

# Judging Philosophy: Reflected in the Communication of Judge's Decisions in NFA Lincoln Douglas Debate

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*Webmaster's note: The original printed version doesn't have the correct equations for endnotes 3 and 6.  $\chi$  symbols that had been missing in the original article have been added.*

## Abstract

*The research reported is an examination of the rationales used to justify decisions in NFA LD. The present research investigates these rationales to begin to answer the question: on what grounds do judges base evaluations of rounds in NFA LD? By exploring the rationales used to communicate judging decisions in terms of judging paradigm(s) present, we can better understand the process of decision making and application of the Stock Issues paradigm proscribed in NFA LD. We examined the rationales for decisions found on the elimination round ballots of the 2001 NFA National Championship Tournament. We found judges in elimination rounds communicate reasons consistent with the Stock Issues paradigm in their rationales for decision; however, the use of the Stock Issues paradigm is not mutually exclusive to the inclusion of elements of other paradigms for decisions communicated on ballots. We discuss these data in terms of the function that rules for round evaluation might serve and argue that we are seeing an evolution of decision making in NFA LD.*

## Rationale

A little more than ten years ago, the National Forensic Association (NFA) added Lincoln Douglas (LD) Debate to the list of events that it governs and awards a national championship title to the best individual at the annual National Forensic Association National Finals Tournament. LD's founders believed that if they created a strong mission and set of rules, they would be able to lay the foundation for an event that blended the research and refutation skills of traditional debate with the strength of delivery for which individual events are renowned (Minch & Borchers, 1996). The mission<sup>1</sup> along with the rules for LD were laid out in a document that was frequently referred to as the "blue pamphlet." The blue pamphlet not only established the mission of the event, but the official paradigm—or evaluative criteria—that was to be used for the event; the Stock Issues Paradigm.

While often criticized, the rules for NFA Lincoln Douglas debate make it unique. The rules distinguish it from other forms of academic debate in that LD has a clearly proscribed judging paradigm; whereas other forms of debate allow an ad hoc application of judging standards in rounds. While other forms of debate discuss concern over a lack of consensus on a prevailing paradigm and inconsistent interpretation of what those paradigms mean (Brey, 1989), LD participants now focus on the validity of the rules for the event. In fact, in the 1996 special issue of the *National Forensic Journal*, an issue devoted to NFA LD, all of the

articles in the issue focus on modifying the paradigm by which this event is adjudicated; calling for greater freedom from the paradigm (i.e., Morris & Herbeck, 1996; Minch & Borchers, 1996; Bile, 1996; Howard & Brusse, 1996). Collectively, these articles question the judge's willingness to adhere to the Stock Issues Paradigm. Additionally, these articles justify their advocacy for alternative judging paradigms; they suggest that the traditional Stock Issues Paradigm does not best meet the unique mission and style associated with Lincoln Douglas debate. Despite the years that have passed and the extensive debate within the LD community about the voracity and appropriateness of the Stock Issues Paradigm, there is little empirical research that focuses on the in-round practices and decision making strategies communicated by judges of the event.

Accordingly, these authors' questions and conclusions about LD may have been premature. Now, with a decade of practice using the Stock Issues paradigm, it would seem important to first consider how judges are actually justifying their decisions. Thus this paper is an attempt to answer the calls from Diers (1999) and Birkholt (1999) to consider the ways in which the forensics community—of judges and competitors—perceive the process of evaluating LD. Therefore this research seeks a quantifiable answer to the question: What paradigmatic frameworks are reflected in the decision justifications judges provide on ballots? To answer that question, we reviewed the literature describing different judging paradigms that have been specifically applied to or are advocated for Lincoln Douglas debate (for the typology, see Appendix A).

### **Establishing the Paradigms**

While it might be argued that different decision making schemas are mutually exclusive, there may be considerable conceptual overlap among the various paradigms. For example, we polarize "conservative" and "liberal" ideologies—which really are reflective of political paradigms—yet, in reality many people act with a blend of those ideologies. This reflects an assumption that when there are choices, they are either/or kinds of choices. You can only select a Coke or a Sprite with the value meal at Subway. However, it seems naive to assume that evaluative decisions are this polarized. This point is particularly salient as we discuss each of the four primary paradigms associated with or proposed for NFA LD, because this assumption of mutual exclusivity is a part of most authors' discussions of or proposals for judging paradigms. Yet it seems reasonable, as with any "competing" sets of criteria, it may be possible for different criteria to be mixed and matched depending on context, preferences, and knowledge. In our research questions, we will interrogate the actual separation of these paradigms in the communication of LD decisions; however, for the purposes of clarity, we will also discuss the paradigms separately, moving from the two more commonly known paradigms of the Stock Issues Paradigm (also the Official NFA LD judging paradigm) and the Policy Maker Paradigm to the two newer and specifically tailored to LD paradigms; the Critical Listener and Dialectical Perspective Paradigms. In our review of the decision paradigms we draw heavily from an article that appeared in the Fall, 1996 *National Forensic Journal* spe-

cial issue on LD by Minch and Borchers because it offered a concise discussion of many of the major paradigms associated with policy debate. As such, it is an invaluable resource. However, we have also supplemented that with comparisons to the original works.

### **Stock Issues**

The Stock Issues paradigm for decision making in policy debate is the oldest and most "traditional" set of criteria for the evaluation of competitive debate. Because of its ties to classic persuasion theory, the paradigm assumes that people are not likely to change from the "known" and more comfortable status quo without a substantial indictment to that status quo and proposal of a specific and solvent plan of action (Ericson & Murphy, 1987). Ulrich (1992) points out that the stock issues paradigm suggests that there are basic responsibilities that any advocate of a change in policy must face to effectively justify the proposed change.

The more traditional views of the Stock Issues paradigm focuses on four and sometimes five fundamental questions (Ulrich, 1992, p. 245):

1. Is there a need for change?
2. Can the present system solve the problem?
3. Will the proposed policy solve the problem?
4. Will the proposed policy produce undesirable effects?
5. Does the policy meet the requirements imposed by the resolution?

These five central questions form the grounding for the six decision making criteria labeled the "Stock Issues Paradigm" for NFA LD. To that extent, while the NFA LD criteria add to the five fundamental questions asked in the Stock Issues Paradigm, it is typically considered to be an example of it. First, the NFA LD Stock Issues paradigm requires that affirmative proposals be topical. This refers to the jurisdiction of the judge to actually listen to the debate as well as the affirmative's ability to fall within the parameters of the resolution (Minch & Borchers, 1996; Patterson & Zarefsky, 1983; Ulrich, 1992). Second, the affirmative must show a significant harm to the status quo, representing the credible reason to be dissatisfied with existing policies (Minch & Borchers, 1986; Ulrich, 1992). Third, in addition to showing that the status quo is deficient, the affirmative must also prove that there is a barrier that, absent a policy change, prevents the status quo from correcting itself—this is known as inherency (Birkholt, 1999; Minch & Borchers, 1996; Ulrich, 1992). Fourth, after the affirmative provides a specific plan to change the current system, s/he must demonstrate the ability of the proposed plan to eliminate or reduce the harms and/or accrue a substantial advantage; essentially this is a demonstration of the degree of cure projected to come from the plan proposal (Minch & Borchers, 1996). This fourth element includes both questions of solvency and desirability articulated by Ulrich (1992) in his discussion of the traditional Stock Issues paradigm. Fifth, the negative is permitted to offer a counter proposal (i.e., a counter plan). This alternative pro-

posal must be competitive (i.e., solve the same harms as the affirmative proposal), have a comparative advantage to the affirmative proposal, and may not be topical (so that the negative is still negating the resolution) (Minch & Borchers, 1996; NFA LD Homepage). This element is a little different because it is not required, rather is allowed. The final element of the NFA LD Stock Issues paradigm differs significantly from the original articulation (see Ulrich, 1992) in that NFA LD includes a compelling delivery as a critical part of the judging process (Minch & Borchers, 1996, NFA LD Homepage).

