on the use of appropriate humor, ranging from highly conservative to highly liberal. No clear consensus is apparent. Miller (1974) perhaps offered the best argument concerning humor in stating that "some speakers use various forms of humor better than others" (p. 157).

Yet another issue within the realm of after-dinner speaking judging criteria is the use of overdone topics. Wartman (1988) and Holm (1993) listed topics that were used in after-dinner speaking in the late-1980s and early 1990s. They included etiquette, small town life, dieting, fear, and benefits of smoking, all of which could easily be found in a round of after-dinner speaking today. Many after-dinner speaking topics are timeless and, as a result, overdone which has become a serious problem as the event has evolved.

Feeling the need for rigid guidelines in after-dinner speaking events, many of these same theorists, including Anderson and Martin (1983), Dreibelbis & Redmon (1987), Mills (1984), and Hanson (1988) offered solutions to the problem that usually included the expansion of the definition of after-dinner speaking and the standardization of formalized ballots. Perhaps the one thread of consistency throughout all prior research is that lack of consistency is a problem worth addressing.

METHOD

A total of 115 short questionnaires were completed by both students and coaches within the realm of forensics. These questionnaires were collected in two ways: responses from an e-mail list-serve (ie-l), and also through individual e-mail distribution to coaches and students. A total of 42 coaches and 73 students took part in the study. Respondents were largely from the midwest, but many also were from all regions of the country, allowing for generalizability across forensic district boundaries. The sex of respondents was nearly equal: 60 males, 55 females. Subjects were asked just four questions, 2 multiple choice and 2 open-ended

questions. Questions were derived in an attempt to pinpoint some of the major issues facing after-dinner speakers in the 1990s. These questions were:

- 1) What is more important: research, humor, or both?
- 2) People using over done topics is a: big problem, moderate problem, minor problem, or non-existent problem.
- 3) What is the biggest problem with after-dinner speaking today?
- 4) Can you think of any way to increase participation in after dinner speaking?

Results were then compiled using a single coder and then analyzed through converting multiple choice responses to percentages. Open-ended responses were analyzed using content analysis.

RESULTS

Perhaps the most divisive question in the study was: "What is more important: research, humor, or both?" Of all respondents, 35% felt that humor was more important, 28% stated that research was the integral facet to an after-dinner speech, with the remaining 37% offering the argument that both elements were of equal importance.

Such divisiveness was not found in regard to the question concerning overdone topics. Eighty-five percent of all respondents stated that people using overdone topics was either a big or moderate problem in current day after-dinner speeches (54% big; 31% moderate). Eleven percent felt it was a minor problem, while only 4% of all respondents felt it was a non-existent problem. Obviously, overdone topics are likely a problem in all four categories of public address speeches; however it is particularly a problem in after-dinner speaking because some topics "never go out of style," as one respondent noted in an open-ended response: Overdone topics is an extreme problem in after-dinner speaking because, while other events

require timeliness of topics, after-dinner speaking often does not. Successful A.D.S.' of the 1990's have dealt with topics such as stereotypes against Asian Americans, credibility, and public displays of affection. All of these topics could have been done twenty years ago. Needless to say, when 96% of all participants can identify overused topics as a problem to some degree, it is easy to see, despite popular belief, that some consensus can be found within the forensic community.

Eleven respondents extended their arguments on the issue of overdone topics in open-ended responses. Four stated that the current solution to the "no topic is a new topic" problem has been to make every issue into a "syndrome" or an "ism." One respondent wrote, "If a speech on patriotism has already 'been done' then the topic becomes 'Patriot syndrome: America's obsession with supporting it's own.'" Respondents stated that any old topic can be finagled into *sounding* like a new topic and that therein lies the problem.

The open-ended responses also had some common threads of sameness. Ten respondents felt that the biggest problem with after-dinner speaking is its current position that is perilously close to persuasive speaking, which hurts after-dinner speaking as an event. Twelve noted that informative topics are virtually non-existent. "Topics," as one respondent stated, "are beginning to resemble stereotypical persuasion topics too closely. Policy speeches should be discouraged in after-dinner speeches because I would not want to see the two events become too like each other." Another coach had a very interesting point in stating that not only do most students write persuasive after-dinner speeches, but another problem arises when they attempt to meld informative and persuasive organizational patterns together. He gave the following example:

Consider a speech in which the first point is devoted to what "x" is or the history of "x." This is followed by a second point on the problems of "x" and a third that deals with solutions. The speech begins with an informative first point, yet most

speeches that propose solutions to problems are persuasive in intent and design.

