

Assessing Forensics in the 21st Century: Ten Questions Individual Events Programs Must Address

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First, it is important to indicate my strong support for collegiate individual events. Much like a problematic family member, you can love something and still realize certain faults. At the dawn of a new century, it is important to assess the status of collegiate individual events not only for what we were or what we are, but for what we, as a community, hope to be in the future. In this essay, ten issues within forensics are illuminated. One could argue that these are not the ten most important questions facing the future of forensics. One could even argue whether there are ten issues total that must be addressed. Yet, within these arguments is my integral main point: regardless of where one stands on the issues, an open dialogue about these questions must occur. Hopefully, this essay is a start.

1. How can we accommodate new technology into individual events programs?

Needless to say, the computer-age infiltrates every aspect of our lives. While marginal changes in individual events are because of advances in technology (such as research tools, Internet publishing, and email correspondence with sources), individual events programs have yet to fully embrace technology within competition itself. Students are unable to give platform speeches using PowerPoint; extemporaneous speakers still must create paper files of sources; Lincoln-Douglas debaters continue to perform using legal pads and index cards. Many scholars within the discipline now argue that forensics does not offer the utility it once did, as students are not being trained in advanced technology in the ways they ought to be. Individual events programs must find ways to widen the opportunity for cutting edge technology within the preparation and performance of an event. While the occasional platform speaker will be found wheeling a television and VCR into a round, this hardly seems to be a trend that the majority of speech participants find to be practical. To avoid being seen as "old school" or impractical, the activity must embrace, rather than ignore, technological advancements.

2. Should unpublished interpretation pieces be regulated?

Oral interpretation has always been an easy target for critics of individual

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events. Many regard it as easier or inferior to public address events because the student does not have to create the actual script, nor are they required to perform without the script in hand. Even supporters of oral interpretation find two sharp criticisms: (1) students too often choose literature of poor quality, and (2) oral interpretation performances often bastardize the integrity of the material for better dramatic and technical effect (Holloway, Allen, Barr, Colley, Keefe, Pearse, and St. Clair, 1983).

Both of these critiques directly relate to the subject of unpublished literature. While exact percentages are not yet known, it is clear that many students and coaches write their own material for oral interpretation competition. They do so for three reasons: (1) it saves them the hassle of searching and cutting an already published selection, (2) it nullifies the "it's been done five years ago" comment, and (3) it works. Koeppe and Mormon (1991) argue that the interpreter should serve as the creator of the character, with the top goal being to emphasize ideas that "can be viewed as the communicative or rhetorical feature of the literature" (p. 144). Unpublished literature appears to undermine both of these goals, as students and coaches create their own ideas and characters without an original text to use as a guide. While one could easily argue that unpublished literature teaches other skills (most notably writing and plot formation), the skills are inherently different.

Considering the increased use of the Internet as a publication venue, the regulation of student/coach-written scripts cannot possibly be achieved. However, unpublished literature still is the dark, hidden secret of individual events competition. Opponents of this practice argue that solutions do exist; yet most proposed solutions seem implausible. First, judges could drop their obsession with avoiding scripts that were done years ago. This is not likely to happen, yet, considering the fact that many people resort to unpublished literature because everything "good" has already been done, it would definitely help to alleviate the perceived problem. Others have proposed set lists of scripts in which the student must choose. However, from a judges' point-of-view, the thought of seeing a 42nd performance of *Agnes of God* may seem repulsive.

Verlinden (1987) writes that "the way oral interpretation is presented in forensics is important because so many students have their first or only exposure to the art in forensics" (p. 57). Students who perform unpublished literature are gaining art skills in the form of writing, but they are not gaining exposure to the mainstream literary world. As unpublished interpretation increasingly becomes an issue, the forensics community must address these separate and unequal skills.

3. Is Lincoln-Douglas debate an individual event?

Nothing dichotomizes individual event participants more than Lincoln-Douglas debate. Students who compete in the event often refer to other individual events as inferior; many students who do not compete in L-D harbor strong negative feelings regarding its inclusion. Since becoming an NFA standard in the early 1990s, participation in L-D Debate has steadily increased. Still, Lincoln-Douglas debate is not included in overall team sweeps placings, with the top-five Lincoln

Douglas schools instead receiving awards in a separate national championship. Proponents argue that Lincoln-Douglas debate diversifies the individual event options even further by allowing for on-the-spot argumentation. Opponents counter that the structure (other individual events do not require counterstrategy depending on opponent), time limits (42 minutes when no other individual event is more than ten), and presence of other debate outlets (NDT, CEDA, Parliamentary) make including Lincoln-Douglas debate within individual events an unwise decision.

Many research articles regarding Lincoln Douglas have been publishing in the *National Forensic Journal* (most recently: Abrams & Novak, 1997; Shelton and Patterson, 1997). The fall 1996 issue of *National Forensic Journal* even devoted an entire issue to the issues related to Lincoln-Douglas Debate. However, rarely has discussion focused on what the real issue appears to be: should Lincoln-Douglas debate be an official tenth NFA event? If so, how can this form of debate gain acceptance within the entire forensic community? Williams (1996) is the only known scholar to address how Lincoln-Douglas fits within the scheme of other individual events. Williams writes: "The delivery skills prevalent in public address are typically not found in debate. The individual events student who begins competing in L-D will benefit from the need to prepare speeches, or cases, that will be thoroughly critiqued within the competition" (p. 60).

The need for a different type of argumentation skill within individual events certainly can be articulated (Bartanen, 1981). Still, L-D has thus far been satisfied with being fragmented from other N.F.A. events, rightly for fear of backlash from a large segment of the forensic community which hopes to keep debate separate from individual events. In the future, both L-D debate supporters and opponents will have to take a "sink-or-swim" mindset. As it currently stands, the placement of Lincoln-Douglas debate within the N.F.A. schema is murky at best.

4. How can individual events avoid reliance on a "success formula" that stifles creativity?

The first day that one of my students joins the team, they receive a forty-page booklet that explains the events. They are told to treat it as their forensic Bible. The booklet does not merely tell the students what the events are; it also tells students the hidden secrets for success. In essence, they are formulas.

Everyone hates the word "formula" when constructing an individual event. Formulas stifle creativity, often reducing the preparation of an event to a mechanical process. The only thing people hate more than the discussion of these formulas is the fact that they work. Students resist becoming indoctrinated within the success formula mind-set, but then proceed to apply the same formulas when they are judging and coaching post-graduation. It's an endless cycle based on the notion that there has to be a "right" and a "wrong" way for doing things.

Forensics proponents often argue that a great appeal of the activity is its diverse styles and tastes, but the bottom line is that people strive to find a success formula—for no other reason than that if there is a success formula, an ardent student can certainly follow it. Ask any person within forensics how long a "teaser" is and they will likely give the same response: approximately 45 seconds. How

many main points in any platform speech? Three. Always. There are countless rules for competition that create competitive "in" and "out" groups. Successful programs can be defined by who knows the unwritten rules and who does not. Releasing ourselves from success formulas is something that many know would be best for the creativity of individual events, but successful programs will likely fight to keep the formulas in tact. And why wouldn't they? Following the formulas virtually ensures competitive success. In the future, forensics must find ways to work outside of our self-inflicted box. If we don't, the applicability of the skills we claim to be teaching may not truly connect to the outside world.

5. Will the season ever be shortened?

The tournaments start in September and end with Interstate at the end of April. Seven and a half months of unregulated I.E. excitement. Most people know the season is too long, seeing as the I.E. season is longer than the college football and basketball seasons *combined*. Yet, because it would likely cause changes in the A.F.A. qualifying system and uproot other forensic schedules, directors of forensics embark on this seven and a half month odyssey with the belief that "there's nothing I can do about it." Students quit because they are not willing to make speech their entire college experience; quality coaches "retire" in their twenties because they cannot handle the strain; marriages end because coaches are never home. Granted, it wouldn't be easy to shorten the season (to say, five or six months), but it may be something the forensic community should pursue.

The first consideration should be the educational value of the activity. If students are competing the entire school year, when do they have the time to stop and learn the basics, let alone improve upon past performances? Students often know their events could be better, but they don't have time to stop and improve them because the next tournament is already around the corner. Educationally, this is a nightmare of a scenario. Clearly supporters of the current system can say that if a program doesn't like the length of the season, they can always start late. In reality, everyone knows that if students were competing in their first tournament in November against other students who already have eight tournaments under their belt, the program will be left scrambling to catch up the rest of the season.

A second major consideration for shortening the season would be from a financial standpoint. Programs constantly display woe at their miniscule budgets. While funding of forensic programs will always be a top concern, perhaps the budgets would last longer if programs weren't traveling the entire academic year. I recently had a conversation with a Director of Forensics who stated they can barely make it on the budget they have. He then told me that they have traveled to 38 tournaments over 20 different weekends. The parallel would seem obvious, and yet many programs are not making the connection.

Many other reasons for shortening the current season (judge burn-out, watered-down competition, unbalanced priorities between forensics and school) could all be addressed. The bottom line is that most of the community knows the season is too long. In the 21st century, the question will be whether anyone does anything about it.

6. How can forensics recruit more qualified Judges?

No subject area of forensics has been dissected by forensic scholars as much as judging criteria. The famous 1-6 ranking combination makes coaches and competitors wonder what judging paradigms are being implemented. Many studies have analyzed the need for judging paradigms from after-dinner speaking (Billings, 1997; Mills, 1984) to oral interpretation (Mills, 1991) to Lincoln-Douglas debate (Minch & Borchers, 1996). However, as Mills (1983) points out, "no discussion of judging criteria could be complete without examining the problems presented by hired judges" (p. 29). Still, the difference between an incompetent hired judge and a hired judge who may assess a performance differently from others must be articulated. Diversity in opinions is the reason for having multiple rounds of competition. However, individual event programs must work harder to provide judges who *have justified diverse* opinions. As forensics digs deeper and deeper into judging pools, the same judges often watch the same performances numerous times in a given season (or even weekend). The obvious first solution is that host schools must have increased judging support from departmental faculty. Yet, with participating schools providing fewer and fewer judges of their own, the strain to find anyone with a pulse, pen, and stopwatch becomes greater. The N.F.A. decision to waive the previously-required college degree criteria at the national level underscores the fact that the individual event community is increasingly willing to take anyone who is willing to judge. While no one can critique decisions to lower judging standards because they are necessary to keep tournaments staffed, the fact is that quality judges are a dying breed. Forensics is based upon the principle that the best speaker wins. With judges admitting they "didn't know what to look for" (Mills, 1983), this basic principle most likely is not being fulfilled with any sense of regularity.

7. How can scholarly forensic research be increased?

The core of the perceived lack of credibility of forensics within the communication discipline concerns the lack of research development in the past ten years. The *National Forensic Journal* began publication in 1983, with the goal of producing two issues of solid forensic research each year. Currently, *NFJ* struggles to be published once per year, with an entire three-year gap in publications from 1992-1995. *The Forensic* was recently published containing just one ten-page article. This is not the result of poor editorial leadership or inept management; it is an indication of the lack of quality research being conducted in the forensic arena. Former *NFJ* editor Halford Ryan wrote of his four years as editor that "many essays were not satisfactorily composed" and that many contributors "routinely made egregious errors in English composition" (p. 76). This may not be the result of ignorance, but rather the result of an activity that does not encourage scholarly research. Considering the skills the forensic community displays in speeches, directors of forensics and other forensic minds clearly are capable of superior scholarly work. Yet, many people willing to conduct research have not had the necessary training on how to do scholarly research well, likely the result of the fact that we are entering a second generation of forensics coaches who have not conducted

regular research. Current directors of forensics often argue that hectic travel schedules and teaching demands make conducting scholarly work impossible. That most likely is true. However, forensics programs in the coming years will be forced to find ways to raise the amount and quality of research being produced. If not, forensics will likely continue to be the ugly stepchild of the communication discipline.