### **Policy Maker**

While the ambiance of a legislative setting seems implied in the Stock Issues paradigm, the legislative frame is never clearly and particularly established because the Stock Issues paradigm focuses on those elements of debate needed to persuade an audience to adopt a change. The Policy Maker paradigm, on the other hand, makes the legislative framework explicit in the decision making criteria—by encouraging both sides to critically evaluate competing policies (Freely, 1986; Patterson & Zarefsky, 1983). Whereas the setting is not assumed in the Stock Issues paradigm, the Policy Maker paradigm assumes a legislative setting; therefore, there are references to the debate judge as a maker of policy. Metaphorically, when a judge signs a ballot s/he is theoretically enacting a policy (Freely, 1986; Minch & Borchers, 1996; Patterson & Zarefsky, 1983).

The critical element to the Policy Maker paradigm is that the debate (i.e., the judge) evaluates competing policy options (Birkholt, 1999; Hanson, 1990; Minch & Borchers, 1996). There are four direct criterion implications of this evaluation process. First, competing policy options often include counter proposals (Minch & Borchers, 1996; Patterson & Zarefsky, 1983). Second, the debaters ought to emphasize the advantages and disadvantages to the proposal(s) (Hanson, 1990; Minch & Borchers, 1996; Patterson & Zarefsky, 1983). Third, this is a policy systems analysis, so it can also interrogate the risks associated with each policy (Hanson, 1990; Patterson & Zarefsky, 1983). Fourth, inherency and solvency (see Stock Issues for description) are necessary, but are subordinate to the issues of harms and cost (i.e., advantages and disadvantages) (Minch & Borchers, 1996).

Further, there are two types of affirmative cases allowed by the Policy Maker paradigm: first is the core values case, which replaces or modifies core values within a particular policy system (e.g., in the case of terrorism, shifting the central values from civil liberties to the maintenance of security); and second a policy replacement case which only replaces one policy with another—it does not seek to shift the policy values (Minch & Borchers, 1996).

### **Critical Listener**

Each of the two preceding paradigms for decision making has been long applied across debate formats. However, these last two were developed to address what the advocates believe are specific needs of NFA LD. Therefore, the Critical Listener perspective, proposed specifically for LD by Minch and Borchers

(1996), focuses on the debate judge's role as a critic of the totality of the debate endeavor, not just a judge of arguments specific to each debate. They point out that the mission of LD is to be an audience-centered event that emphasizes research, analysis, and refutation and because of this a traditional debate perspective is not appropriate. They suggest that other evaluative paradigms place the debaters and the debate topic as the central focus; however, they claim that for debate to be persuasive the audience ought to be the central focus.

The Critical Listener paradigm therefore assumes that the audience, especially the judge, is the central figure in the round. Accordingly they advocate three "Subjective Standards" as the evaluation criteria for each debate round. First, Minch and Borchers (1996) argue that a judge's experience with debate should be a source of criteria, which would suggest that a judge with 20 years of debate experience brings with them a very different understanding of the event than a member of the university faculty invited to judge a debate and both of those should be used. Second, they argue that a judge's specialized knowledge ought to be employed in the debate round. Minch and Borchers (1996) point out that in many instances a debater might be more persuasive and compelling, yet be wrong; therefore, instead of assuming a role as a neutral referee, the judge should use the knowledge s/he has to make the more correct decision possible. The final criterion is the judge's perception of the event's educational needs. The authors suggest this would allow judges to make decisions that they feel are in line with the mission or goals of the event, but may be outside of the particular context in which the debaters are arguing.

### **Dialectical Perspective**

Like the Critical Listener paradigm, the Dialectical Perspective, proposed by Bile (1996), is a paradigm specifically tailored to the NFA LD format. Bile argues that LD, "has significantly expanded opportunities for students to experience the benefits of educational debate... unfortunately... [it] has failed to realize its full pedagogical potential... part of this failure can be attributed to ambiguities in the current rules" (p. 37). In line with the educational and audience-centered mission, Bile (1996) argues that we should not view a debate round as a "war of words," rather, we should consider the relationship—within the debate context—of the participants (i.e., judge, affirmative, and negative).

Bile (1996) therefore proposes four specific evaluative criterion and four meta-philosophies to be used in the evaluation of and communication about the debate round. The first evaluative criterion is cooperation, which focuses on the debaters' ability to conform to appropriate rules and norms of the event (Bile, 1996). This suggests that good decision making relates to; the evaluation of the participants' demeanors during the debate exchange, a focus on fair treatment of the participants, and a connection with community values (Bile, 1996; Trapp, 1993). The second criterion is comprehensiveness, which asks whether the debaters have dealt with the subject matter as thoroughly as possible (Bile, 1996). Third, the arguments should be candid meaning that they are made clearly so that they are more open for examination and critique (Bile, 1996). Finally, Bile argues

that debaters should be evaluated on their critical skills, that is, their use of the most rigorous tests of the positions presented that is possible.

Underlying these four evaluative criteria are four meta-issues that Bile (1996) suggests should also inform the decision making process and be communicated on written ballots. First, the evaluation of debates ought to integrate delivery and content issues into a single theoretical framework (Bile, 1996). Second, judges, affirmative, and negative participants should be viewed as partners in the decision making process because without all three, there could be no debate (Bile, 1996; Trapp, 1993). Third, judges should reward friendly, respectful, and productive exchanges between debaters (Bile, 1996; Trapp, 1993). Third, students should be evaluated on holistic argumentation. What Bile (1996) means by this is that students ought to be evaluated on the quality of their arguments in the "big picture" of the decision making process, not how badly they have beat a particular opposing position. Finally, Bile (1996) argues that the decision itself should be made holistically. Therefore, in the evaluation of the round, there should be a focus on the round as a whole, not what is done in particular speeches, rather across the debate.

### **Research Questions and Hypotheses**

It has been over a decade since LD was first offered at the NFA National Finals Tournament, with the Stock Issues Paradigm established in the blue pamphlet as the official judging paradigm. It has been five years since the Critical Listener and Dialectical Perspective Paradigms for LD were proposed. There has been little empirical answer to the question, "What paradigmatic frameworks are reflected in the decision justifications judges provide on ballots?" Birkholt's (1999) content analysis of ballots, using a qualitative grounded theory approach is the only known empirical work on the topic. In his analysis, Birkholt (1999) found judges consistently used the "rules" to justify the rules as part of their decision justifications on LD ballots. However, because this research did not begin with a priori categories of analysis, it did not specifically test the degrees to which debate decisions communicated elements of the different paradigms on the ballot.

*Research Question J:* What evidence of each paradigm is found in the communication of the decision by an NFA LD judge on the ballot?