Thus, several different arguments within the realm of the "after-dinner speech as persuasion" argument were easily identified in the responses.

The other common thread found within the question of the "biggest problem facing after-dinner speeches today" was, not surprisingly, the lack of uniform judging criteria. Students were more concerned with this lack of consistency than their coaching counterparts, as 35% of all students, but only 12% of the coaches, noted the problem. The debates over humor versus research, persuasion versus informative, overtime versus undertime, visual aids versus lack of visual aids, serious point versus lack of serious point, and style versus substance were all cited as reasons for concern in the forensic community. As one student directly stated: "It's difficult to encourage people to compete in the event when no one really knows what the rules are."

Eight responses also dealt with the controversy of the increased use of "spontaneous" jokes. Many speakers have begun adding jokes to their speeches by relating them to other speeches within the room or relating jokes to the tournament as a whole. Some judges found this practice to be quite intriguing, as evidenced through the increased number of national finalists who participate in this practice once there is a larger audience. Yet, respondents stated that this was hurting the event for several reasons. First, such jokes often make speeches last longer than the allotted time limits. Second, they believe an after-dinner speech is supposed to be a written, memorized speech rather than an extemporaneous one for these jokes are obviously extemporaneous. Third, the perception that many students do not compete in after-dinner speaking because they "are not funny" is verified in this practice of extemporaneous jokes. It appears that the "naturally" funny speakers, who can add spontaneous jokes, percolate to the top of a round because of this practice. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, judges argue that this practice grants an unfair advantage to competitors who speak

toward the latter part of the round because these speakers have more material with which to extract additional humor. Once again, this debate has served to polarize judges and competitors without any vision for compromise or resolution in the near future.

The other open-ended question asked respondents to think of a way to increase participation in the event. The most common response (44%) was that there was no way to increase the number of competitors in after-dinner speaking. However, of the people who did identify ways to bolster numbers, the most frequently mentioned idea was to offer novice after-dinner speaking at more tournaments. One coach stated that "it's difficult to get freshman [sic] to do after-dinner speeches when they know they will be competing against the top speakers in the country every weekend. It's much easier to do a prose or compete in impromptu: they require less preparation and the chance for success is higher because of the novice designation."

Eighteen respondents, seventeen of which were students, also cited the lack of uniform judging criteria as the reason for low participation. Students argued that if they knew what the judges were looking for in an after-dinner speech then they would more readily compete in the event.

DISCUSSION

After analyzing the results of the study, the long-standing divisions between different modes of thought remain prominent in current-day competition. Majority agreements could not be reached on the research versus humor debate. Open-ended responses resulted in controversies mentioned by several scholars in prior research on whether speeches should be persuasive, whether speeches should address significant societal issues, and what is the ever-changing role of humor.

The solutions to problems currently facing after-dinner speeches can be divided in two ways: feasible and impractical solutions. For instance, the need for novice after-dinner speaking

can be resolved simply through offering a novice division or designation. The actual definition of the event could be clarified through working with the national committee to ensure that the N.F.A. definition of after-dinner speaking accurately reflects the criteria that are currently being employed at tournaments. The problem with over-done topics appears to be so universal that it could be solved by judges' rankings that reflect their distaste for the overdone.

However, problems concerning judging preference are difficult to solve. With such a division concerning the importance of research and humor, no consensus is likely to occur in the near future. Whereas problems within after-dinner speaking can be solved through rules changes and tournament offerings, one cannot make judges think more uniformly. As with most events, this is one area in which students may constantly be frustrated, as they will likely never know what judges' criteria are for any event.

The answer to the question of which is more important, research or humor, is that a speech should contain both. Seventy-two percent felt humor was most important or equally important, while almost two-thirds felt research was most or equally important. Additional research should be conducted to examine the question further and detect whether all judges agree that the criteria should contain both research and humor, even if the order of importance can not be determined. This appears to be the most heated argument currently facing after-dinner speaking. Some judges abhor the use of sources within after-dinner speeches, while others consider it a seminal criterion to the speech. The dichotomy is apparent, which frustrates students in tailoring their speeches to fit the majority of judges and it can deter students from participating in the event.