8. In the age of the Internet, how can forensics enforce unethical and unverifiable source citations?

Forensics in the 21st century has new, adapted terminology. In platform speeches, the term "cite count" is now a powerful ranking force. Whereas a typical persuasive speech in the 1990s could be considered highly researched with eight sources, that same speech would be considered lightweight today. Platform speeches have begun an era in which the twenty-source speech is becoming commonplace. What's more, many judges are rewarding these speeches which often are nothing more than collected strings of newsbytes with intermittent transitions. This, coupled with the "it's been done" comment about most every speech topic, has forced platform speeches into the fringes. Students stretch topics to make them seem new and earth-shattering, while stretching the boundaries of what constitutes a good source and what the sources are actually saying. The result? Ethical lines have been blurred.

Cronn-Mills & Schnoor (2000) analyzed the 1999 A.F.A. informative final, finding potential ethical violations in all six of the speeches. This study pointed out that this particular A.F. A. final was not likely an anomaly. Students with only one future implication of their informative topic are told they must have three; the second and third future implications get fudged a little. A persuasive speaker is told that they must have a national solution to their proposed problem; a source citation on the topic morphs into a "call for action" on the national level.

Lexus-Nexus provides students with bountiful resources, but does a cite from an editorial in the *New Straits Times* really warrant inclusion in a persuasive speech on an American issue? Students have now been told to "dig" for more variety in research, resulting in the citation of biased Web sites and email correspondences with corporate summer interns. Judges cannot discern between the credible and plausibly fictional, so they tend to let ethical concerns slide. In the 21st century, as this line continues to get blurred, solutions must be proposed.

First, judges must pay increasing attention to the quality of the source that is being cited. A judge who is a conscientious critic can alter the activity in many positive ways. Additionally, judges must drop the notion of "cite counts" and, in turn, substitute it with focus on argumentation. A speech with twenty sources is not inherently bad, but it's also not inherently better than a speech on the same topic with eight sources. Counting citations is the judges' easy way out. Evaluating citations is what all judges should strive to achieve. Finally, national forensic organizations must establish guidelines for the citation of sources. This can be done. The National Forensic Association's recent guidelines in regard to electronic correspondences in Lincoln-Douglas debate evidence is proof of that. Enforcing proper citation guidelines will be no picnic for anyone involved. However, failure

to address the growing ethical dilemmas in regard to course citation may denigrate the entire activity.

9. Can college forensics develop better networks with high school programs?

The naive forensics coach could assume that building a successful individual events program requires little to no recruiting skills, guessing that whoever simply walks through the door on call-out night will be molded into a national finalist. The experienced forensics coach knows better. Top-notch college programs often have "feeder schools," high schools in which students naturally flow into a certain college program. Building a rapport with local high schools, can not be overrated. Yet, beyond the seemingly artificial relationship that accrues through recruiting, high school and college forensics programs do not always like each other very much. High school coaches often say college forensics involves risque interp and too many platform speeches. College directors often take the attitude with incoming freshmen that "sure, you may have done this for four years in high school, but now we're going to show you how to really do it right." Several authors (Brand, 1996; Snider, 1994) have argued that outreach with high school programs needs to improve and have provided guidelines for common ground that can be established. Still, many directors of forensics see having a rapport with high schools as a "necessary evil." Until that changes, high school and college programs will continue to function separately—without the help they could and should be giving to one another.

10. Can forensics help to alleviate coaching burnout?

It's the battle the majority of forensics coaches face. You love the students, but.... You love the activity, but.... There's something that keeps coaches from wanting to make a career out of forensics. Many reasons for this battle (lack of respect within the communication discipline, length of season) have already been discussed. However, the burnout factor applies to more than merely the amount of travel and tournaments. Many coaches have the title of "Director of Forensics," yet receive no course release for their involvement. Others may be released from coursework, but find that their team of twenty people is currently preparing five events apiece. Suddenly, the coach is faced with working on 100 events at once—a daunting task to say the least.

Beyond the fact that coaches rarely stay in the activity for the extent of their career, forensics, as a whole, suffers from a lack of leadership. Granted, there are excellent educators who do a strong job locally and nationally, but they are often required to lead and/or work with several different organizations at once because so many programs are in a state of transition. When I coached in the state of Indiana, over half of the leadership of the forensics programs in the state would change from year to year. Without better stability, current forensic leaders become overburdened in their attempts to do it all, making the activity increasingly unhealthy. Coaching burnout could be addressed in countless ways, but there is no easy answer to this one. Still, a list such as this one would not be complete without men-

tioning this issue that so closely relates to leadership and the entire stability of the individual event framework.

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Adjusting to Technological Change in Competitive Forensics

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Technology is simply a tool—a means to reach an end more efficiently. Forensics is also a tool—a pedagogical one. While few may argue that emerging communication technologies have been unimportant, too little attention has been focused on the impact of technology in competitive speech and debate. If technology is a tool, then perhaps it is best left to others to discuss its particulars. However, public speakers may be missing an important opportunity by ignoring the possibility that technological understanding and communication competence will be closely linked in the 21st century. This essay explores the possible problems, advantages and uses of emerging communication technologies in forensic competition.

Three particular problems stem from increasing integration of technology in forensics. The first potential issue is the shift towards alternative (and less important) skills. If technology is more than a tool, that is to say that an understanding of technology is a study of values, the pedagogical intention of the activity must also change. Directors must become aware of current and emerging technologies and the educational impact of using them. Do debaters get less out of the event if a computer does all of the research? Would competitors network with others in an online tournament? Tulloch (2000) asserts that the line between online and offline instruction have become blurred. In other words, the forensics director simply cannot separate their responsibility to help students grow and their task of understanding the technologies their competitors are utilizing.

Second, technological integration has the potential to create further financial strain on programs. Programs with tighter budgets, to remain competitive, would be required to play catch up with technology. Given the rate of obsolescence in technology, remaining technologically competitive has the potential to be extremely problematic. One of three scenarios may occur. First, the director will simply not enter the race at all. And if the integration of technology changes the values guiding the activity, a student would be placed at a disadvantage—competitive success may be determined by technological access as much as by rhetorical skill. Another problem concerns the hosting of tournaments, which would require a vast amount of technological resources. In this area, the forensics director would face a most difficult challenge—most likely passing on the responsibility and the benefits of hosting a tournament.

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Second, the student may be required to shoulder the burden of technological expectations. Many colleges are now requiring students to purchase laptop computers to help facilitate their own education. Just as a student is required to make purchases to maximize success, such as professional attire and, in some cases, meal money for trips to tournaments, perhaps the students participating can be held financially responsible for their involvement. The potential problem, however, is that the cost to the student may be prohibitive. Additionally, a disparity may occur within the team itself—some competitors having access and others without. This makes the creation of team cohesion more difficult and presents a roadblock for coaches and directors to achieve relational equity in the face of technological and economic divergence.

Or, the director may choose to dive head first into technology—at the expense of other areas. A program, under this scenario, would be forced to cut corners to stay current with technology. A program may reduce the number of tournaments attended, eliminate meal funds, place a limit on the number of participants, or place a fundraising expectation on competitors.

The third issue surrounding the integration of technology and forensics is the threat to the view of the activity as a "community." The primary challenge to the community nature of speech and debate is the potential for tournaments to be held online through computer networks or interactive television systems. While one may argue that having these kinds of tournaments could actually save money for programs due to the elimination of travel costs, these types of tournaments represent a minimization, at best, and a disintegration, at worst, of the bonds that connect forensic teams to themselves and each other.

Innovations such as the word processor helped competitors to reach their competitive goals. Additionally, the activity is competitive in nature because of the values served by competition. In essence, competition is as much a tool of education as the word processor is. However, by eliminating the community of forensics, we jeopardize its primary values. Competition is no longer a tool—it becomes the goal. Gergen (2000) calls this new community, shaped by technology, a "relational imaginary." In a community formed this way, identities are formed that are not linked in a concrete way to the participants. Relationships proceed and occur not because of tangible relationships but through positioning in the electronic discourse. The forensic community no longer exhibits a geographic locus—competition and experiences become robbed of the contexts that make forensics relationally value-laden.

However, as Voth (1997) states, competitors are shortchanged if they are being prepared for speech roles that do not exist in everyday practice. Indeed, there are several ways that emerging technologies can bolster the pedagogical values of the activity. First, integrating technology and forensics can help students prepare for a multimedia work environment. For example, a persuasion speech may be given as a Power Point presentation. The judge must then assess the student's use of technology in terms of its relevance and creativity. The potential danger, though, is that multimedia may become a competitive expectation, resulting in the harms previously discussed. Also, the educational utility of an event should still be to

understand persuasion. If the event becomes a comparison of technological acumen then technology has sabotaged the purpose of the activity.

Second, integrating technology with forensics activities may increase involvement. Program directors have the responsibility to illustrate the benefits of their programs to receive funding and support. As universities increasingly value the importance of technological preparedness as an educational priority, framing the forensics experience as technological skills training can augment programs and increase visibility among students and administration.

Ultimately, this essay argues that technology, when used as a tool, has the capacity to enrich and modernize the activity. Unfortunately, if emerging technologies become the pedagogical focus of forensics, the interactions and purposes of the community are placed in jeopardy. When outlining goals for a competitive forensics team, a director must contemplate the impact of supporting or implementing technological strategies. From economic disparity to value violation, this issue will continue to confront members of the forensic community.

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Virtual Forensic Activities

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One of the more interesting issues before the community is how to adapt to new technology. With some qualifications, the positions taken in the preceding papers suggest that technology is essentially complementary to the educational ends of forensic activities. In this paper I would like to consider the possibility that technological change can advance to the point where it challenges the need for an existing physical presence between speaker and audience. The implications are significant to an educational community dedicated to teaching humane forms of discourse.

We are advancing closer to the point where it is possible through the use of technology to engage in forensic activities without ever leaving our universities. Almost fifteen years ago Corsi (1986) predicted that technology would soon make debate tournament travel unnecessary. Five years later, a special issue of *The Forensic* was devoted to the use of interactive video in forensics (Pearson, 1991; Littlefield & Pawlowski, 1991; Sellnow & Hest, 1991; Hanson, 1991). Shortly after the special issue on interactive video, Kay and Borchers (1994/95) warned us that Corsi's vision was not far away from being realized and challenged us to consider the implications. Postings on the IE-L during the 1999-2000 season invited students to participate in debates made possible through online technology (University of Iowa and Romania). The time is at hand for us to confront the impact of technology on the relationship between speakers and audience members.

Virtual speech tournaments would naturally reduce the expenses associated with forensic travel and connect those who are so separated by distance as to make travel unaffordable. Moreover, in those cases where speakers, audience members, and judges are separated by distance, the prospect of virtual tournaments seems innovative and purposeful. Distance learning technology promises to deliver educational resources and experiences in cheap, efficient ways.

However, we should think about the implications such practices might have on the nature of the activity. Elsewhere (1996/97) I have argued that having a physically present audience for a speaker can contribute to a more humane form of discourse. The absence of a real audience for a message and the experience of communicating through electronic media, diminishes the distinctly humanizing experience of communicating. Although computer mediated communication has only begun to receive the attention of communication scholars, Flaherty, Pearce, and Rubin's (1998) findings suggest that "computer-mediated communication

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channels are not functional alternatives for face-to-face channels for most interpersonal needs" (p. 264).

Further, such a mediated form of relating to others can invite aggressive, uncivil, or abusive messages that have been observed in the practice of "flaming," an outcome resulting from the impersonal nature of cyberspace. Given the controversial nature of many speech topics and debate resolutions, the more information a receiver has regarding how to interpret a message, the greater the chance for effective communication.