Similarly, if the official Stock Issues Paradigm is not consistently employed by judges in NFA LD it may not best reflect the norms and values of the event. If the criticisms of the Stock Issues paradigm offered by the community have led to changes in practice, then other paradigms should have emerged in judge decision justifications. The frequency of these alternatives could demonstrate one of a number of possibilities: (1) community adherence to Stock Issues; (2) a community that has, in practice, embraced a new judging paradigm; or (3) that a complex mixing of paradigms has emerged. However, because Birkholt's (1999) content analysis of LD ballots found that there was a consistent use of the elements of the Stock Issues paradigm in communicating the decisions in the debate round, we propose the following hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 1:* The observed use of the Stock Issues paradigm will exceed the expected application of the paradigm.

*Hypothesis 2:* The observed use of the other LD paradigms (i.e., the Policy Maker, Critical Listener, and Dialectic Perspective) will be less frequent than the expected applications of those paradigms.

The first research question and these two hypotheses treat the elements of the paradigms as well as the employment of the paradigms in the communication of decisions in LD as independent. However, as we argue earlier in the paper it would be naive to assume that these elements and decision making paradigms are entirely independent. This conceptual crossover is clearly illustrated in the discussion of each of the paradigms. There are not only similarities among the elements (e.g., both the Stock Issues and Policy Making paradigms allow for the use of counter proposals in the debate), but the elements of different paradigms complement each other (e.g., the element of delivery in Stock Issues is complementary to the Dialectical Perspective's meta-issue integrating delivery and content issues into a single theoretical framework). Therefore, it would be reasonable to expect elements of multiple paradigms to appear in judges' decision justifications.

*Research Question 2:* What is the relationship among the elements of paradigms emerging in judges decision justifications on ballots?

### **Methods**

The sample was comprised of 47 ballots, including all available octafinal, quarterfinal, semifinal, and final rounds of the 2001 NFA Championship Tournament. These ballots were drawn as a recent group of ballots that should include some of the most complicated arguments being run on the competitive circuit; thus providing an initial test of the adequacy of the typology and providing suggestions for where meaningful connections among the paradigms might be found.

#### *Coding Procedures*

Each ballot was unitized into a series of discrete reasons for decision and those justifications for decision were then matched with the characteristics of each of the paradigms. As such, the units of analysis for evaluating elements of any paradigm were phrases and/or sentences, with each phrase or sentence evaluated for each coding category. Because our research questions do not assume that the evaluative paradigms are mutually exclusive, each unit was coded independently for each category (see Appendix A). For example, a phrase or sentence focusing on "advantages" could be considered for any paradigm to which the phrase or sentence met the criteria for its inclusion (see Appendix A). Then an overall evaluation of the paradigm reflected in the judges' comments was made. As such, the unit of analysis for determining the overall paradigm reflected by the judge's communication of his or her decision was the ballot itself.

Procedurally, two independent coders were used for approximately 20 percent of the sample (N = 10) to determine the overall intercoder reliability (91%).

Finding that the intercoder reliability was strong, the coders worked together to evaluate the units of analysis and code the ballots. This coding methodology was used to critically evaluate the categories emerging from the literature and their application to the communication of decisions on ballots.

#### *Analysis Procedures*

Because Research Question 1 and Hypotheses 1 and 2 focus on the relationship between the expected and observed a simple chi-square test was used to analyze these relationships. However, because Research Question 2 is exploring the relationship between dominant paradigms and the elements of paradigms found in the analysis two different methods for analysis were used to answer the question. First, a Logit Loglinear model was applied to test the relationship between the overall paradigm identified and elements of the paradigms identified on the ballots<sup>3</sup>. Logit Analysis was appropriate because we are analyzing the relationship between the categorical dependent variable (i.e., dominant paradigm) and the interaction of the categorical independent variables (inclusion of elements of other paradigms) (see Powers & Yu, 2000).

The analysis of the model fit revealed that the interaction for Stock Issues \* Policy Maker \* Critical Learner \* Dialectic Perspective would be an acceptable model ( $\chi^2 = .435$ ;  $df = 288$ ;  $p > .05$ ). Application of the model also revealed an insignificant chi-square ( $\chi^2 = 6.298$ ;  $df = 54$ ;  $p = .03$ ); therefore, further suggesting that the model was rigorous and fit the data. Further, the chi-square for the main effects was also found to be insignificant, also indicating the model was a good fit for each element<sup>4</sup>. The logit model tested the overall relationship between the dominant paradigm in comparison to the inclusion of the other debate paradigms in the judge's communication of his or her decision<sup>5</sup>. However, to better understand the multinomial distribution for the two-way table (i.e., dominant paradigm \* each element of each paradigm), a maximum likelihood chi-square test was used<sup>6</sup> because the uncertainty does not pertain to sample size, but to the classification of the paradigms (see Powers & Yu, 2000).

Additionally, a chi-square test was appropriate in answering the central question to determine if any of the paradigms were more likely to occur than others. Finally, because this study explored the decision justifications in Lincoln Douglas debate, a hierarchical cluster analysis with the binary data was performed to determine which paradigms occur simultaneously.

#### Results

Overall, these data demonstrate that while the Stock Issues Paradigm for decision making is the most frequently communicated paradigm for judging LD at the National Tournament, there was substantial inclusion of elements of the other paradigms as well<sup>7</sup>. To more specifically focus on Research Question one, these data found evidence of each paradigm and each element of the paradigms in the communication of the decision on the ballots. Many of these values were at the expected level (e.g., Harms for the Stock Issues paradigm); however, as Table 1 demonstrates, those elements that were communicated more than expect-

ed only included discussion of advantages for both the Stock Issues and Policy Maker paradigms and the meta-issue from the Dialectical Perspective paradigms focusing on the evaluation of the whole round. All other significant Chi-square findings suggest less than expected frequencies.

**Table 1**  
*Elements of Paradigms Used In the Debate Justifications*

Paradigm	Characteristic of the Paradigm	Particular Parameters Used in the Judge's Evaluation Using the Paradigm	df	Chi-Square Value
Official N FA Judging Paradigm	Inherency		1	11.255 <sup>1**</sup>
	Advantages/ Solvency		1	39.340 <sup>2**</sup>
	Counter-Proposal		1	23.171 <sup>**</sup>
Policy Maker	The Debate	This can include	1	23.17 <sup>1**</sup>
		counter proposals		
	Evaluates Policy Options	Emphasis on adv./disads to the proposal.	1	15.511 <sup>2**</sup>
		Inh. and solv. are necessary but subordinate to harms and cost (adv and da's)	1	9.383 <sup>1**</sup>
		Acceptable Types of Cases	Changes core values within a particular policy system	1
Critical Listener	Standards = Criteria	Replace one policy with another	1	43.085 <sup>1**</sup>
		Judge experience	1	23.17 <sup>1**</sup>
		Judge Specialized Knowledge	1	29.128 <sup>1**</sup>
		Judge perception of event's educational needs	1	29.128 <sup>1**</sup>

Dialectical Perspective	Criteria for Evaluation	<u>Cooperation</u>	1	11.255 <sup>1**</sup>
	Related Elements likely to be emphasized	Relationship between delivery and theory	1	13.298 <sup>1**</sup>
		partners in a decision making process	1	39.340 <sup>1**</sup>
		"productive" exchanges	1	26.084 <sup>1**</sup>
		Evaluation focuses on the round as a whole, not on individual speeches	1	17.894 <sup>2**</sup>
Tabula Rasa	Blank Slate	Explicit Statement of paradigm	1	43.085 <sup>1**</sup>
		debate rules evolve from the debate(rs)	1	15.511 <sup>1**</sup>
		neutral referee	1	35.766 <sup>1**</sup>
Paradigm	Elements of the Paradigm	Particular Parameters Used in the Judge's Evaluation Using the Paradigm	df	Chi-Square Value
Hypothesis Tester	Argument Evaluations are Tests of Truth	evaluation of argument is a test of truth	1	39.340 <sup>1**</sup>
Skills Orientation	Evaluation pre-conceived standards		1	17.894 <sup>1**</sup>
	Judge ensures use of logic and argumentation		1	29.128 <sup>1**</sup>