CONCLUSION

This study has presented the polarizing issues within competitive after-dinner speeches. The debate over standardization of after-dinner speeches will remain within the forensic community

for the foreseeable future. Perhaps the most amazing aspect of after-dinner speaking research is its dire lack. Although many textbooks discuss the format or structure of the speech, the competitive after-dinner speech is a different breed. Yet, even with this fact in mind, the search for standardization of the event is at the forefront of many judges' desires. Rather than continuing to ask the question of "what standardization needs to take place," future researchers should be asking *if* standardization needs to take place. Research should clarify a standardized judging criteria, yet the formula for a successful after-dinner speech should be left to each individual student. The responsibility of the judge would then be to *evaluate*, rather than *impose*, as formula. The guideline that an after-dinner speech should be a "speech that makes a point through the use of humor" (Bartanen, 1994) should help determine the judging *criteria*, but not a judges' perceived *formula*.

After-dinner speeches are very diverse and this diversity makes the activity stronger. As the event currently stands, no one speaker can be all things to all audiences. They can adhere to judging criteria much more easily than they can dissect a judges' "success formula," especially when it often changes each round.

One of the strengths of after-dinner speaking is its lack of a "success formula." A final round can witness a speech with two sources followed by a speech with twenty. Speeches can employ different types of humor, from slapstick to deadpan. While preferences for certain forms of humor and formats will always be a matter of taste, this diversity makes the event stronger. Future research should continue to clarify judging criteria, but leave the "success formula" to the students.

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A Choreographic Explication of Swing and Double-Up Tournaments: Finding New Ways to Talk

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In the late 1930's a new movement was on the rise among the teenagers of Hamburg Germany. Its followers refused to join the Nazi youth organization, the Hitler Jugend—known as the H.J. They wore their hair long and were obsessed by American movies, British fashion and Swing music.... They called themselves Swing Kids.¹

The movie "Swing Kids" explores philosophical and political positionality on issues and concerns within a specified historical context. Dance is used in the film as a metaphor for positionality and a display of resistance. Hence, in the film, the term "swing" focuses on a ideological movement, a form of political resistance, and a form of dance music concretized in a style of dance. The dance movement engages two partners in a fluid motion across a dance floor. Always in contact with each other, the partners pull and push, catapult and cuddle each other, switch places, and literally swing in a series of intricately choreographed and synchronized movements. The movements speak to the rich tradition of couple dancing, a commitment to intimacy, negotiation, and shared experiences. The movement is undergirded by the music. The music that signifies swing is characterized by polyphonic rhythms that overlay a basic melody often submerged in improvisation, and a collective use of syncopated rhythms. The political implications of the "Swing Kids" is highlighted as the kids dance as a form of resistance against a repressive regime that seeks to homogenize

individual expression and silence political opposition by viewing energetic couple dancing as collaborative collusion against community.

In the forensic community, a recent trend is to reformulate the notion of a swing tournament by initiating a new choreographic dance step.² The initial notion of a swing tournament was based in the denotative sense of the word "swing": to move from one place to another in a rhythmic, progressive pattern. A "swing" was two tournaments, held in succession of each other, in two different locations, moving from one campus to another. As a student and as a coach, we remember traveling in the late 1980s to attend the USC/UCLA Swing tournament (held on two different campuses, and separated by several days), and, later as coaches participating in the "Northern Swing" co-sponsored by Concordia College, Moorhead, MN and by Moorhead State University. In this case, only the distance of three blocks, the strategic circumvention of a graveyard and a residential neighborhood, and a time difference of only an hour and a half separated the two. Each experience, like the original conception of the "swing tournament," covered time and space.

In most cases, a swing tournament is a separate entity unto itself with a specified judging pool and awards ceremony. The accumulated sweepstakes points from one tournament are usually coupled with the accrued points from the second in order to determine an overall sweepstakes award for the entire swing. However, the trend in recent years is to conduct two tournaments in succession of each other, in the same space, on the same campus, yet under differing sponsorship. The denotative meaning of swing then becomes a misnomer.

The purpose of this article is to formulate new language, a new way of talking about and looking at the modern day practice of what we call here double-up tournaments. Using musical and dance terminology, we suggest that the swing tournament experience is a choreographed movement with the strategic placement of bodies. It is the negotiation of a geographical terrain and the intensely repetitive practice of forensics, all of this is executed in ways that

give meaning and sense to the activity by validating and recognizing tournament management and an intense commitment to forensic participation. The purpose for swing tournaments may be to capitalize on qualifying opportunities, to utilize effectively limited funds, and/or to condense a travel season. The same may be true for what we here call double-up tournaments. Yet, we argue that swing tournaments and double-up tournaments, or slow dancing, are pragmatically different experiences. This paper is a descriptive observation of how these two forms are different. It coins new language and new ways of talking about double-up tournaments. And it is a call for further quantitative and qualitative research in developing forensic practices in tournament management.