Presently, the problem of misunderstanding email messages is a significant issue in the workplace (Schafer, November 13, 2000). The problem could be true for the forensics community as well. Just as employees in an organizational work environment cannot hear the rich nonverbal textures behind emailed words, forensic students might have to rely on messages constrained by technology. Under rhetorical conditions engendered for the purposes of persuasion, understanding, or aesthetic experience, receivers would be left with messages that embody only a partial element of human discourse, messages far more complex than that of office email.

The problems posed by such a vision of forensic activities should invite concern. As Watzlawick, Beavin and Jackson (1967) have demonstrated, the nonverbal message systems are crucial to interpreting verbal messages. With a greater reliance on virtual forensics activities, much of the chapter on delivery taught in a public speaking course becomes irrelevant when it is absolutely essential to the successful decoding of a complex message. The sound of a speaker's voice—the instrument that gives human expression to language is, in some uses of technology, eliminated from the communication transaction. Elements such as pitch, rate, volume, facial expression, eye contact, gestures, and personal appearance—in short, all of the nonverbal elements of delivery—as yet, cannot be captured as dynamic elements of the experience for cyberspace. Impressions of ethos—the speaker's motives, values, and credibility—are limited to the view of the text and no longer tied up with the experience of the message. The capacity to comprehend the speaker's message and speaker's character seems severely constrained when these message systems are compromised by technology.

For some elements of the forensic community, the loss of the human voice might seem a negligible evolution of the activity. For example, some debate activities like NDT and CEDA emphasize the exchange of information sometimes at the expense of persuasive processes. Other forms of debate emphasize the importance of the student's voice in the process of persuasion rather than the quantity of information. For most individual events, nonverbal elements of delivery seem vitally important in evaluating student performances. However, having said all of this, technology might ultimately make possible real time experience of the human voice, especially for the purpose of bringing together very distant audiences and speakers, if only on large video screens. Individuals and groups who cannot gather in the same place but can use technology to exchange messages might be an interesting evolution of forensics activities regarding the bridging of cultural differences. Therefore one effect of increasing the use of technology in forensics might

be the need to define more clearly what is gained and lost in forms of forensic activities that increasingly rely on technology.

Bringing students together for the purpose of speech activities might yield important benefits. Kay and Borchers (1994/95) have argued that forensic activities have desirable outcomes in terms of socializing team members and those benefits would be lost if the need to engage in face to face human interaction were no longer necessary. Apart from the positive benefits of providing enormous amounts of information to students (Bickford, 1994/95; Katsulas, 1994/95; Olson, 1995/95; Olson & Keaveny, 1996/97; Madsen, 1996/97; Williams, 1996/97; Cronn-Mills, Sandman, Sullivan & Golden, 1996/97) and holding out the promise of community building through Internet listservs (Adams & Wood, 1996; Kay, 1996/97; Herbeck, 1996/97), we need to ask if there is any important value to traveling students to tournaments; that is, taking them to places physically different from their own universities and communities where they gather for the purpose of creating an educational community? Is there any value to hearing the human voice in real time and real space or any value to the fact that a student speaks to an audience of critics and other students existing in real time and real space immediately before them?

Personally, I think there is value to congregating as an educational community in a common physical space of a college or university. Certainly, the physical presence of other human beings collected around a speech tournament lends itself to the experience of a sense of community. However, the nature of this experience and the value it bestows upon its participants have not been described, measured, and considered in relation to other possible advantages offered by technology. Thus, questions regarding the long term role, function, and value of technology remain to be answered.

The 21st century has brought along with it a number of technological changes capable of challenging the traditional vision of forensic activities. For the most part, we have assumed forensics will continue to involve a speaker and audience sharing a rhetorical transaction in the same physical space and time. That might not always be the case. My purpose in this short essay was to identify some of the issues so that forensic educators might address these questions in future work. Hopefully, technology can serve the interests of humane discourse in forensics activities. Where that is not clearly the case, we should think carefully about the long term implications for the forensics community.

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Pseudonyms, Performance and Pedagogy: Performing Original Literature in Forensics

Kurt Lindemann

Changes in the forensic landscape are marked by many details, including the performer's style of performance and his or her selection of literature. But a quick mental check of the latter reveals that the performer's selection of literature has remained constant in many ways. One constancy that both maddens and delights competitors and coaches is the performance of material specifically written for oral interpretation in forensics. As far back as 1988, forensics scholars addressed the use of original material for interpretation as a critical recurring issue (Endres, 1988; Green, 1988; Lewis, 1988). Today this practice is perhaps at its most prevalent, with countless national finalists placing with material they have written for themselves or that others have written for them.

The practice of performing original literature is indeed "the dark, hidden secret of individual events competition," as Billings writes. It need not be, however. The performance of original literature in forensics has many potential educational benefits and, given the proper coaching and competitive mindset, is a practice that can be openly embraced by judges and competitors. This essay attempts to illustrate the educational benefits possible when students and coaches carefully question and re-articulate the methods of bringing original literature to performance in the forensics context.

(Post)Modern Literary Theory and Analysis

Some forensics educators may argue that the practice of writing material for oral interpretation in forensics is one that hampers the educational activities of selecting literature, discerning themes, and exploring character (Green, 1988; Endres, 1988). A common tenet of this argument is that writing material for performance shortcuts an important part of oral interpretation: literary analysis. Endres (1988) claims that a student can study neither the intrinsic factors of a work, such as mood and rhythm, nor the extrinsic factors of work, the author's culture and history, when the piece is written by that student.

This argument seems to hinge on a notion of maintaining authorial intent in the translation of the piece from page to performance. However, much of standard literary theory taught in literature classrooms today involves a recognition that author's intent simply does not matter (Birkerts, 1996). Structuralist theory states

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that since the author's very notion of self is constructed through language, it is therefore irrelevant, or at least not any more important than the views of the reader or performer, in the face of the higher-order system of language (Abrams, 1993). Proponents of Reader-Response Criticism state that the very act of reading constitutes another construction of the text, so that each reader "writes" the text a different way each time he or she reads that text.

Even with work written by an author who is not the student, coach or an acquaintance, the student in his or her analysis becomes an author, splicing sections and pieces and cutting paragraphs and lines to adhere to the time limits and highlight certain themes. While this is most easily realized when looking at the event of Programmed Oral Interpretation, where the student's hand in shaping the tone, mood and build of the program is perhaps most visible, it is no less prevalent in the events of Prose or Poetry. Students engaging in such analysis often exhibit an understanding of the various meanings a text can make in relation to other texts. The texts are placed together, juxtaposed, contrasted and compared to make an argument based on the properties of that text and not necessarily the intent of the author. The homoerotic themes in a certain work, then, may be highlighted over the traditional aspects of the plot and character regardless of what the author "really meant." Indeed, this approach to literature is what many forensics coaches might simply call "interpretation" and is not far removed from what might be traditionally taught by these coaches. The relationship between performer, author and text, then, cannot be the relationship argued for by Endres (1988), Green (1988) and other forensics coaches in which the performer is a simple conduit between the work of literature and its author, and an audience. The performer is not simply "an intermediary between the work and the audience ... communicating the intent of the author" (Green, 1988, p. 70). Such a relationship is clearly inconsistent with modern literary theory.

Some forensic educators may argue that they are not teachers of literature; in other words, it is not their duty or place to teach literary theory. But it seems that the performance of literature, even in the view of the most conservative forensics coaches, involves an analysis of literature, and literary theory must figure into the performer's analysis to some degree if the analysis is to be informed and thoughtful. Since modern literary theory involves a setting aside of the author's intent for a closer examination of the text, to argue that authorial intent must figure into a student's analysis of literature is to ignore the important role these theories play in literary analysis. With the author of the piece set aside, then, it becomes obvious that it may not matter who the author of the piece is. Literary analysis can still take place if the literature is approached in a thoughtful and informed manner and is tempered with an air of objectivity. If a student author can divorce him or herself from the text for purposes of analysis, the process of adapting original literature for performance can give students the same pedagogical benefits as can analysis on a previously published piece.

The Current Landscape of Literary Publishing

Those who disagree with the use of original literature in forensics may also

argue that the literature students often end up performing is of poor quality. Billings seems to be of this opinion. But we must ask ourselves: who is to determine the quality of literature? Green (1988) notes that using original literature unfairly turns judges and coaches into literary critics as they are forced to answer this question. As illustrated in this author's argument regarding literary theory, criticism—the ability to discern the relationship between meanings in a text and the support of arguments regarding these meanings—is a large part of *reading* literature, and therefore adapting literature for performance. Coaches and judges, then, must become literary critics, in every sense of the word.

Furthermore, coaches and judges cannot look to outside criteria, like publication, as a measure of literary quality. While publication may have been an acceptable ruler for "literary merit" at one time, the changing nature of literary publication has made this ruler inaccurate as a measure of quality. Spahr (2000) reports that, in response to dwindling governmental and institutional support, many writers are self-publishing, forming collective presses and setting up magazines on the World Wide Web. This trend is also due, in part, to the widespread introduction of the creative writing class into the university curriculum (Eshleman, 2000). With so many students taking creative writing classes and looking for an outlet in which to publish their writing, it seems that many are finding the market for unpublished writers saturated and magazine editors faced with a glut of submissions. As a result, these students, whose work may not even be viewed by their creative writing teachers as worthy of publication, are starting to self-publish chapbooks or are starting print or electronic magazines themselves. And since relatively obscure literature is valued as "new" and "fresh" by competitors, it is no wonder students in search of literature find web sites and self-published books to be gold mines of possibilities.

Judges and coaches are guilty of pushing students to find literature that is "new" and "fresh." How often have judges remarked on a ballot that a topic or script was "done last year" or "won nationals the previous year?" Clearly, students are in a double bind: pressured to choose material that has not been done before, yet frowned upon for writing their own material or performing literature published in less "literary" outlets. Considering the changing nature of literary publishing, there may be virtually no difference in quality between published writing and work written by the student or someone else associated with the activity. And unless we start specifying the outlets in which acceptable literature appears, which may be virtually impossible to effectively regulate, we must accept student writing as an alternative to published writing.

The Use of Pseudonyms in Forensics Performance

Endres (1988) notes that when students do not write their own work, they engage in the unethical practice of using pseudonyms. The reason for such practice is obvious: students know they may be judged unfavorably if they admit in their introductions that they are the author of their selection. The American Forensics Association Code of Standards (1998) does not specifically prohibit the use of pseudonyms in a student's piece unless the evidence or facts attributed to that

author are also distorted or fabricated. The author's name may be a fact that has been fabricated or distorted by using a pseudonym, but the practice of using a pseudonym cannot be viewed as unethical, especially when, as Lewis (1988) notes, we would not prohibit students from performing the works of Mark Twain or George Sand simply because the authors use pseudonyms to identify themselves. Nonetheless, the possible sanctions that judges may give a student who admits in the introduction that he or she is the author causes students to hide the true name of the author, again making the use of original literature something that is widely practiced but seldom talked about.

Future Directions for Forensics Education

Clearly, those who fight against the use of original literature in forensics oral interpretation are fighting a battle they cannot win: students will continue to write and perform original work, original work will continue to do well competitively, and the practice will continue to be legitimized by its competitive results. But as long as unpublished literature continues to be "the dark, hidden secret of individual events competition," it will remain an aspect of the activity whose pedagogical benefits are not fully realized. In the past, forensics scholars have suggested forming a separate event for original work (Lewis, 1988). This suggestion should be seriously considered. Another suggestion: perhaps tournament directors could put a separate rating scale for quality of literature on the forensics ballot. To be sure, judges already comment on the quality of the literature being performed, and, as with an overtime or undertime performance, a judge's evaluation of the literature may figure (however amorphously) into the rank and rate given.