\*\*p<.01; <sup>1</sup>= frequencies less than expected; <sup>2</sup> = frequencies greater than expected

Additionally, these data also confirm Birkholt's (1999) findings that the Stock Issues paradigm is communicated with greater frequency than the other paradigms. In confirming these previous findings, these data also support both hypotheses. The Chi-square test, tested both the observed use of the Stock Issues Paradigm as well as the observed use of the Policy Maker, Critical Listener, and Dialectical Perspective Paradigms finding significant differences between the observed and expected ( $\chi^2 = 51.468$ ;  $df = 3$ ;  $p = .001$ ). Examination of the residuals (see Table 2) further supports these hypotheses as the observed communication of elements of the Stock Issues paradigm exceeds the expected communication of elements of the paradigm, while the observed comments invoking elements of the other policy paradigms was less frequent than the expected communication of those paradigms.

**Table 2**  
*Chi-square Values for Overall Use of the Paradigms*

Paradigm	Number	Residual
Official NFA	33	21.3
Policy Maker	4	-7.8
Critical Listener	4	-7.8
Dialectic Perspective	6	-5.8

In offering a more rigorous analysis of the relationship between the frequencies of the paradigms and their inclusion of the elements, the Wald statistic for the logit model reveals an insignificant interaction effect for the model overall. Further, the small beta values and Wald statistic for the main effects suggest that there is no overall predictable relationship for judges inclusion of comments reflecting the different debate paradigms.

While there was no overall relationship, the two-way Chi-square analysis of each element revealed significant differences for the judge inclusion of the ten elements for each overall paradigm (see Table 3) including: elements of Stock Issues—Harms ( $\chi^2 = 13.37$ ;  $df = 3$ ;  $p = .004$ ) and Advantages/Solvency ( $\chi^2 = 10.183$ ;  $df = 3$ ;  $p = .017$ ); elements of Policy Maker—Inherency/Solvency ( $\chi^2 = 12.773$ ;  $df = 3$ ;  $p = .005$ ) and Core Values Cases ( $\chi^2 = 22.456$ ;  $df = 3$ ;  $p = .001$ ); elements of Critical Listener—Assumption of Audience Centrality ( $\chi^2 = 9.921$ ;  $df = 3$ ;  $p = .019$ ) and Educational Needs ( $\chi^2 = 7.952$ ;  $df = 3$ ;  $p = .047$ ); and elements of Dialectical Perspective—Cooperation ( $\chi^2 = 12.853$ ;  $df = 3$ ;  $p = .005$ ), Relating Delivery and Theory ( $\chi^2 = 23.419$ ;  $df = 3$ ;  $p = .001$ ), Partners in Process ( $\chi^2 = 14.274$ ;  $df = 3$ ;  $p = .003$ ), and Productive Exchanges ( $\chi^2 = 9.040$ ;  $df = 3$ ;  $p = .029$ ).

**Table 3**  
*Residual Statistics for Significant Element \* Paradigm Chi-square Tests*

<b>Paradigm</b>	<b>Element</b>	<b>Related Paradigm</b>	<b>Residual</b>
Stock Issues	Harms	Stock Issues	4.9
		Policy Maker	-2.6
		Critical Listener	-1.6
		Dialectical Perspective	.8
	Advantages/Solvency	Stock Issues	1.4
		Policy Maker	-.8
		Critical Listener	-.8
		Dialectical Perspective	.3
Policy Maker	Inherency/Solvency	Stock Issues	-2.1
		Policy Maker	2.9
		Critical Listener	-1.1
		Dialectical Perspective	.3
	Core Values Cases	Stock Issues	-1.4
		Policy Maker	1.8
		Critical Listener	-.2
		Dialectical Perspective	-.3
Critical Listener	Audience Centrality	Stock Issues	-3.9
		Policy Maker	-.6
		Critical Listener	2.6
		Dialectical Perspective	.8
	Educational Needs	Stock Issues	-1.5
		Policy Maker	-.4
		Critical Listener	1.6
		Dialectical Perspective	.4

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Dialectical	Cooperation	Stock Issues	-3.9
Perspective			
		Policy Maker	-.6
		Critical Listener	0
		Dialectical Perspective	3.5
	Delivery + Theory	Stock Issues	-4.7
		Policy Maker	-.1
		Critical Listener	-.1
		Dialectical Perspective	4.6
	Partners in Process	Stock Issues	-1.4
		Policy Maker	_.2
		Critical Listener	_.2
		Dialectical Perspective	1.7
	Productive Exchanges	Stock Issues	-1.2
		Policy Maker	-.5
		Critical Listener	-.5
		Dialectical Perspective	2.2

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These results suggest that for only ten of 23 elements did the overall paradigm communicated affect the inclusion of elements of the paradigms measured. For the significant Stock Issues elements the observed frequency of Harms exceeded expected frequency for those ballots communicating the Stock Issues and Dialectical Perspective paradigms (see Table 3 for all residuals), the same was true for the observed frequency of Advantages and Solvency. For the significant Policy Maker elements the observed frequency of Inherency/Solvency exceeded the expected frequency for those ballots communicating the Policy Maker and Dialectical Perspective paradigms. However, for the Core Values element, only the Policy Maker element exceeded the expected frequency. For the both of the significant Critical Listener elements (i.e., Audience Centrality and Educational Needs), those ballots communicating the Critical Listener and Dialectical Perspective paradigms exceeded the expected frequencies. For the four significant Dialectical Perspective elements, only those ballots communicating the Dialectical Perspective paradigm exceeded the expected frequencies.

Further examination of the residuals reveals that the Dialectical Perspective is more closely associated with more paradigms than any of the others. Likewise, when the Stock Issues paradigm is not employed as the dominant paradigm, it is the most unlikely to be employed in the communication of the decision.

### **Discussion and Conclusions**

Because our interest in this paper is to explore judges' decision making in NFA LD and evaluate their decision justifications in terms of paradigms relevant to policy debate, we will examine the two themes emerging from these results. First, we will address the question, "what is the dominant paradigm communicated in rationales for decisions on ballots?" Second, we will deepen that analysis by focusing on the extent to which extra-paradigmatic critiques are also included.

#### **Establishing the Dominant Paradigm**

The data across all paradigms suggest that judges primarily communicating their decisions on ballots using the official Stock Issues paradigm as it is outlined in the blue pamphlet. In examining the Stock Issues paradigm, it is interesting to note that judges are also predisposed to comment on the issues of advantages, disadvantages, or solvency and that these reasons for decision appeared on 96 percent of the ballots. At the same time, the Stock Issues of inherency and counter plan were discussed significantly less than expected on ballots; which suggests that these issues may not have been as useful for the particular topic and further exploration is warranted before considering changes to the paradigm (e.g., for the 2001-2002 resolution, inherency seems to be a compelling judging issue because Federal Policy on Terrorism was changing weekly). Further, there is no reason to assume that judges ought to address each stock issue equally for each resolution.