Like many dance movements that evolve and capitalize on each other—a repositioning here, a flair there, which accommodate different musical genres—the results are experientially and existentially different, and thus require a new name and orientation to articulate their purpose and intent. Hence, in describing the similarity and differences between a swing tournament and double-up tournament, we seek to formulate language that describes a new and emergent form of tournament management. We argue that each form has distinct advantages and disadvantages, which forensic directors should consider in contemplating attendance, for the two forms should not be conflated as the same forensic, and consequently, the same educational experience.

THE SWING TOURNAMENT

The traditional swing tournament typically require participants to travel to two locations, usually during a school break or holiday vacation period, with a time difference of one to several days between the tournaments. More recently, while still traveling to different campuses, some time periods are reduced to only a matter of hours or less, but still a distance is traveled. The distance between the tournaments, in most cases, has several advantages that become intrinsic to the differentiation of tournament experiences.

The following advantages are inherent to swing tournaments. Students have an opportunity to rest, if ever so slightly, between the two tournament experiences. This rest may be a matter of a day or two, or only several hours, but it is a rest period. This rest not only allows an opportunity for their body musculature to relax after a tournament's intense workout, but it also allows time for mental rest and reflection. This aligns with the current AFA focus on how a tournament contributes to and supports students' "mental and physical health."³ This rest period is drastically cut when tournaments are scheduled closer in time and in physical location.

Students have an opportunity to reflect upon their performances and the outcome of the previous tournament before engaging the second leg of the swing. Students could read ballots, receive coaching, and review specified judging philosophies of critics who may be encountered at the second leg of the swing. However, this time of reflection may be greatly diminished if the tournaments are separated only by a short period of time and no geographical distance. This factor is, of course, influenced by individual coaching philosophies regarding student access to ballots.

At a second tournament, in the traditional sense of a swing tournament with a different campus and some geographical distance, students encounter the potential for a new judging pool, given faculty from the second campus and its hired judging pool. (The assumption here is that the hired judging pool usually consists of a high percentage of local judges who would not normally travel the distance from tournament to tournament.) When a hired judge pool remains basically the same, since both tournaments are held on the same campus, this changes the dynamics of the entire educational nature of the comments on ballots, such as a typical "see my previous ballot from this morning."

Thus, the traditional swing tournament helps students. The change in geographical terrain and two campuses clearly distinguishes the two competitive experiences, for it allows students to adapt to differing physical environments. The change of site, coupled with a new judging pool—assuming that the same judges do

not merely move across a city from one campus to another— encourages and challenges students to adapt to differing judges. Tournament schedules might vary, thus encouraging students to adapt to varying conditions and to manage their time. Additionally, tournament management could differ, based upon the tabbing system and variations, which challenge students and coaches to adapt to different cultural norms. The notion of a swing literally connoted movement, activity, change, variation, and dynamism.

The notion of a swing tournament could also be measured in terms of cost—economic or time. The joint tournament experience condensed within one weekend made it economically feasible for schools to test their skills against a wider competitive pool as well as a wider judging pool. This occurred within a specified region on a specified weekend or week. The cost of time away from school and other professional and educational obligations was reduced to a specified time period.

"Swinging out" was a dance step that signified a cultural milieu. The dance move was the intersection of the artistic and the athletic. Unlike the frenetic jolts of the jitterbug or the fast paced panting of "Saturday Night Fever" fame, swinging out was both a commitment to intimacy and a declaration of independence with each partner exerting individuality, flair, and style. Like swing tournaments, the dance movement joined two partners who were committed to a collaborative effort with the agreement that they individually would not be suppressed in the attempt to move and sway with the music, thus they experienced a mutually fulfilling and physically exhilarating artistic endeavor.

In dance terms, what used to be called doubling up or a slow dance, unlike swinging out, was an intensively sexualized, intimately linked movement that pressed bodies together by swaying in rhythm to the music and simulating a oneness that comes from sharing space and time. The act of doubling up signified the dual effort of both participants to engage in an intense closeness that marked a relational dynamic akin to making out. In many ways this intense, almost indistinguishable closeness of dancers, is symbolic of the kind of

intimacy displayed in the new configuration of swing tournaments or what we here want to term "double-up" tournaments.