Forensics educators must realize that the pedagogical value of adapting original work for performance has yet to be fully explored. And given the changes in the practice of oral interpretation and how it is informed by current literary theory and the changing nature of today's literary publishing world, the use of original literature in forensics deserves not only to be re-examined but also embraced by coaches and judges.

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Grappling for Original Intent: Failed Mission or Misunderstood Goals In NFA Lincoln-Douglas Debate?

Kevin M. Minch

Talk to the average Lincoln-Douglas debater about what they believe the rest of the forensics community thinks of them and they will likely comment that they feel separate and not necessarily equal. Ask students who are committed solely to individual events competition what they think about the presence of Lincoln-Douglas debate at tournaments and their response is likely to demonstrate less concern. If anything, they are probably more concerned with the impact of the event on sweepstakes awards at invitational tournaments or scheduling at nationals. Billings alleges: "Nothing dichotomizes individual event participants more than Lincoln-Douglas debate." In this essay I contend that this argument is an example of a regularly vocalized hasty generalization, unfortunately dependent on anecdotes and Internet listserv discourse rather than upon empirical data or a coherent rationale formed from the rhetoric of published research. The more important question to be considered is not whether Lincoln-Douglas dichotomizes the community, but whether its image and significance has been tarnished because of a failure to meet stated competitive and pedagogical goals charted when it was originated in 1991. Put more simply, has Lincoln-Douglas debate failed to integrate into the family of individual events? To clarify this argument I will begin by describing, to the best extent possible, the philosophy undergirding Lincoln-Douglas debate in its early days. Next, I will make observations regarding the evolution of Lincoln-Douglas practice and hypothesize how that has affected perceptions of the activity. Finally, I will offer some personal conclusions about the proper role of Lincoln-Douglas debate in the National Forensic Association.

Background and Philosophy of NFA Lincoln-Douglas

Anyone who competed in, or judged, Lincoln-Douglas debate when it first appeared at NFA nationals in 1991 (Marshall University), remembers an "animal" that is far different than Lincoln-Douglas debate is today—especially from a stylistic perspective (Foster 18). This may be, in large part, due to a fairly explicit philosophy statement that made the new activity sound like an initiative as much as an experimental event. As Foster notes, at the first NFA-LD national tournament the rules and philosophy were not as carefully spelled out as they are today.

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The tournament invitation for 1991 was perhaps even more blunt than the current philosophy statement: "If you believe that speed is a strategic part of debate, do not come to this tournament" (Foster 18). A memorandum on speed was issued during the course of the tournament as well, reminding judges to penalize fast debaters. Speed, of course, was not the only consideration for those who crafted NFA-LD in the early 1990s.

As the "rules" became codified after the nationals of 1992, a more specific philosophy statement was formed: "NFA Lincoln-Douglas Debate is a one person, persuasive policy debate on traditional stock issues. It is a communication event, by which we mean the philosophy of the activity is consistent with that which governs other individual events Rapid fire delivery, commonly called 'spread delivery,' is considered antithetical to the purpose and intent of this event" (National Forensic Association). Several authors have commented on this statement—although not necessarily supporting it—when shaping their observations about the nature of NFA-LD as an educational, persuasive, rhetorically sound enterprise (Morris and Herbeck 1; Minch and Borchers 19; Bile 37). Speaking from the personal perspective of one who served on the NFA-LD Committee during those years, I think it is a reasonably fair assessment to say that the intent of those involved was to find a home for debate within the community of individual events. When the authors of the rules wrote, "the philosophy of the activity is consistent with that which governs other individual events" they charted a deliberate course that should have taken Lincoln-Douglas debate away from the derided practices of other debate formats.

Evolution Through Practice

If one were to watch a Lincoln-Douglas debate in 1991 or 1992 they would most likely have seen two debaters with a small handful of file folders maybe a small evidence box. They would have heard affirmative and negative constructive speeches with—at most—six to eight pieces of evidence, a fairly simplistic plan of action, and lots of rhetoric. The negative debater—in nearly all debates—would have focused on arguing the case (harm, inherency, and solvency), and rarely would have uttered the word "disadvantage." Counterplans—let alone language critiques or philosophical "kritiks"—would have been considered odd, even "slimy." It was not until 1993 and 1994 that disadvantages became regular fixtures in debates, and counterplans only became truly common a couple of years after that. Analysis dominated rebuttal argumentation. While evidence was occasionally used in rebuttals, the emphasis of those speeches was overwhelmingly upon analysis. The last two rebuttals, in particular, were focused on summarizing and synthesizing arguments rather than extending the period of the debate devoted to refutation and extension. In essence, the early years of Lincoln-Douglas were very much in sync with the stated intention of its founders—to make it accessible to non-debate judges. It was, if only for a brief shining moment, not unlike other individual events. Then things began to change.

A longitudinal study of NFA Lincoln-Douglas debate theory and practice is a study in contrasts. Today affirmative constructive speeches contain significantly

more evidence and far less rhetoric. Negative constructive speeches employ a wide range of weaponry from the traditional negative arsenal: plentiful case attacks, frequent use of the "turning the tables" strategy (on harm and solvency), disadvantages, counterplans, and topicality. Rebuttals, rather than being summary statements, are far more refutation and extension focused. It is important here too, however, to avoid falling into the trap of the hasty generalization. Certainly not every debater has been part of this evolution and there are many who still cling to the older practices. However, a spectator at the national tournament or at competitive invitational tournaments will likely see a more technical style—reminiscent of that seen in CEDA or NDT debate (albeit slower), or varsity-level high school policy debate—being employed by the most competitively successful individuals.

While empirical research does not presently exist to support the hypothesis that an evolution has taken place, there is certainly anecdotal support for that conclusion. Why, despite attempts to codify "rules of engagement" and define a unique character for Lincoln-Douglas debate, has the event changed? I would argue several factors are at play.

First, as students become more experienced in a forum, their language and techniques become more specialized. Just as the emphasis on the technical aspects of blocking in oral interpretation has become greater over the years, and the demand for greater source citation and structure in extemporaneous speaking has become increasingly acute, so too has debate evolved to provide greater challenges for participants. The notable difference, however, is that while individual events have no comparative counterparts in other organizations, Lincoln-Douglas debaters can look to NDT, CEDA, NPDA, and other formats to acquire the technical jargon and philosophical perspectives that the Lincoln-Douglas community might take years to nurture in isolation.

Second, the excessive regulation of Lincoln-Douglas has backfired. While those of us who supported codification of rules and a philosophy statement thought it could provide identity for the fledgling activity, they did not. The opposite effect was true. Students now actively seek ways to argue around theoretical obstacles to reach the argumentative goals they seek to achieve in any particular debate. The fact that the rules mandate topicality is a voting issue, for example, have not stopped competitors from spinning elaborate theoretical rationales for discounting the issue. Similarly, despite there being no framework within the current rules to evaluate a "critique" or "kritik," these arguments are still advanced even if they are cloaked as other arguments, such as disadvantages. These developments in argumentation are not bad, they simply challenge the existing order. One need only consider the philosophy of the imminent rhetorical scholar Kenneth Burke to recognize that attitudes inevitably change and that each "order" faces pressure from a "counter order" that might eventually overturn it. There is no reason why we should believe the debate realm should be different.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, debate resolutions have become too broad to allow Lincoln-Douglas competitors to confine their time commitment to the event. When resolutions were as simple as "Resolved: That the terms of federal legislators should be limited to a specified duration" students could count on a

relatively compact set of arguments in each debate and a reasonably manageable body of literature to study. Participation in numerous other individual events was possible without providing a significant impediment to participation in debate. In 2001, however, a resolution such as "Resolved: That the United States federal government should adopt a policy to significantly restrict civil lawsuits" creates an infinite number of potential affirmative cases, with volumes of available literature, and a host of different negative options. To truly be on top of such a broad resolution requires a significant commitment in time—a commitment that is not necessarily compatible with individual events competition. In this sense, the Lincoln-Douglas community, in their votes in the annual topic selection process, has contributed to their own demise as a part of the family of individual events.

Conclusions: A Sense of Place

In 1996 Tim Borchers and I authored an article in which we observed that a fusion of traditional policy debate and individual events judging paradigms that we termed "the critical listener perspective" was possible (30-2). This perspective would allow for debaters to argue what they felt was appropriate in a debate and allowed judges to base their decisions on, among other things, their ability to critique arguments based on prior experience, informal logic, and so forth. The idea was that the best of argumentative creativity could be preserved in Lincoln-Douglas debate while allowing the potential intervention of judges to limit the kinds of excesses observed in other debate formats. Such a perspective is achievable, I believe, only when the forensics community commits itself to the deregulation of Lincoln-Douglas debate and the selection of narrow topics with more reasonable research burdens. Only then can Lincoln-Douglas debate fulfill its founders' objective of relatively seamless integration into the family of individual events.

This issue is dedicated to fleshing-out some of the key issues confronting forensics in the 21st century. I agree that the status of Lincoln-Douglas debate is one important issue. However, the hasty impulse to characterize differences between debate and individual events as a source of division or animosity exhibits that same kind of negative culture that Professor Deborah Tannen called, "the culture of critique" (7). Such "agonism" (Tannen 8) does not yet exist within the confines of the NFA. Still, the organization's members have an obligation to recognize that dialog about the technical evolution of the event, as well as reform of some of its founding documents, is necessary to ultimately pull the event back onto its original course and avoid the magnification of minor conflicts where they presently exist.

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Formulaic Forensics: When Competitive Success Stifles Creativity

Dave Gaer

Ask any director of forensics what their program promotes and I imagine the first and most often utilized phrase would be "the education of students." While a proponent for such grounding, I contend that forensics, in its current state, promotes competition over education by the nature of conventions; either governed by written event "rules," or unwritten formulas established by coaches, judges and students. Indeed the nature of our activity is competitive, and having the competitive factor established from the beginning might help to explain why formulas emerge as "ways of winning." In this essay, I will explore why formulas may exist and propose ways in which we can promote creativity over cookie-cutter stylisms for our competitive events.

The notion of formulaic events is not new and has been discussed for years. While the formulas can and do change over time, you can ask any student who is competitively successful, and they will provide you with a list of conventions and mechanical devices that will "ensure" competitive success. For example, competitive public address events *always* have 3 main points. Why? Most of us who teach public speaking teach our students that the length of the speech and the topic should guide the number of main points for a presentation and have them learn a variety of ways to organize a speech including two to five main points. Why, then, do we demand a 3-point speech in competition? Additionally, in interpretation, there are many formulas that exist. Poetry doesn't rhyme anymore. Many students no longer examine their selections for poetic forms such as alliteration and metaphor. Those types of poetry "just don't win." Prose can only be in first person. Students wouldn't dare try a third person or second person narrative. Somewhere along the way we have boxed our events and ignored the creativity that can and sometimes does permeate our activity.

An appropriate question, then, is why and how do formulaic events evolve? First, it's because as people, we have a tendency to WANT everything to be in a little box. It's how we process and remember information. We utilize what we know, attaching things to those notions, and develop our brains accordingly. Think of it as stereotyping. We all have the innate tendency to observe stereotypes and utilize them to create prediction and control for our lives so that we can be seen by others as part of the "norm." It stands to reason then that people involved in

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competitive forensics might also want some prediction and control over the outcomes of their performances. The written guidelines leave too much "gray area," the rules are too vague for our liking. So, in order to create that prediction and control, we develop a set of guidelines that are outside of the written rules, and rely on them to make us feel better about how we construct our performance pieces. Students, coaches and judges alike don't want so much subjectivity in predicting the outcomes of a competitive outing.