On those other paradigms found to be dominant, these counts may signal potential concerns for judges failing to follow the rules of the event; however, closer investigation suggests an alternate explanation. Those characteristics with higher than expected frequencies included: advantage and disadvantage comparisons in the policy maker paradigm and judges commenting on the whole round from the dialectical perspective. There are two possible explanations for this. First, because the categories were not coded as mutually exclusive, comments that counted in the official paradigm could have been counted again in the advantage disadvantage comparison in the policy-making paradigm. Second, the conceptual addition of weighing the advantages and disadvantages in the policy maker paradigm is not excluded from the advantage/ disadvantage structure of the official paradigm. Likewise, the notion of examining the round holistically is not excluded from the Stock Issues paradigm as long as it is the Stock Issues being examined holistically.

#### **Paradigm Consistency**

These findings show clear and compelling support for the notion that the majority of the judges included in this sample consistently communicate their decisions in terms of the official paradigm. At the same time other forms of

debate have not chosen to structure the evaluation paradigm for their debates; which has led to concerns in consistency in judging and unequal expectations in their events (Brey, 1989). By proscribing a particular judging paradigm, the NFA has helped to standardize the event and create more consistent expectations for student performances.

Simultaneously, these data also suggest that judges are not restricted to communicating their decisions in terms of the fairly specific set of criteria established by the Stock Issues paradigm. Instead, they are communicating issues outside of the official paradigm that they find to be important in the decision making process. This is not to say they are purposefully including elements of other paradigms in their decision, rather that the actual decision making process in NFA LD is more complex than simply the application of the Stock Issues paradigm. This observation, coupled with the clear and strong call for change in the paradigm in the *NFJ* in 1996 suggests that the official paradigm may not adequately express the vision that the judges have for the event in the immediate round or in the future. Additional research should investigate why judges deviate from the Stock Issues paradigm and what modifications might be made without losing consistency in expectations.

However, an alternate explanation would suggest that the paradigms are not mutually exclusive. The conceptual overlap between these argumentation frameworks is significant and could also explain the inclusion of these deviant reasons without serving as a call to abandon the Stock Issues paradigm. For example, one of the characteristics of the dialectical perspective calls for decisions to be made based on the integration of delivery and theory and argues that effective arguments are comprehensive, clear, and rigorous arguments. These could be clear standards for evaluating the quality of a Stock Issues presentation; thus upholding the delivery elements outlined in the rules and conceptually integrating them with the argumentation elements outlined as Stock Issues. Essentially, this could be an evolution in the way that we employ a Stock Issues paradigm. Certainly future research should explore the evolution of the communication of decision making strategies in evaluating rounds of NFA LD. Such future research should include a larger and more diverse sample of ballots.

In sum, this research has established a concrete method for investigating the communication of judging decisions in NFA LD. We have presented a set of coding and analytic procedures to evaluate these decisions, using the existing paradigms about policy judging, to gain a better understanding of the judging process in LD. While future research is also needed, we argue that these data demonstrate that judges in NFA LD articulate their decisions in a manner consistent with the original mission and event rules; however, their communicated decisions are not limited to the Stock Issues paradigm, rather a diverse and complex set of criteria is also used to support the paradigm.

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Appendix A  
LD Paradigm Typology

<b>Paradigm</b>	<b>Elements of the Paradigm</b>	<b>Particular Parameters Used in the Judge's Evaluation Using the Paradigm</b>
Stock Issues (Official NFA Paradigm)	Topicality	Refers to the jurisdiction of the judge to listen to the debate, ability of the affirmative to fall within the parameters of the resolution,
	Harms	Harm of the current system or a comparative advantage of the status quo; the ill in the status quo
	Inherency	What prevents the present system from adopting the affirmative; blame assignment; or the barrier to change
	Solvency/ Advantages/ Disadvantages	Ability of the proposed plan to eliminate or reduce harms and/or accrue an advantage; a degree of cure projected to come from the plan.  Disadvantages refer to the degree of cost associated with implementing the plan
	Counter-Proposal	Counter proposal must be non-topical and have a comparative advantage to the aff plan
	Delivery	Likely to also see comments about the debater's ability to tell a convincing story on each of the issue to fulfill their respective burden of proof.

Policy Maker	Assumption of a "legislative" setting	References to the judge as a maker of policy, when the judge signs a ballot, s/he is enacting a policy
	The Debate Evaluates Competing Policy Options	This can include counter proposals
		Emphasis on advantages and disadvantages to the proposal.
		This is a policy systems analysis, it also can interrogate risks associated with each policy.
		Inherency and solvency are necessary but are subordinate to issues of harms and cost (adv and da's)
	Core Value Case? (Case Option 1)	Replaces or modifies core values within a particular policy system
	Policy Replacement Cases (Case Option 2)	Replace one policy with another

<b>Paradigm</b>	<b>Elements of the Paradigm</b>	<b>Particular Parameters Used in the Judge's Evaluation Using the Paradigm</b>
Critical Listener	Assumption of Audience Centrality	The audience (especially the judge) is the central figure for the round
	Subjective Standards = Evaluation Criteria	Judge experience
		Judge Specialized Knowledge
		Judge perception of event's educational needs
Dialectical Perspective	Criteria for Evaluation	Cooperation: conformity to appropriate rules (norms) and focus on good decision making—evaluation of the participants' demeanors during the exchange of debate, a focus on fair treatment of participants; community values
		Comprehensive: the subject matter dealt with as thoroughly as possible
		Candid: Arguments are made clearly so that they are more open for examination

		Critical: Use of the most rigorous testing of the positions possible.
	Deliver + Theory Emphasized	Integration of delivery and content issues into a single theoretical framework
	Judges and Competitors are Partners	Judges, affirmatives, and negatives viewed as partners in a decision making process
	Respect	Rewarding of more friendly, respectful, and "productive" exchanges
	Holistic Argumentation	Students are evaluated on the quality of the argument in the "big picture" of the decision making process, not how badly they beat their opponent
	Holistic Evaluation	In the evaluation, there is a focus on the evaluation of the round as a whole, not on what's done in individual speeches

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>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. Competitors in NFA Lincoln-Douglas will be evaluated on their analysis, use of evidence, and ability to effectively and persuasively organize, deliver and refute arguments. Rapid-fire delivery, commonly called "spread delivery," is considered antithetical to the purpose and intent of this event" (Opening Paragraph, Blue Pamphlet).

<sup>2</sup>Chi-square Paradigm Used:  $est. F_{ij} = f_{ij}/(\text{degrees of freedom})$

<sup>3</sup>Logit Paradigm Used:  $\text{logit}(p_i) = \beta_0 + \beta_1x_1 + \dots\beta_4x_4$

<sup>4</sup>Stock Issues:  $\chi^2 (12) = .394$ ;  $p = 1.00$ ; Policy Maker:  $\chi^2 (9) = 1.058$ ;  $p = .999$ :

Critical Listener:  $\chi^2 (9) = 1.224$ ;  $p = .999$ ; Dialectical Perspective  $\chi^2 (24) =$

2.953;  $p = 1.00$

<sup>5</sup>This was a computed variable based on identifying some elements of the paradigm on a ballot despite what the overall paradigm was judged to be.

$${}^6 p(f_{11}, \dots, f_{ij}) = \frac{n!}{\sum_{i=1}^i \sum_{j=1}^j} \sum_{i=1}^i \sum_{j=1}^j f_{ij}$$

<sup>7</sup>By indicating that other paradigms were present in a judge's rationale for decision, we are not arguing that the judge "intended" to apply elements of other paradigms; rather, we are reporting the correlation between judges' communication of their decision with elements of known decision making paradigms in policy debate contexts.