THE DOUBLE-UP TOURNAMENT

Two tournaments that are held on the same campus in succession of each other can be characterized as double-up. In dance terms, the double-up tournament is really one dance movement that is interrupted by a pause, a kick, or maybe even a dip or an awards ceremony. After the dip has occurred, the movement continues with a new fervor and energy toward an expected conclusion. The double-up tournament format offers the following advantages.

Time and money are saved. No additional travel between tournaments is necessary because the tournaments are held in the same location. One does not need to re-negotiate for rooms and schedules, although more money might be required for additional nights in order to accommodate tournament schedules and travel time.

Students' anxiety and uncertainty may be reduced, for they do not have to adapt to a new tournament site. They will likely be less anxious and have a greater sense of comfort on the second leg of the tournament.

A potential utilization of the same tabbing system may add to the consistent administrative policies that govern the two tournaments. Although each tournament may utilize a different tab room staff, students usually encounter a consistency in scheduling and rules. Similarly, a utilization of the same judging pool could confirm consistent and committed judges.

Repetition of the same tournament schedule, in terms of timing, rooms, and facilities may contribute to a certain consistency between the two tournaments. However, great care should be taken to ensure that the pairings and judging assignments are not the same in the preliminary rounds for both tournaments.

The immediacy of the double-up tournaments, usually scheduled with only an hour or two between the awards ceremony

of one and the first round of the other, may capitalize on and extend the adrenaline and performative drive to engage. This implies an understanding that contestants and judges need to be aware of time management and how to pace one's energy and sense of focus.

The doubling up of tournaments at a specified site has the advantage and disadvantage of expanding the number of tournaments within a specific district. In some cases, this method is used when one of the hosting schools may not have adequate facilities on its home campus. Thus, hosting a tournament on a neighboring campus affords the opportunity to "host" a tournament and overcome the limitations of its home campus. Also, this method works when there are limited weekends within a specified month, for tournament directors simply double on the same weekend on the same site.

However, double-up tournaments can accrue disadvantages that far outweigh the advantages, which are mostly drawn from convenience and proximity.

Double-up tournaments can actually serve to increase the number of total tournaments attended or offered within the season. Hence, this would mean keeping students away from their academic studies for longer periods of time on a weekend. This has certainly been an increasing concern in the public discourse in the forensic community.⁴

As more double-up tournaments are scheduled, this could actually cost more money. With additional fees and perhaps an additional overnight stay, double-up tournaments could create financial burdens. However, some programs might deem it competitively and politically necessary to attend and support neighboring programs.

Ultimately, double-up tournaments work in contradistinction to some of the advantages of a swing tournament. Double-up tournaments not only reduce the judging and competitive pool of the two consecutive tournaments, they actually concretize those pools by negating the need to swing, to move, to reflect, and to initiate some element of difference. The replication of judges and competitors within the specified site may simply insure the replication of results

and instigate an oppressive educational environment. Individual programs may want to consider these variables when deciding the relative merits of double-up tournaments and how many to attend.

The renaming of the new configuration of swing tournaments to double-up tournaments literally describes the phenomenon. Two tournaments are buttressed against each other in time and space. They are intimately interconnected by a dance movement choreographed by the directors of each. The rhythm is paced by how the tournaments are scheduled. In double-up tournaments, the second tournament moves in a space that is always and already occupied by the rhythms and resonant traces of the preceding competition. The competitive impulses of the first are spliced to and foreshadowed in the second.

CONCLUSION

Throughout the film "The Swing Kids," the prophetic and declamatory Duke Ellington song, "It don't mean a thing, if it ain't got that swing," is used as a secret code. The song marks a political and ideological positionality. It is used as a mantra, for the repeated line and tune serve as a reminder of self and other, and it is used as a underlying impulse, a rhythm of life and social practice. At the end of the movie, the dancers persist in their expression of a choreographed movement against Hitler's political regime. But through dissension, political pressure, physical force, and social alienation their ranks are broken and most dancers succumb to the pressure of change and the *Zeitgeist* of the time: "Hundreds of Swing Kids were sent to work camps. Thousands more were forced into the army and died in war. But the movement continued to grow, and a new generation of Swing Kids survived to see the defeat of the Nazis."⁵ For some time, those who accomplished this task performed a silent resistance by maintaining the spirit of swing. Their resistance was far from being a simple rhythmic movement from side to side, a progressive pattern, or a musical genre. They maintained an ideology that contributed to a democratic ideal,

personal growth, separateness, and individuality.