Second, we are also responsible for creating and perpetuating the formulaic event because of our competitive nature. At tournaments, especially national competitions, students, coaches, and judges watch out-rounds and attempt to discern why the people advancing did so. They watch these rounds and attempt to emulate what they have seen, or be able to provide "reasons" to their own students as to why they did not advance. What ultimately happens, is that a creative idea or mode of presentation (which is possibly new and innovative) is observed, seen as different from a student's own performance, and the assumption is made that they did not advance based on the fact that they did not emulate a formula and were not rewarded accordingly. The next year, students and coaches who wish to be competitive will do everything in their power to create a performance that mirrors what was competitively successful the previous season. Is this educational? I suggest that while students still reap benefits from formulaic competition, we are stifling creativity and teaching them to ignore free thought and expression.

I believe that we as a community and especially as judges and coaches need to re-examine what we reward at tournaments and what we do not. I have seen and read countless ballots that discuss the formulaic: the *number* of sources used, the fact that a third person prose is not as effective as first person, that students don't move enough in duo, that a teaser wasn't used in a DI. Students will only give us what we reward them for, and coaches and judges can only reward what we are given.

Students: go out on a limb. Let those creative juices flow. Make each performance your own in terms of style and creativity. Rather than attempting to put yourself into someone else's formulaic box, create your own path. Try that third person prose that is a "great piece, but won't win," use only two main points in your persuasive speech, write an informative that is neither medical or technological in nature. Above all, remember that this is your activity it is designed for *you*. Don't buy into the argument that you *must* do your events a certain way in order to be competitive. If we tout education as the focus of our activity, then allow yourself to experience the education that exists in a system where you do have some creative control and the freedom to express yourself.

Coaches and judges: Get out of the rut we have created by rewarding non-formulaic styles for both interpretation and public address. We all know we work in a subjective activity. Stop attempting to simplify the coaching and judging process by adding formulaic rules to a creative and expressive activity. Think of the judging process as a means by which we would suggest ways for each student individually to enhance or improve their performance, not to "fit in" with the rest of the crowd. When we talk education, we must not forget that creativity and open

expression of ideas are the foundations of what creates new and innovative theory and advances our disciplines. I realize that not following formulaic ideas makes our judging and coaching assignments even more difficult. However, there is not a coach/judge among us who would argue that this activity *could* be even more educational if we only take the time to develop an open mind when it comes to the events we coach/judge. Think back to when movement was not seen as "acceptable" for interpretation events. It has now become a formulaic expectation. Be open to diverse styles and tastes. Just because it's "not the way I did it," or the "way I coach my students to do it," does not make it "less than." Finally, encourage your students to break out of the formulaic and develop their own unique styles. Help them create new and innovative ways of communicating their message. Doing so will only advance our activity and our discipline.

Forensics is a highly beneficial activity for every person it touches. I am in no way condemning the activity as totally uneducational. I do, however, advocate that we attempt in every way possible to develop a more diverse notion of what the activity is and what each individual event can be. When we stifle creativity in the name of competitive success, we do create an activity where students become presentational robots and let freedom of creation and expression go by the way-side.

Give It to Me Straight Doc, How Much Longer Can I Coach: The Length of the Individual Events Season and Its Effects on the Wellness of Coaches

Scott Dickmeyer

As an undergraduate competitor, I was coached and mentored by some of the giants of individual events: Larry Schnoor, George Armstrong, Grace Walsh, Seth Hawkins, Bob Derryberry. These individuals coached for decades, touching the lives of countless individual events competitors. I entered graduate school because I wanted to follow in their footsteps. Throughout the rigors of graduate school, two things remained constant—my enthusiasm for coaching individual events and my desire to put my ideas into action by directing my individual events program.

Six years later I remain in academia, but am no longer coaching individual events. I found that regardless of how enthusiastic and dedicated I was, the time commitment of coaching individual events was too much. I simply could not manage the juggling act of being an individual events coach, teacher, researcher, active member of my college community, husband, and father. Coaching from August through late April became a burden on my time, energy, and health. Therefore, I retired from coaching. I am not alone in my "coaching retirement" as many exceptional and dedicated coaches left the activity too soon.

I agree with all of the issues addressed in Billings' discussion about the length of the individual events season, yet I believe the problem is more drastic than presented. I believe that the length of the individual events season damages the physical, mental, social, and career health of its coaches. I define health in the broader perspective that includes not only physical ramifications of life decisions, but also the relational, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, and career impacts of the choices we make. The general argument I make in this response is that the length of the individual events competitive season is dangerous to coaches' overall health. For space and clarity, I will focus specifically on physical, career, and relational impacts of the length of the individual events competitive season. Unfortunately, there has been little research addressing the problem. Perhaps individual events coaches are too busy traveling to tournaments to find the time to appropriately study the health problems associated with our long season.

The first problem is that individual events coaches' physical health is harmed by the length of the competitive season. Leland (in press) argues that the forensics community has focused on external factors for coach burnout, overlooking a very

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crucial component, that of the coaches' physical health. In a poignant example, Leland describes the outcome of an examination by his family doctor during a time of intense coaching in the 1990's. After describing his physical ailments (elevated blood pressure, weight problem, marginal diabetes, potential ulcer) the doctor put it bluntly; "You can either drastically change your priorities in life and in work, or you can die." After evaluating his priorities, the one that most negatively impacted his health was forensics coaching. Therefore, he made the difficult decision to apply for academic positions that did not involve coaching forensics.

In evaluating the effects of his priorities on his physical health, Leland looked to the "wellness gurus" and found that forensics coaches are continually participating in several health-robbing choices (Ardell, 1994). Individual events coaches are at their "unhealthiest" when traveling and participating in tournaments. Coaches eat poorly, have no time to exercise, overindulge on caffeine (perhaps nicotine and alcohol as well), get little sleep, and when exhausted from the weekend, put their life (as well as their students' lives) in jeopardy when hitting the road for the long drive home. It seems absolutely ridiculous and morally irresponsible that individual events coaches put themselves and their students in danger so often.

Several scholars have recognized that travel is unhealthy and have outlined the wellness issues that need to be considered by tournament administrators (Burnett-Pettus & Danielson, 1992; Hatfield, Hatfield, & Carver, 1988; Littlefield & Sellnow, 1992). The good news is that the American Forensics Association has created a set of healthy guidelines for tournament administration (which are not binding for AFA qualification standards) and several tournament hosts follow them. The bad news is that many individual events teams continue to place their coaches and students in danger by traveling to more tournaments than they did in the past (Dickmeyer & Schnoor, 1997). While tournament administrators are providing healthy food options and schedules designed to decrease physical and emotional stress, the physical demands of travel are still damaging. Unfortunately, the newest tournament administration trend neglects wellness in an attempt to get more "bang for the bucks" out of the team's forensics budget.

In the last ten years, tournament directors are scheduling their tournaments in a "swing" and "double-up" format with greater frequency (Dickmeyer and Schnoor, 1999). The swing or double-up tournament format involves scheduling two tournaments over the course of a weekend. It is difficult to schedule two complete tournaments in two or three days and as a result, wellness guidelines are often overlooked. As swing and double-up tournaments become the norm, coaches are forced to decide between traveling to more healthy "traditional" tournaments and providing their students with "double" the opportunity to qualify for a national tournament. The example Billings cites of the coach who traveled to more tournaments than there are weekends in the season points to the problem swing and double-up tournaments create for competitors and coaches. Competitors and coaches acknowledge that swing and double-up tournaments are unhealthy and more stressful than traditional tournaments (Dickmeyer & Schnoor, 1997). However, the popularity of these tournament formats is increasing and in some areas of the country, swing or double up tournaments are the norm. This trend will damage

more than coaches' physical health, it will adversely impact their academic careers as well.

The second problem created by the length of the individual events season is the negative impact on coaches' academic careers. Coaches' careers are adversely impacted by a hectic travel schedule and administrators' inability to appropriately compensate or evaluate individual events coaches. Generally, instructors are evaluated by university administrators for their competencies as teachers, researchers, and as members of the academic community. Colleges and universities retain those who demonstrate competency or excel in all three of these areas. The length of the individual events season hinders coaching careers, as it is difficult to excel in any these areas (let alone all three) when one must consistently prepare and travel with his or her team from August to April.

Forensics coaches are usually given release time to compensate for the tasks of administration, coaching, and traveling with their teams. However, it is rare that this compensation is an appropriate representation of the time and energy expended in coaching. It is a Herculean task to set appropriate team goals, prepare a season travel schedule that helps competitors accomplish those goals, manage the team budget, prepare and execute travel plans, coach students, and be responsible for the safe travel of the team (often out of state or even geographical region). Yet in addition to these responsibilities, universities expect individual events coaches to plan and teach several classes, promptly return feedback on students' assignments, be accessible to all students outside of the classroom, as well as do appropriate research and additional university service. The length of the season inappropriately and adversely affects coaches' ability to meet university standards for effective instruction.

The third problem created by the length of the individual events season is seen in coaches' ability to engage in and sustain relationships. Relational health is harmed as the responsibilities of coaching limit the time, energy, and emotional exertion often necessary in romantic and platonic relationships. Coaches have a great deal of contact time with their competitors and share unique experiences. For example, coaches are actively involved in one-on-one practice sessions, team meetings, driving to and from tournaments, eating in restaurants, bunking in hotel rooms, and sharing the physically and emotionally stressful experience of tournament competition. With increased contact time, coach/competitor relationships develop more deeply than the instructor/students relationships found in the traditional classroom setting.

It is not surprising that Linda Dickmeyer (2000) claimed that the metaphors used to describe the bond between a forensics coach and his/her competitors are often the same as those used to describe marriages and families. The problem arises when coach/competitor relationships interfere with the other platonic and romantic relationships of the coach. Using her own experiences as the wife of a coach, Dickmeyer (2000) described how her husband's relationship with his competitors created tension in his relationship with her and their children. It is no secret that her husband is me, the author of this response. Several examples of

tension-creating "coaching" decisions include, beyond traveling 15-20+ weekends a year for tournaments, I would spend time running team retreats or practices on weekends that the team did not travel, took phone calls from competitors during dinner or family time, would "run back to school" to coach or help a competitor through some problem, and share our house with competitors who wanted to talk or watch a football game. At times, these relationships physically and emotionally exhausted me.

The time and energy spent with competitors hindered my relationship with my wife and children. Although she appreciated and enjoyed the students, there were times when the strain of handling these relationships decreased my energy as a husband and father. Unfortunately, we had no language to describe the problems coaching created for our relationship. The relational and family metaphors used to describe my nuclear family were the same used to describe my relationship with the competitors. It was only after metaphorically describing the coach/competitor relationship as a competing love interest in our relationship that we were able to openly discuss the problem. While shortening the length of the individual events season would not eliminate the relational problems created by coaching, it would help. If the length of the individual events season were more reasonable (like the 3-5 month travel schedule found in college athletics), coaches may be able to dedicate more time and energy to their relationships.

I have offered arguments to demonstrate that the length of the individual events competitive season is too long. I argue that the length of the season adversely affects coaches' physical, career, and relational health. The individual events community needs to produce more research on this topic. More importantly, officers of the organizations that sanction national tournaments need to take a closer look at how their goals and objectives may be met by a more reasonable schedule for the competitive season.

In an ironic twist of fate, one year after retiring from coaching individual events, I successfully defended my dissertation on April 9th, the last day of the AFA National Individual Events Tournament. Not only did retiring from coaching positively impact my degree completion, I have an even better relationship with my wife and three sons, become more physically fit, established new friendships while strengthening old ones, and become the teacher I knew I could be. I am pleased with all of these results. I am, however, disappointed that I had to give up all that I loved about coaching to do it. I miss the personal connection I felt with my individual events students. I miss the opportunity to be actively engaged in helping students recognize and reach their potential. I miss being a mentor to forensics competitors.