## Working within Forensics Systems

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**Webmaster's Note:** Appendix A has been updated with more accurate information about different organization websites. The reader should also consult the Council of Forensics Organizations master calendar, which has links to organizational websites.

### Abstract

*This article identifies key systems and subsystems forensics teams need to work with and within to develop successful programs. The authors argue that our campus academic community, national forensics community, and individual forensics and debate programs exist in a symbiotic relationship. Suggestions are made for increasing program visibility to both internal and external publics and how involvement in national organizations might benefit forensics programs and the forensics professional.*

Every fall a few thousand students in the United States enter into another year of forensics competition. Most of these students are lead by coaches who will spend the next seven months dedicating the better part of their waking hours to forensics. It is easy for these coaches to become so consumed with the pragmatic and day-to-day activities of running a forensics program that they lose sight of forensics as part of a larger organization and community. As Deetz (1985) reminds us "existing organizations are intrinsically interrelated with the larger social, historical, and economic forces of the society(ies)/culture(s) of which they are a part" (p. 122). The forensics system is no different.

The purpose of this article is twofold: First, to bring to the forefront the need for integration of a forensics program into the larger academic community. Second, to address the benefits offered by membership in larger forensics organizations for individual forensics programs. This article shows that forensics is a system within a series of systems and sub-systems that must be attended to and managed to ensure the continued success of forensics programs and forensics as an activity. While General Systems Theory was originally developed by Ludwig von Bertalanffy to suggest that scientists in unrelated fields of study could cross apply their findings to other fields of study and inform a completely different line of research, the theory has been expanded to look at the interconnectedness of business systems, computer applications and a variety of other fields. For the purposes of this article we examine the systems with which and within which forensics programs must interact to establish healthy programs.

### On-Campus Systems: The Internal Public

In 1987 there was a panel at the Speech Communication Association convention in which Vickie Bradford (Regis College) spoke about promoting a forensics program to what she called an "internal public." She defined the internal public as the groups and organizations on our campuses with which we do interact and those with which we should interact. She pointed out the fact that we

are very poor about tooting our own horns. But self-promotion is an important part of a forensics program. In an era of reduced Federal support for higher education and across the board budget cuts, it is important to the survival of individual programs and the health of the activity at large that we take steps to insure that administrators understand the valuable services provided by a forensics program. We need to stop thinking of self-promotion or increased visibility as tooting our horns and start thinking of it as a basic survival skill.

#### Within the Department

When we start to look at our internal public, we should really begin in our own departments. Most forensics programs are respected by their departments but because of our busy travel schedules and unique relationships with students it is also easy for us to develop an image of being distant from the rest of the department. That distant image can lead to perceptions of superiority and aloofness. It is important to keep the other members of our departments aware of what we are doing and involved in what we are doing. It is also important that the program gives back to the department in some way.

Some of this may seem like a form of office politics. In many ways it is politically. But as Deetz (1985) points out "Critical researchers do not believe that organizational processes can ever be apolitical or politically neutral" (p. 122). Deetz also explains that not all interests are represented equally in an organization. Our colleges and universities are filled with sub-systems with a variety of needs and responsibilities. Some academic systems are primarily concerned with recruiting students, others seek to establish positive public relations with external communities while there are still other sub-systems that are solely devoted to educating the student body or issues of assessment. As an interdependent sub-system, forensics programs need to increase their visibility and establish links with the other systems on campus. These political ties can be very beneficial during trying economic periods when institutions are looking to make across the board budget cuts. An organization that is perceived as supporting the mission or interests of multiple organization sub-systems is far less likely to bear the brunt of the budget cuts.

The first step is to keep our departments aware of what we are doing. The value of little things like discussing how the team is doing with our colleagues should not be underestimated. But keeping faculty posted on the team's progress should not be relegated to chance encounters. The dissemination of information about the team's progress should be systematic. But the postings of results in a specified area after each tournament or sending emails with tournament results will also help keep our colleagues abreast of our doings. Trophy displays in or near the department is another way to keep people aware and (hopefully) impressed.

Keeping them aware is just the first step. As scholars of communication studies we know that people feel better about things they have had the opportunity to influence, so it is important to involve our peers as much as possible. The most obvious and beneficial way we can do this is to ask them to judge at local

tournaments. Always offer to pay them the going rate and do not take advantage of them. Some instructors, while they may feel perfectly comfortable assigning grades in the classroom, might feel uncomfortable in assigning rankings and ratings in individual events rounds or giving a win or a loss in a debate round. The uncomfortable feelings probably arise from uncertainty about the rules and norms of this new group. As tournament directors it is important that we provide them with some kind of judge training. This does not mean we tell them what to value or think, but rather we provide them with general guidelines for how to be a judge. By explaining the ranking and rating system, providing them with event descriptions (including time limits), and the same kind of general information we would provide a novice competitor about tournament etiquette (signing in, what D.E. means, etc.), we help reduce uncertainty and increase the likelihood that they will have a pleasant experience (Dean, 1988). Make sure they have some guidance in the mechanics of judging a tournament (e.g. time signals in impromptu, the use of off stage focus in duo, and particulars of debate) and that they feel competent in judging. You do not want them to feel isolated because they were unprepared. Kevin Dean provides an excellent body of information to offer our colleagues as we send them off to judge.

Involve the department members in their specialty areas. Ask rhetoricians for ideas about communication analysis models and even artifacts. Ask the oral interpretation instructors to listen to a speaker or maybe even to come to a squad meeting and give a short presentation on internalization or developing a character. As you schedule judges for your tournaments, try to schedule them into their areas of specialty. Rutledge (1997) takes the incorporation of faculty beyond the communication department. He suggests inviting faculty from disciplines such as philosophy, history and political science to come in and teach mini sessions to the parliamentary debate teams. He reaffirms that this approach develops a sense of shared ownership between these "outside" faculty members and the team.

The weekend before the first competition set up a mock tournament. Have the department members come in for a couple of hours and judge two rounds, ranking, rating, and even "coaching" if there is time. This may also be a good time to ask the faculty members from outside the department to come in a judge. If no one seems interested do not push it, but always let them know they are welcome.

Ask the other members of your departments to recruit for you. Many coaches also teach the basic public speaking course, but often only one or two sections. Our colleagues teach as many sections or more. They can be our eyes and ears and it can make them feel apart of the larger forensics team. Let them know that if they have really good students in their classes they should send them to the team. A follow up thank you note or email will inspire repeat business.

A team should really do more than just travel and compete. A good forensics program should also give back to the department/college/university. A forensics team can provide model performances for oral interpretation classes, public speaking classes and debate classes. Ohio University forensics students even perform in the mass lecture hybrid class. The performances not only help the instructors by providing models, but the students will benefit from the extra

practice time and the input from the instructors and class members in the discussions which follow the performances. Since it is a mass lecture class (around 300 students in the lecture hall), it also gives students the chance to perform in front of a large audience, an opportunity they might not otherwise get until final rounds at nationals. The final round is a poor place to first experience the effects of a large audience. You might even find these performances work as a recruiting tool.

#### Administration as Part of the Public

Some of us work in departments where the closest Dean or Vice President is a half a mile away. Others may wish that were the case. Either way, the administrators do need to be kept abreast of what we are doing and how we are doing (Bradford, 1987). A standard memo after each tournament just listing tournament results and the students in attendance may be all that is needed. At Carroll Community College after every tournament the Director of Forensics would send such a memo to the Department Chair, Vice President, and President. Because the President was a former football coach and very competitive, the names of the schools ranking below CCC in sweepstakes were also included. At college wide meetings, the President or Vice President would often take time out to recognize the success the team had been experiencing.