A new trend in the forensic community to reformulate the notion of a swing tournament, is initiating a new choreographic dance step. Yet, unlike the politically potent climate and historical period chronicled in the film, this new forensic trend is only a variation. Both swing and double-up tournaments can provide a service to the forensic community. We believe that these two configurations, the traditional swing tournament and the double-up tournament offer existentially different experiences.

The implications of whether the swing or the double-up tournament is more desirable are realized in how a coach determines which kind to attend and how many of either to include in the travel schedule, which will be resolved by the goals, objectives, available resources, and how one evaluates the costs and rewards of each. The naming of this trend in the forensic community marks the differences embedded in how they are configured in time and space, with special emphasis on tournament management and judging pools.

The purpose of this article has been to formulate new language, for it is germinal to the nature of human communication to invent language to reflect and demarcate the differences in perceivable phenomenon in our lived experience. The practice of conducting two tournaments consecutively, on the same site, with different sponsorship, is a relatively new phenomenon in forensics. Though it capitalizes on a rich heritage of swing tournaments, it is in essence a variation—a new practice. It is a new praxis that influences the nature of the activity. Thus, our naming of the double-up tournament seeks to assign the practice legitimacy and difference as a unique form, while still offering it associative credence in its relation to the established practice of swing tournaments.

This paper has been a descriptive observation of a new trend in forensic management and tournament configuration. Hopefully, it can serve as a precursor for more extensive research into the quantitative and qualitative differences between swing and double-up tournaments. The authors of this article do not wish to demonize the

practice of double-up tournaments. The purpose of this article is not to create a hierarchy of difference between swing tournaments and double-up tournaments. Yet, the purpose is to mark different approaches to a commonly held practice in tournament management and forensics competition. Hence, we encourage further research by our colleagues on the historical development and origins of swing tournaments. We offer the following questions as fertile ground on which the forensic community can survey and make intellectual inquiry into its practices.

Do competitors encounter significant differences in tournament results in a double-up tournament—two tournaments held in succession on the same campus—as opposed to the results of a swing tournament—two tournaments held in close proximity divided by time and space? What are the differences based on the amount of time and the amount of distance?

Do students experience swing tournaments and double-up tournaments as existentially different? Is the notion of "swing" in swing tournaments a necessary descriptor of the dual tournament experience?

Do schools or teams attending swing or double-up tournaments have the same reasoning for participation (i.e. convenience, economics, diverse judging pools, diverse competitive pool, concentrated opportunities for national tournament qualification)?

The word "swing" suggests a movement, a shift in time and space. The closing scene of the film "Swing Kids" depicts a swing kid being arrested and taken away by the Nazi youth organization. As a form of his resistance, he proclaims the sentiments of the film: "It don't mean a thing if it ain't got that swing." The guiding impulse of this paper might be: "It means something totally different . . . if it ain't got that swing." The final line of the movie is an echo of resistance and a politically imbued appropriation of a Nazi salute, "Swing Heil." The forensic community should continue to explore new and varied methods of presenting and formulating tournament experiences. Yet in that process, we encourage a clear

demarcation of the differences. The process of naming is ultimately the process of giving credence. It also helps to identify the individuality of one convention, form, or identity so that it is not usurped, mistaken, or confused with another. It ensures that the uniqueness of a form is not overshadowed by the lack of clarity in a linguistic descriptor and the accompanying expectations and educational consequences of new practices.

ENDNOTES

1. *"Swing Kids,"* Hollywood Pictures with Touchwood Pacific Partners I, 1992.
2. "Intercollegiate Tournament Calendar, 1997-1998," AFA Newsletter, American Forensic Association, Vol. 19, No. 3, June, 1997. A total of 15 swing tournaments and 16 double-up tournaments are listed for the 1997-1998 season.
3. "Health Initiatives" AFA-NIET Fall Minutes, Dec. 8, 1997: Initiatives passed at the Spring AFA-NIET Business Meeting.
4. Summer Development Conference in Forensics, August 16-17, 1997, Rice University, Houston, TX.
5. *"Swing Kids,"* Hollywood Pictures with Touchwood Pacific Partners I, 1992.