As the individual events community looks forward to the new millennium, I hope the health risks involved in a travel season that spans eight months of the year are seriously considered. Larry Schnoor was, and still is, my mentor. He transformed my life and many others by carefully guiding his students through their individual events careers and staying in contact with them after they left the university. Thoughtful coaches who dedicate their careers to this activity strengthen the individual events community. Shortening the individual events season will al-

low more coaches to live more healthy and meaningful lives while contributing to our students, colleges, and communities.

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The Search for Qualified Judges: A Tournament Director's Views

Jeffrey D. Brand

For the past seven years I have had a hand in hosting seven to nine tournaments every season. These have ranged from high school invitationals to the Pi Kappa Delta National Tournament. Hiring judges has been a full-time activity for five months a year. The search for qualified judges is an important one for all tournament directors. In order to continue to provide judges for tournaments, there are three areas I have emphasized to help staff the many tournaments I have been a part of. These areas include recruitment/training, maintenance, and investing in a future judging pool. Other tournament directors can do the same. When it comes down to it, however, the activity as a whole must address these issues, all coaches and contestants have a responsibility to contribute to the judging pool.

Recruitment for judges should begin well in advance of the actual tournament. Each season I try to assess who is available as a potential judge. Departmental colleagues are a place to begin but are far from sufficient. If your university has graduate programs, consider recruiting interested judges from a variety of departments: English, Education, Business, Theatre, and Communication. Faculty at smaller colleges in similar disciplines can also be contacted. Do not forget about adjunct and part time faculty who might be available. Community members are also worth tapping. Contact local high school programs for hired judges who might be available for collegiate tournaments and make the connections necessary to offer your students to help judge high school tournaments. Advertising might also be helpful. By casting a wider net, you might find additional judging resources.

Once you have a pool in place, some training would be helpful. In the North Dakota high school system, there is a judge test to become certified. Your recruiting and quality of judges will be enhanced by offering judges guidance, before, during, and after tournaments. Collegiate tournaments rarely include judges meetings or guidelines unless there are experimental events or unique competitive circumstances. I have tried to provide training to graduate students prior to tournaments to familiarize them with basic judging responsibilities and procedures. Any training that can be performed prior to a tournament will save the staff time and potential embarrassment at the actual tournament. What makes a judge "qualified," however, is a matter of opinion.

I firmly believe in the notion of the lay judge. Someone who knows how to perform the basic responsibilities of a judge but who is not fully immersed in the

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forensic culture. Recent convention papers have discussed the "unwritten" rules of forensics. Many of us take these "rules" for granted and even use them in our coaching and judging paradigms. The existence of unwritten rules or norms by their nature should make them outside the responsibility of the hired or lay judge. They cannot be expected to know them or to rank and rate students on the basis of expectations that have not been articulated to the community as a whole. If such expectations are so important, then event descriptions or judging guidelines need to be published for the community to follow. I do not expect my judges to know about unified analysis or the proper angle to hold a scriptbook. The varieties of standards and preferences that are seen in lay judges make the activity more diverse, challenging, and interesting for competitors, judges, and coaches.

Once I have my pool of judges and I have tried to provide at least some degree of training, I move to preserve or maintain these judges over the span of the speech season. Because I have hired judges at least five months a year, I need to develop them not just for the tournament this weekend, but for future ones as well. There are some basic areas to consider: pay, working conditions, and even non-tangible rewards. Most judges are volunteers; they sacrifice some of their time and energy to this activity. They rarely need forensics as much as we need them.

In the past few years I have raised judge fees to an average of \$10 per round. I usually provide guaranteed fees for judges willing to commit to a set number of rounds or days of judging, usually with bonuses for lengthier commitments. In addition to the financial support, I have also tried to offer other incentives. The wellness tradition that has been growing in the Midwest usually means providing food for judges and contestants. In the past, I have also offered daycare for the judges' children when necessary. Anything you can do to make judging more pleasant is important. Give judges sufficient time between rounds and time off. At the end of the tournament, payment should be convenient and prompt. Paying judges and thanking them before the final rounds gives you time concentrate on tabbing. The tournament should be a positive environment for judges. I have needed my judges to return frequently so the conditions they work under should be the best possible.

There are additional ways to reward judges that do not need to cost you much but are equally appreciated. Every year I have hosted an open house around Christmas to thank judges, faculty, and others for their support. It has become a tradition and it serves to show my appreciation for their efforts. Thank you letters, public recognition for service, making judges honorary team members, and other means of recognition help to cement your relationship with judges. The relationship you establish with judges should be a two way street and it should be possible for them to feel as though they are benefiting from their services along with you.

Finally, we need to grow more judges, increase the pool and help share the burden of judging as widely as possible. There is a lot of turnover in local judge pools. Every competitor should be taught to expect that they too should help promote judging in the future. Most of my students have judged at the high school level for tournaments I have managed. This experience helps to encourage future judging activity and expertise. Using seniors to judge novice events has been an

approach taken by some tournaments which also can help these future alums see the value and need for becoming a judge. Giving other coaches information about your alums with forensic experience in their area might help other programs.

Discussions of judging paradigms and critiques of judges found in journals like this one, and in convention papers and online lists need to respond to the educational and the competitive tensions that hired judges inherently create. We cannot have it both ways. I have been satisfied to use hired judges in local and regional invitational tournaments with limited expectations as to their competitive literacy. They do not need to be former competitors or coaches. They do need to conduct themselves professionally, respect students, attend rounds on time, and complete ballots with some reason for decision (RFD). In the limited time I have to train them and to monitor their behavior, these are reasonable assumptions. If a judge is failing to adhere to any of these basic expectations, I expect to hear from coaches or competitors and I would take action if necessary. The diversity of opinion and expertise is a reflection of the evaluations competitors are likely to receive outside of forensics. Life is not always fair and no one is entitled to "win."

The national tournaments have the option, in my opinion, to expect more from their judges. I do not believe that national contests serve as anything more than competitive venues, with the exception of the Pi Kappa Delta National Tournament. The PKD tournament lacks a qualification requirement and therefore does not limit participation to those most in need of development. The awards and tournament structure of the PKD tournament also helps to encourage experimentation and new participation by competitors. At the AFA, NFA, and ISO tournaments in particular, the field has been limited in varying degrees. Participants come together with explicit competitive expectations and the purpose of the tournament is competitively defined. Others may disagree with my assessment of these tournaments, but few coaches and competitors would welcome panels of lay judges in final rounds or experimentation in judging paradigms at the national tournament.

With these expectations in place, national tournaments can require or expect different judge qualifications. These requirements should be developed for all judges, including coaches, graduate assistants, and lay judges. Unlike some debate national tournaments, we do not require judges to pre-publish their judging paradigms. We do not allow strikes for judges in events either. If the national tournaments wish to limit their judging pool for competitive reasons, I believe they should. They have not been willing to do so because it would require significant restrictions on entry sizes, fees, or tournament schedules. Limitations that could add expense, time, or change the competitive standing of teams.

There are many ways to improve the quality of our judges; actions that would help renew our educational mission in forensics while allowing the competitive impulse that dominates forensics to remain. Judge training could be a required part of the national tournament schedule. It would require time, expense, and keep some from participating. We could also use national and regional conventions, qualifier tournaments, publications, workshops, and Web sites to train and develop the quality of judges available at all of our tournaments. Forensics could actually become more educational, training critics who might not only render verdicts that

satisfy the competitive complaints but that are also grounded in communication principles and practices that remain vital outside of the forensic tournament.

Increasing Forensics Research: Recognizing Our Strengths

David Worth

Much of the usual critique of forensics research emphasizes external constraint on (or prevention of) the research process or discusses apparent inadequacies in forensics research methods (Klumpp, 1990; Logue & Shea, 1990; McKerrow, 1990; Porter, 1990, for example). In many ways, both of these lines of inquiry appear to be correct. I wish to propose, however, that we are not taking advantage of our present opportunities. Assuming that there are researchers who are capable and that the normal configuration of forensics positions around the academy is not likely to change on a large scale, we remain faced with the question of how to improve our research in terms of both quality and quantity despite external forces and lack of time. In this response I will first focus on the nature of forensics scholarship as a lifestyle and second on kinds of scholarship that recognize and take advantage of that lifestyle. Finally, I will suggest that institutional mechanisms could be developed to encourage and aid research.

To begin, we must consider the idea that the difference between productivity for forensics and non-forensics scholars is a deeper issue than simply scheduling and time allocation. It is a lifestyle issue. The conditions for a "normal" work-day (or any work period) are radically different between the two groups. In addition, the cycles that characterize the work-year are different. The implication is that the lifestyle, and, accordingly, the work style and resulting work are different. Non-forensics scholars divide their time between teaching, research, and service. Scholars are able to settle into semester-long and yearly routines that include regular blocks of time devoted to research. These should usually occur on a daily or at least weekly basis. If I teach on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, I can schedule blocks of time, or even perhaps whole days, for research and writing on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The point here is that the conditions for regularity are present and should be taken advantage of in order to do consistent work.

The typical forensics scholar, however, divides her time between all of these in addition to the "main" job of coaching, administration, and travel. Because of travel, several weeks of each semester are simply unavailable for research and writing. Tournament travel may mean leaving Thursday afternoon and returning Sunday night. Thursday will be spent packing, picking up vans and petty cash, preparing to leave, etc. Monday hopefully will be spent as a day off or as a teaching-only day because one is tired. So, on a tournament week, the forensics

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scholar loses most of the week. It will be spent on forensics exclusively. Weeks between tournaments will be spent catching up on grading, planning lectures, and research/writing. All of this will occur in addition to finding time for "having a life" that other scholars will enjoy on weekends. Because this lifestyle becomes more hectic at certain times of the year (around nationals, for example), and a semester or quarter really is not really much time, forensics professionals are very nearly forced to live much of their professional time in a much less structured routine that often precludes, or at least discourages, regularly scheduled time that can be devoted to research. For many, it seems that research feels like something external to the daily demands of our jobs. Administrative concerns absolutely must be addressed, the coaching must be done, and the travel is unavoidable for most coaches.

I am arguing here that many of the concerns expressed by Billings can be addressed, in part, by a real examination of the lifestyle and the very real effects it has on work habits. Clearly, there are researchers in forensics who are not well trained, and one can make the case that the time concerns expressed above contribute to that. One can also agree that ill-trained researchers tend to produce others of the kind. This is not unique to forensics, however. There are ill-prepared researchers in all areas of the academy. One might argue that in some cases forensics scholars are given more room by their departments. I mean this in a very restricted sense: Because they are away so often, forensics scholars may not be viewed as involved in the daily research endeavor (at least conceptual in nature) of the department, and may therefore be allowed (or left alone) to conduct research with less oversight or input from peers. This might be an area worth studying.

There is, however, nothing intrinsic about forensics scholars that makes them less trainable or less capable of doing research. Indeed, as Billings points out, as coaches for intellectual activity, forensics scholars would appear to be among our most capable. Interestingly, one must acknowledge, as the author does, that writing for speeches is different and that this has been argued to be the cause of lack of publication or for weak style for pieces written by forensics scholars (Klumpp, 1990). I am arguing here that it is lifestyle that contributes to the insufficient research and writing practices that sometimes characterizes forensics research.

The time structure that the forensics scholar must follow, however, appears to be unavoidable for most working in the field. The challenge, then, is to find research and writing practices that better accommodate the forensics scholar. The obvious place for this kind of change is in the area of tenure requirements and work exists studying and arguing for better recognition of forensics instruction as academic labor (Preston, 1995; Jensen, 1993; Murphy & Ferri, 1991; Gill, 1990; Porter, 1986; Klopff & Rives, 1965). Clearly, this basic area of concern holds promise for helping forensics scholars and it is certainly the most logical place to start.