In addition to keeping them abreast of how the team is doing, it is very helpful if you can find opportunities for them to see a round of competition. Trice and Beyer (1984) remind us that we often use organizational rites and ceremonies to understand the organization. Perhaps the most complex forensics ritual or ceremony is a forensics tournament. An administrator who can observe that complex "ceremony" first hand will have a far richer understanding of the nature of the activity than we could possibly explain to them in several hours of discussions. Observing forensics students giving impromptu speeches that experienced coaches might consider average or mediocre is still very impressive to most people unfamiliar with the activity.

You can email results to each of these people but you may want to email each separately rather than using a mailing list just to give that personal touch, which will increase the chances that the email is actually read. The key to these memos is to keep them short and easy to read. Large fonts and bulleted lists will help them pass the "scan test." They do not need more memos, they need more information. If you want the list to look a little bigger, list everyone who placed in the top ten in their respective events.

If you hold a tournament on campus ask your administrators to say a few words either at an opening ceremony or the awards ceremony. The sheer number of people in attendance often impresses them. Hosting a high school tournament that is another opportunity to impress administrators by showing them how many "prospects" you are bringing to campus and how many high school students are interested in forensics. If you host a high school tournament it is worth your time to talk with the admissions office. In some cases admission offices have provided pencils, pens, folders, or even offered to pay for the trophies.

This kind of awareness by administration can benefit you in many ways. Many schools have found great success when they have made connections with the campus communities. At Carroll Community College the Vice President of Academic Affairs once paid for the trophies for the tournament the team hosted and paid for registration and judging fees for a tournament at the end of the year when the team was running short on funds. At Prince George's Community College the Director of Forensics would ask to be put on the schedule to speak to the Board of Trustees twice a year to let them know how the team was doing. By doing so she developed a great deal of support for the program and the Board of Trustees saw the program as a contribution to the college rather than just another group looking for money. When the Director decided to discontinue the program, members of the Board actually offered to help support the program out of their own pockets.

At Truman State University sweepstakes trophies are shared between the office of the Division Chair, Vice-President of Academic Affairs, and the President. They are proudly displayed for all to see as they visit the administrative offices. A small trophy display in the President's outer office can bring a good deal of positive attention to the program. Perhaps most importantly, the trophies serve as a reminder to administration that the speech and debate team is an active organization and not just an organization that exists on paper in a budget.

If you are on good terms with your administrator and your team gets team shirts, send your administrator one too. He or she may be one of the most important team members. Consider that carefully however, as you do not want to look like you are simply trying to gain favors.

#### Student Government

Stepp and Thompson (1987) reported that almost one-third of the respondents to their survey received funding from student activity funds. If you were to poll Directors of Forensics and ask them if they enjoyed appearing before the Student Government Organizations that usually control that funding, you would probably get a resounding NO! Many times these organizations simply do not understand what we do. Comments like "Well, why do you need to travel to do that, couldn't you just compete here on campus?" and "Couldn't the students pay for their own travel expenses?" are not uncommon in finance committee meetings. For some reason forensics programs are looked at as a good place to "trim the fat." But if you have established a rapport with the members of the Student Government Organization you will find it to be a less stressful endeavor. Send them memos after each tournament too. Make sure your flyers get put up outside the Student Government Organization office doors. Invite members to on campus performances. Do whatever you can to increase your visibility in their eyes.

Perhaps the easiest way to develop support from your student government organization is to simply have your team members in that organization. There are two obvious ways to accomplish that task. Either get team members elected to the student government organization or recruit the members of student government to be team members. Either way, it makes the funding process much easier.

### Service to the College

Forensics programs can do more than just compete. If you integrate your team into the college or university, the organization will view you as more valuable than if you do all your work off campus. Make administrators and student government aware that your students are available for all kinds of activities. Students can do everything from hosting debates to giving tours to doing the play-by-play at sporting events (providing the mass communication faculty, staff and students do not already do that).

The more we give to the organization, the more value we have to the organization. The more value we have, the more support we get. More support can mean more money, more release time and even better facilities and equipment. Being a valued part of the whole system makes a program stable and secure. In the big picture, it is just good business.

### Off Campus Systems: The External Public

When we work as closely as we do with forensics programs and forensics students it is easy to forget that we are also part of a larger community that goes beyond the department, the college, and even the university. We are also part of our community. Our programs can involve that external public as well. Everything from presentations at nursing homes and elementary schools to holiday reader's theatres that take our programs to the community. If we have not actually done these performances, we have given some consideration to doing them but as Wright explains, "the time needed to organize and carry out community service events can be overwhelming" (1994, p. 1). This may be the perfect opportunity to delegate some responsibility to varsity team members. It provides the community with a service, gives the students a chance to develop leadership skills, and allows them to be more creative and expressive than they might have opportunity to be in competitive situations.

Stanton and Tomlinson (2001) suggest that nearly every college in the United States supports some kind of service learning initiative (they note that these programs are sometimes found under alternate titles such as "expanded classrooms"). Forensics programs seem uniquely suited to service learning projects. According to the National Society for Experiential Education (1998), service-learning can be defined as "any carefully monitored service experience in which a student has intentional learning goals and reflects actively on what he or she is learning throughout the experience" (p. 1).

When we have students perform for the public in showcases or public debates we are engaging in service learning. We might not always think of it that way but it is service learning. The student provides a performance model for the audience and the audience can see what experienced speakers can accomplish. It is easy to recognize the educational value of the activity. But the audience also serves as a model for the student. Sadly, in most preliminary rounds at regional tournaments we rarely find audiences larger than five or six people. Even final rounds at regional tournaments are typically under 20 people. But when students

begin to advance in national level competition the size of the audience begins to grow. Events like After Dinner Speaking at national tournaments have seen audiences of well over 100. Interacting with an audience of that size takes skills that many of our students have not had an opportunity to develop. When students participate in a year end showcase or a public debate with the British team or even if they moderate debates or serve as campus speakers on special occasions they are developing skills and providing a service to the public. Forensics and service learning are a good duo. There are many opportunities for these kinds of projects if we take the time to cultivate them.

During the winter holiday season there are always people who have to plan banquets and parties and are charged with the duty of providing entertainment for those events. While word of mouth might eventually provide you with a full schedule, you might want to start by going to the local Chamber of Commerce meetings and letting them know you are available (give them a flyer with all the pertinent information). You could have the Better Business Bureau put it in a newsletter or even put an ad in the local newspaper. Usually, these organizations will offer to provide you with a meal and some will even give you money.

Preston and Jensen (1995) remind us that one of the big distinctions between *service and public relations* is that with service activities we are not expecting to get anything in return, not even image improvement. Doing things for the community falls into both public relations and service areas. Community performances are more about raising awareness and less about raising funds. The business leaders that attend these functions are the same ones that administrators work with when they seek special alliances in the community. Having one of those business leaders tell your President or Vice President that your students were really enjoyable, can go a long way towards developing a very important support network. Derryberry (1991) points out that programs that serve the community "bring the added benefit of local campus and community recognition" (p. 24).

There is one more idea that actually encompasses all three of the aforementioned areas. That is the idea of a year-end showcase. This is a common practice among many established programs that has been recommended by a number of forensics professionals (Boggs, 1997; Bradford, 1987). Some hold their showcases just before national tournaments; some hold them after everything is done for the year. Whichever way you choose, make sure key people receive personal invitations. One of the memorable stories from Vickie Bradford's 1987 presentation was her story about the year-end showcase at Regis College. She said that when she started it, she sent out invitations and followed them up with personal calls just to make sure some people showed up. A few years later, the invitations were still sent out with RSVP requests for reserved seating because the event had become so large it was standing room only in the theatre. Not every program will have that kind of success, but standing room only is a problem most of us would welcome.