It seems likely, however, that tenure requirements for one class of scholars within a specific field will be slow to change and will be adjusted only in minor ways. In isolated cases, coaches at various levels of academics will be given unique tenure requirements that suit the forensics lifestyle as a profession. Overall, however, it seems clear that we must find ways to conduct research (and thereby meet

standard tenure requirements, along with doing research in order to improve forensic education) that can allow us to work within the time structure of our lifestyle and the concomitant work habits necessitated by that lifestyle. In other words, some of the solution lies in our own choices about conceptualization of study, method, and type of research we produce.

In particular, one way to turn the time structure to our advantage is to use the time at tournaments for research. This can be promoted in two ways. First, researchers can choose methods and subjects that allow them to collect data at tournaments, and second, tournaments can encourage the process of research collection. As I have argued elsewhere (Worth, 2000), the tournament setting is under-researched from the ethnographic approach. As participant observers, coaches are uniquely situated because they spend so much of their time "in the field." In addition, it should be noted that this kind of field research is already funded, eliminating a major barrier to a great deal of ethnographic research.

The richness of the experience of forensic education comes from its experiential nature. We teach and reinforce through the necessity of doing. Given this basic feature of the forensic experience, it is a prime candidate for a method that explicitly looks for structures of lived experience, such as ethnography. In addition, a number of settings present themselves for study within the tournament travel setting. Van rides, hotel stays, and the tournaments themselves each offer many substructures for study in addition to themselves as settings. This response is neither a justification of ethnographic methods nor a guide for research using these methods. The point here is that the time that one might normally view as preventing research can be spent doing it.

Tournaments also offer potential for other kinds of study, both qualitative and quantitative. Usually, national tournaments offer chances to distribute surveys and questionnaires. Rarely does one encounter these at the average tournament. Though there may be regulations on each campus that differ concerning this, perhaps more organized mechanisms could be made available for data collection as a normal part of a tournament. Other areas of the academy routinely use their basic courses for data collection. We should be using our basic activity, the tournament, in the same way. In addition, one might argue that such research will be more appropriate since, while the samples are always similar kinds of people, they do make up the subject of study, as they are direct participants in the process being studied. Thus such research presents a better sample than the typical use of the basic course, in which subjects tend to be "undergraduate students at a large Midwestern university" who might or might not have experience relevant to the topic under study.

In any case, clearly significant samples and, in some cases, sample sizes approaching the level of population (some national tournaments, for example), offered at tournaments present us with myriad possibilities for study. In addition to observational methods mentioned above, researchers have the possibility of interviewing and conducting qualitative research based on data gathered in the interviews. While the tournament day is already busy, tournaments usually offer pockets of time spent waiting for the next event on the schedule. These are times to

schedule interviews. With planning and forethought, one could easily agree to conduct interviews the morning before the tournament starts on Friday, a time when many people have to be in the city or town in which the tournament is being held but when most do little beyond practicing. In addition, there is usually time before awards spent waiting on tabulation, completion of final rounds and other processes. Clearly, not all tournament structures are the same, and regional differences in scheduling and travel necessity lead to differences in the kinds of times I cover here. The point is, however, that subjects are there and there is usually time somewhere in the weekend. For researchers in other areas, interviewing subjects who live elsewhere represents a major hassle and expense. Forensics researchers encounter them as a matter of necessity since travel is an inherent part of competition.

What we need are mechanisms for encouraging and aiding such research at tournaments. National tournaments offer review processes for proposal for study. Such a process seems to be in our own and our students' interests. In terms of forensics as a discipline, the review of research procedures is responsible and sensible for the same reasons universities require such processes. Perhaps one of the major associations should offer a review or approval process that could be used as a standard for approval. While some organizations have authority only over their national tournaments, they do set guidelines usually followed by tournaments during the regular season. Offering a sanctioning process of some kind might be one way to encourage research and provide a check on procedure that protects subjects and researchers. Reviewers could be sought who have experience with both forensics and research outside the forensics world. This could be an attractive service activity for scholars who have left forensics and have moved into more standard research positions. Since this is not the place for a full proposal for such a mechanism, this outline is necessarily only a sketch. The point here is that some institutional involvement beyond the national tournament level might stimulate research.

Of course no mechanism will increase our research amount and quality unless it is utilized. Researchers must choose to do the research. This is where we must choose to find ways that better fit our lifestyle and allow us to flourish within the academic structure as it is. I agree with Billings that we will be forced to find ways of doing more and better research and might argue that more is at stake than our status as "stepchildren." Certainly our credibility is at stake. In addition, however, credit for our intellectual labor is at stake. Also, the potential for improvement of our activity is at stake. This should be the motivation for such research in the first place. Realistically, our status within the academy will, at least to some extent, be determined by our research production. It is also determined indirectly by the success of our students. Better research should be motivated by a desire for improving forensic pedagogy. Motivated by these two important concerns, forensics researchers should begin to look for ways to capitalize on their current situation.

In this response I have suggested first an interpretation of the lifestyle of the forensics scholar as it shapes the possibility of research, and second outlets exist within the current structure that can be utilized. Finally I have suggested that our

organizational structures could be used to encourage research and improve its quality. Clearly, there are unique pressures and constraints on the forensics scholar. We should realize, however, that there are also unique opportunities for research in our discipline as well.

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The Need for a Forensic Civic Virtue

Lisa Anne Perry

Billings succinctly expresses the problem in competitive forensics. Students, intent on doing well and succeeding, give the judges what they want. As a result, ethical concerns are ignored or minimized by competitors, judges, and coaches. I agree with the author that judges play an important role in the reestablishment of ethical competitors. Coaches and directors certainly act as role models and arbiters of what is ethical communication, but once the student gets into the room, it is the judge who actually sees the student present the information. It is also important that as the information age gives way to the information overload age all audience members learn and practice the skills of critical listening. Our words to our students that they need to critically examine the source, context, and content of evidence they use in their speeches is hollow advice when we as judges are sponges at the back of the room, content to merely count sources and look for the occasional international or otherwise "sexy" source.

I also agree with Billings that the national forensic organizations have a stake in the ethical practices of its competitors. An intercollegiate "style manual" would provide a great service to the discipline and the students, especially if the manual was consistent between the American Forensic Association and the National Forensic Association.

I disagree, however, that the primary onus belongs to the judges or the forensic organizations. As the author reminds us, we rely on lay judges at tournaments, and given the pitiful amount we pay them we can hardly expect Supercritics well versed in the particulars of intercollegiate forensics of the day. More importantly, another book of rules does little, by itself, to impart to students why these rules exist, why proper, complete and accurate citation of evidence is important. And more rules will not help with the enforcement of the rules.

Instead I would go even further than the author. Or rather, I would go farther back in the history of rhetoric to suggest solutions that place the responsibility on the shoulders of the rhetors and those who teach them.

From the very inception of rhetoric, theorists and teachers of the art have been faced with the issue of ethics. The art of rhetoric is powerful; through rhetoric speakers can "make savage nations civil, wild people tame, and cruell tyrants not only to become meeke, but likewise mercifull" (Peacham, *ABifiv*). The capacity for a speaker to use the power of rhetoric for good as well as for evil makes rhetoric morally questionable. Rhetoric is equally available to the moral orator striving

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to lead the soul of the audience and the nefarious despot pandering to the lowest desires of the masses; as Augustine wrote in *On Christian Doctrine*, "...the faculty of eloquence is available for both sides, and is of very great service in the enforcing either of wrong or right..." (Book IV). Thus many early theorists and pedagogues of rhetoric conscientiously developed criteria and guidelines for ethical speakers, a person who Plato said "knows the various forms of the soul... [and is] able to speak and to do everything, so far as possible, in a manner pleasing to the gods" (*Phaedrus*, 272-273). Twentieth-century teachers of rhetoric are faced with the same problems of ethics in speaking. Unlike the early days of rhetorical theory, however, twenty-first century rhetors are not as thoroughly inculcated in the ethical and moral obligations of an orator.

Instead, we tell our students that forensic competition is a "game" and intercollegiate forensics is a separate culture with different rules and behaviors than "the outside world." Aden (1991), among others, has criticized this perspective on forensics, rightly stating that it removes forensic practices from those of the real world. As a result student competitors aspire to both "pass" in the forensics culture and win at tournaments. Directors may post the rules of competition in the office or squadroom but there is no discussion about why these rules exist and their applicability to post-forensics speaking. In addition to this lack of instruction in proper citation, forensics students are not systematically educated in how to construct arguments and apply theories of persuasion. Usually a student says they want to do a persuasive speech, or even better, comes with an idea and preliminary research. We give them basic information on organizational patterns like problem-solution or Monroe's Motivated Sequence, we give suggestions on style and support, and then send them on their merry way to compete. As a result we don't provide students with the information and skills they need to draft a persuasive or informative speech that appropriately uses evidence. Instead they pick this information up "on the streets," from veteran competitors who tell the students how to win by citing lots of sources and from judges who write the same comments on their ballots.

Surprisingly, the situation regarding the ethical practice of source citations is not for lack of contemplation or research. Numerous scholars and educators have gathered at forensic conferences, discussed issues of proper source citations and other ethical practices, and subsequently published these recommendations in journals such as *The National Forensic Journal* (see, for example, Sheryl Friedley, "Ethical Considerations for Forensic Educators." *Perspective on Individual Events: Proceedings of the First Developmental Conference in Individual Events*. Ed. Larry Schnoor and Vicki Karns. Mankato MN: Speech Department, 1989; David Thomas, "The Ethics of Proof in Speech Events: A Survey of Standards Used by Contestants and Judges." *The National Forensic Journal* 1 (1983): 1-17; and Walter Ulrich, "The Ethics of Forensics: An Overview." *American Forensics in Perspective: Papers from the Second National Conference on Forensics*. Ed. Donn Parson, Annandale, VA: Speech Communication Association, 1984). The information that Friedley and others publish needs to be incorporated into our forensic practice. The rules that already exist need to be enforced-by everyone in the community.

We need to follow the rules that already exist in forensics. We should not only provide students with clear explications of the rules of competition, including citation of sources, but we should place these rules within the greater context of the rights and responsibilities of orators who possess "civic virtue (*arete*)" (Conley 20). When students rely more heavily on data and less on providing the warrant or reasoning in their argument, we cannot hold them accountable unless they have been instructed on how to effectively build an argument. Too often coaches, judges, and competitors think someone else will or has confronted violations of ethical rules. When we know or ought to know about an unethical practice, we must report it. We need to teach our students to be moral and ethical communicators because the ultimate responsibility and power is theirs, not ours.

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Improving Networking between High School and College Forensic Programs

Treva Dayton
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The concern over the relationship between high school and college forensic programs is not new. In 1989, in a paper for a Conference on Forensic Education, Fritch, Leeper and Rowland wrote, "The key to a strong forensics community lies in the relationships that exist between educators at the two levels. Without a strong tie between collegiate and secondary school educators, the possibility for harmony rapidly dissipates (p. 48)." More than a dozen years later we are faced with that rapidly dissipating harmony. In many cases the relationship between college and high school forensic programs is characterized by a lack of mutual respect and effective communication, among other problems. This is not a healthy relationship for the "forensic community." So the question arises: "Can collegiate and high school forensic programs develop better networks and relationships?" In order for each level to survive and flourish the answer has to be a resounding YES!

High school and collegiate programs share common goals, including—at their best—the underlying mission of providing unique educational and learning opportunities. On both levels, the desire exists to develop or maintain excellent programs that garner recognition, funding and support. The personal satisfaction and the thrill of competition attract competitors and directors in both arenas. But shared goals and perhaps shared motivation does not mean the two levels of programs are identical or in reality, even very similar. In fact, the growing disconnect between high school and collegiate programs may result because such a small percentage of high school programs, those that most closely resemble the college level, directly benefit from the close relationships that currently exist with college programs.

Often high school directors critique collegiate programs for an "elitist" attitude, arguing the valuable interaction provided by summer institutes, quality tournaments hosted on college campuses and extensive assistance in research and coaching is available only to those high school programs with significant financial resources, plus a select number of high school students with exceptional talent. With-

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out a concerted effort to reach a broader audience, the pool of potential recruits for collegiate forensic programs will remain static at best, with limited ethnic or geographic diversity, or diminish.

While not an easy task, outreach programs can be extremely successful. The Urban Debate League, with college involvement, has had tremendous success in expanding forensic opportunities to inner city students, and provides an excellent model that individual events programs could emulate, at least to some degree.

Many high school programs, on the other hand, are accused of "provincialism," rejecting out-of-hand new theories, literature and techniques that work successfully on the collegiate level and "trickle down" into high school event.

It is important to realize that even though members of the same forensic community, most high school programs and the students they serve are very different from college programs and their student population. High school coaches often say college forensics involve risqué interpretations. While using material 'on the cutting edge' may be appropriate for college students, it is not acceptable to many of the audiences that see high school performances, including parents, administrators, community judges and younger students. These audiences are crucial for their current and future support of high school programs. Furthermore, many high school contestants lack the maturity to depict scenes from contemporary material with a depth of understanding that creates believability for the audience.

Instances of outraged or offended community members, often played out in local media, do nothing positive for high school programs. There is certainly a wealth of excellent material for interpretative events available that would not provoke such negative responses. College students working with or judging high school competitors need to recognize the importance of standards set either by school personnel, communities or contest rules, and focus on the interpretation and/or performance and not the "shock value" of the material.

High school directors need to provide forensic programs that are meaningful and rewarding to many levels of students, with great disparities in talent, time, and commitment. If colleges, with their expertise, could provide more local, inexpensive, one-day, or weekend workshops, this huge high school population could be reached. One-on-one mentoring in schools close to campus, with students and/or high school directors, could provide a positive image for both programs and a much needed community service.

Another obstacle to developing better relations is that college judges and students who coach high school have received a bad reputation on many high school forensic circuits. Warranted or unwarranted, they are criticized and stereotyped because some members don't dress professionally, they don't act professionally, they don't keep a professional relationship with competitors, they smoke, they curse, and they don't write educational critiques. David Zarefsky points out the problem:

There is the college student, a competitor in forensics, who also coaches and judges for the local high school... One can do both, but one has to keep them straight. The competitive instincts of a coach... may

be at odds with the educational instincts of a teacher. The mindset of a person who has committed himself or herself to forensics as a profession may be quite different from that of the "paraprofessional" who continues to dabble in forensics for a few years while working on a degree... These conflicts pull us in different directions, and the centrifugal forces oppose those which would make us a strong, united community. (1990, p. 23)

From the perspective of the high school director this is a problem, but blaming the college community is not a productive solution. The high schools and the colleges need to work together to provide students with appropriate direction. How does the first year college student learn to judge or coach? No one ever sits them down and teaches them. High school competitors and directors assume that new judges/coaches know how to judge or coach because they competed. The transition from competitor to coach/judge can be difficult. These individuals need to deal with students in a very different way than they interacted with them as peers. High schools and colleges should work together to provide workshops and training sessions for new judges/coaches, to take a positive step toward a solution. This approach would have a good chance to succeed if both the high school and college programs support it.

The problem of using college students as coaches occurs because there aren't enough high school forensic directors. Without directors, programs have to look to the "paraprofessionals" to keep going. Without college students, many programs would fold. Richard Pineda writes in the *Rostrum*:

Another dilemma occurs when the college student-coach either accepts a role as researcher or falls into a position where they become the major source of team evidence or literature selections and cuttings. Some of the more vocal complaints about college participation in high school forensics stem from this level of involvement. Rather than instructing and teaching high school students how to cut literature, compile debate evidence or find topics for speeches, college student-coaches emphasize a method that creates dependency rather than self-sufficiency. To move beyond this obstacle, it is necessary to direct college-student coaches to become a larger part of the education process and not just to facilitate the means to an end. (2001, p. 24)

It is the responsibility of the college and high school directors to make a concerted effort to recruit more people into the profession. A systematic mentoring program could be developed within geographic regions that would take students in college, pair them with high school directors who mentor them through the first difficult years of "paraprofessional" coaching, and prepare them for a possible career in teaching and coaching. It is in the best interest of both the college and high school program to support and cooperate in such an effort. The college sets up a recruitment network and the high schools get another coach.

Another important issue that should be addressed is that part of the relationship between colleges and high schools is focused on money. The high school programs provide the participants for moneymaking ventures of tournaments and

summer institutes that help support the college programs. This relationship can be problematic. David Zarefsky pointed out that:

Strongly committed college coaches whose schools have weak institutional support for forensics have discovered that they can fund their own programs through a profit-making summer high school institutes... When money becomes the basis for decisions about educational philosophy and goals, or when competition among college programs for the resources of high school students overshadows a recognition of community, we are fragmented and divided against ourselves. (1990, p. 22-23)

High school directors feel the college "profit-making" has a negative impact on the educational values of the forensic activity, when in fact they provide a valuable service. The criticism is that summer institutes seeking consistent or increased enrollment may focus more on winning than learning. To increase entries, college-run tournaments may not enforce the rules of the high school community. Inviting high school directors to be part of the institute staffs, or part of the tab room staffs at a tournament could go a long way in eliminating negative perceptions and promoting an understanding of the mission and purpose of such as activities, as well as the real difficulties in making them happen. Evaluations and feedback from high school coaches whose students attend summer institutes could be better utilized. The availability of summer workshop scholarships for both students and directors could be better publicized.

In identifying problems with the relationship between college and high school forensic programs, our purpose is not to tear down this relationship but to strengthen it. Both college and high school programs have a great deal to offer one another. The colleges provide the high schools with coaches, assistant coaches and judges for high school tournaments. Colleges provide a service through their tournaments and summer institutes. Graduate courses offered in forensics are important to high school teachers seeking advanced degrees, required continuing education or movement on their salary schedules.

High schools also have much to offer the college programs, including fertile ground for recruitment. They provide an outlet to help train future directors. High school programs provide opportunities for coaching and judging to students who might otherwise have to get jobs that would interfere with their college forensic schedule. They provide the participants for tournaments and summer institutes that allow colleges to showcase their programs. High schools provide a much-needed outlet for graduate student theory and pedagogical research. But this type of sharing can't happen if the proper networking and communication doesn't exist.

There are many more vehicles that could be available to foster greater opportunities for networking. The Internet can be a valuable tool to disseminate information. Organizations such as state communication associations and coaches' associations could provide space on already existing Web sites to advertise opportunities or develop databases of programs available for college and high school students and directors. Presentations at state and regional conventions or other

yearly meetings might help coordinate efforts to improve networking. High school and college directors could consider writing or co-authoring articles for each other's publications. There are many opportunities that exist to help unite the forensic community. The strength of the community as a whole relies on the cooperation of each level. Directors and students at both the high school and college level need to be committed to improving their relationship. Without such commitment, the whole community will suffer.

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Ain't No Cure for the Coaching Blues

Ann Burnett

Allow me to begin by saying that my time spent at Nebraska as Director of forensics was rewarding, in large part due to all the wonderful students with whom I worked. It has taken several years for me to not gauge the school year by the tournaments held on particular weekends, and I still cannot resist thinking about good topic ideas for the upcoming season. I now can actually eat a doughnut and enjoy it. These days, there is little that brings me more delight than to hear from my former forensics students. I will always have a fondness in my heart for my years in forensics, but I was a victim of burnout, and I can safely say that I do not wish to return to the activity. Therefore, not only do I agree with Billings' assessment regarding coach burnout, I think he could have chosen to discuss it first, as I believe many of the other problems listed in his essay stem from the issue of coach burnout.

The root of coach burnout lies, in my opinion, with his seventh question regarding the rigor of research in forensics. Whereas the area is ripe for research that might have consequences beyond the borders of competition, the major problem that my contemporaries and I had was the lack of time or resources to conduct well-done research. As a result, much of what is written in forensics is done hastily and without much thought, simply due to time constraints. Furthermore, with pressures to publish in order to obtain tenure and with many schools not considering forensics publications as legitimate, coaches with assistant or associate professor status must maintain a research program in a non-forensics area.

The paucity and lack of legitimacy attached to research in forensics is one of the factors leading to coach burnout, particularly with regard to individuals who have doctorate degrees and who hope to continue in the professorate. Simply put, forensics is a dead end job. Thus, many coaches do not have much choice but to quit. As a result, Billings states, they are increasingly replaced with coaches who do not have advanced degrees. Coaches of this ilk may not have the same research expectations as assistant or associate professors, allowing them to devote their time to coaching. Unfortunately, the trend toward hiring more so-called "second generation coaches" only perpetuates burnout because, without research obligations, the focus can be on competition.

In recent years, coaches have increasingly felt the intense pressure of competition. Billings outlines these issues well. First, the length of the season is unwieldy for students and coaches alike. Yet, the forensics community is caught in a

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bind in which no one is able or willing to make any changes; few individuals would elect to travel in vans to various locations throughout the country, nearly every weekend for an entire school year. However, if students and coaches do not travel, they are unable to win trophies and qualify for national tournaments. Research requires time to write and to think; the current forensic marathon does not allow for such extravagance, thus enabling those who do not engage in research activities to maintain active travel schedules.

Second, Billings mentions the success formulas, a product of the emphasis on competition. These formulas stifle creativity and certainly do not provide new material for forensic research. Not only are these formulas troubling, they are time-consuming for the coach who must take excessive amounts of time to suggest obscure pieces for oral interpretation or obscure topics for public address. In addition, working through the formulaic, stifling "unwritten rules" takes time away from other academic duties.

Third, Lincoln-Douglas (LD) debate takes time. The advent of LD debate was good news to our squad. We did not have the money or scholarships to field NDT or CEDA teams, but we were able to take LD debaters to individual events tournaments. However, with debate comes an additional type of coaching which is time-intensive. As Billings points out, nowadays the coach must have some expertise in oral interpretation, public address, and debate—all of which take a great deal of time.

Such pressures ought to cause any coach, in the professorate or not, to burn-out. However, if an assistant/associate professor is still coaching, imagine the dual pressures of research and competition. Other pressures exist as well. In line with Billings' conclusion, I found the pressure to recruit in local high schools to be almost overwhelming. Billings also mentions the issues of using unpublished literature and citing sources from the Internet. One of the last meetings I had with my squad revolved around such issues; I clearly remember students firmly asserting, "we're losing our competitive edge because you [meaning me] won't allow us to [write our own oral interpretation pieces]." That day, I truly felt like a fish out of water, advocating a seemingly ethical position and not being supported for doing so. Lastly, Billings does not mention fundraising, but I found it to be an extremely stressful part of my job, never knowing if we would have enough money to get students to national tournaments. I grew tired of begging, writing letters, and hoping for last-minute donations.

Coach burnout affects and is affected by a number of issues that Billings lists and is certainly a serious problem in forensics today. Colleagues and I (Burnett, Brand & Meister, in press; Burnett, Brand & Meister, in press) have argued that competition has supplanted education in contemporary forensics. We call for national leadership to make changes, as change can only come from the national organizations. Sadly, as Billings points out, such change will be long in coming as long as leadership changes so often and as long as no one is ready to advocate for serious structural change. Forensics coaches are caught in a vicious circle in which the system, as it currently exists, will continue to burn out those individuals who wish to educate their students and administer a fine forensics program, and who

also wish to be valued faculty members in their departments as well as have a life outside the activity. Perhaps this special issue will be the catalyst for making some healthy changes.

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