### **Working Within the Forensics System**

Developing and maintaining channels of communication with on-campus and off-campus groups is an essential endeavor for any forensics program. These

relationships provide justification for the existence of the program as a viable co-curricular activity. Which, in turn, results in the financial support and academic status that promotes the organization. Interestingly, these on-campus and community relationships are heavily influenced by the national affiliate organizations with which the forensics groups hold memberships. Each affiliate organization provides participating members with a variety of activities that assists them with the development of public speaking, oral interpretation, and argumentation skills. In addition, the national affiliations create a forum through which participants may develop academic and professional networks.

There are a number of factors (e.g., financial support, educational philosophy) that may influence a forensics group's affiliation with national organizations. A review of some of those organizations may be helpful for the development and maintenance of forensics programs. Although most national organizations are inclusive, each does come with a unique purpose and history. The AFA Newsletter provides a detailed list of leadership in American Forensics Organizations each year. The leadership of these organizations changes from year to year, therefore it is important that a stable point of contact be available for each of these organizations.

The World Wide Web has provided organizations with the opportunity to house such information. A list of forensics organizations can be found in Appendix A of this article. Since leadership in the organizations changes every year or every other year, providing the name of the current leadership would have limited helpfulness. Where possible a web site address is provided. The list also provides the titles of journals published by the respective organizations. These journals provide outlets for scholarship of, by, and for forensic professionals. As faculty members, as educators, and as professionals we need to utilize these resources both as a source of information and a publication outlet.

There are a number of organizations that publish annual tournament schedules (i.e., AFA, CEDA, NEDA, NFA) and it would be worth obtaining a membership just to receive appropriate tournament information. Several of the organizations (i.e., AFA and NFA) routinely include tournament information from other organizations in their tournament schedules. Maintaining memberships with affiliated organizations has a number of benefits. Some of the benefits include participant and event rules and regulations, information to promote and support the forensics group on campus and in the community, and information for student participant growth.

College and university programs need sufficient start-up information to establish budgets and organize student participants. In addition to receiving tournament schedules and invitations, forensics programs are provided with the event descriptions and participant requirements that can answer a number of questions that, when unanswered, tend to frustrate students and coaches, leaving them to speculate and learn via trial and error. Many questions, ranging from national tournament qualification to genre of literature, can be answered with the information received with a membership. For example, there are several organizations that impose qualification requirements before students are eligible to attend the

national tournaments (e.g., AFA, CEDA, IOA, NDT, NIET). Other organizations impose individual membership requirements before students may attend a national (e.g., DSR-TKA, PKD, PRP) or international (e.g., IFA) tournament. Yet, other organizations offer unique opportunities for students to compete in tournaments that promote certain pedagogical and philosophical ideologies (e.g., NEDA).

However, programs that seek memberships are not limited to the tournaments and activities that one particular organization schedules or the philosophies that an organization promotes. Many institutions maintain memberships with a number of the affiliate organizations. Many programs promote strong individual and debate program, and maintain memberships with a variety of organizations, debate and individual events. Furthermore, programs may not set as a goal qualification for national tournaments, but want to develop a program that provide students with an opportunity to develop and improve their communication skills via local, on-campus or community activities. The importance of these activities is stated above, but they are also recognized as viable alternatives to tournament competition by several of the national affiliate organizations (e.g., DSR-TKA, PKD).

The key to a successful program is information. This information provides programs and participating students with the knowledge necessary to promote the growth of the individual citizen. Memberships allow students to observe the importance of professional networking among other skills, including good citizenry, leadership, and teamwork.

### **Program Outreach**

There are two distinct groups within the supra-system of forensics that need appropriate attention, high schools and alumni associations. The successful program strives to develop and improve the channels of communication between the campus program, high school programs, and the alumni association. The benefits of maintaining these relationships are tremendous, but each requires different innovation and persistence.

Developing a strong outreach program with high schools is essential for maintaining a healthy collegiate forensics program. There are a number of ways one may enhance the flow of communication between high school and collegiate programs. First, collegiate directors need to contact the state high school administration to learn more about the high school programs. Some states include forensics as one of the activities governed by the State High School Activities Association (i.e., Kansas). Other states maintain strong ties with the forensics activity, but do not assume any formal leadership role in its governance (i.e., Oklahoma). Other states have forensics organizations that are completely autonomous from the state education governing body (i.e., Ohio). In any event, collegiate directors must make an effort to contact the leadership at the high school level. It may take one call to the state's Board of Education or several calls to local high school directors to finally get in touch with the individuals who can provide you direct, up-to-date information. Second, once the initial contact has been made, college programs need to join the organization and start developing a system that will enable the college program and high school programs to interact.

There are a number of activities that college programs may offer to enhance the relationship between the college and high school programs. Providing judges for local, regional and state high school tournaments is always an important resource to offer high school programs. Every tournament director (collegiate or high school) would be grateful to have groups of people offer to judge. In addition, there is always a need for additional high school tournaments. College programs should consider hosting tournaments for high school programs. This provides high school programs with another opportunity to compete and it brings the students to your home campus where you can show interested students what the college/university and the forensics program have to offer. Both activities provide an important service for high school programs and both are excellent recruitment strategies.

The third step to developing a strong outreach program with high school students is to start with your campus admissions office. Ask them to include forensic speech as an activity that students may identify as an area of interest. In addition, ask the admissions office to send you the names and addresses of those students. Although this does serve as an excellent resource, the next step is to develop a system that will provide you with an easy and efficient way of contacting them. Setting contact dates before the Holiday season and around mid-March would be appropriate. Attempting to send letters out on a weekly basis may be difficult and time consuming.

Taking the time to develop a strong outreach program with high school programs is essential for the maintenance of a collegiate program. Not only will this type of activity serve as an excellent recruitment tool, but it will also provide a tremendous service for the high school programs and help your college or university with public relations. There are many other creative ways to develop and enhance the relationship between the college and high school programs, these are just a few.

The second group of individuals in need of attention is the group of individuals who provide support for the program—the alumni association. Graduates of forensics programs can be your most valuable resource. They provide the emotional/historical support, will often send talented students your way, will occasionally donate funds to support scholarships or travel, and will volunteer to help judge at regional and national tournaments. The crucial first step to creating a positive relationship with your graduates is to identify who they are. Unless your institution has a long history of support, some of the most helpful graduates may have been forgotten. A labor-intensive way of identifying these individuals is to look through old tournament records, yearbooks, or library resources. An easy way that will work, if you are lucky, is to contact your institution's alumni center. Once you have identified these individuals, develop a mailing list and contact them on an annual basis via a newsletter. The newsletter is costly, but essential for maintaining a positive relationship with graduates.

Other ideas include developing a web page that graduates can frequent and learn about the current team, tournament results, or what the team is doing locally (this strategy may work with the high school programs as well). Graduates

want to feel valued. There is no better way to make them feel valued than to invite them to help and keep them informed.

### **Support for the Director of Forensics**

Most forensics directors, assistants, and coaches are also part of the larger academic community. This means, in addition to the demands of a forensics program, they find themselves facing the same demands as any other faculty person. They are expected to sit on departmental and university committees, teach classes, and publish scholarly works. While the forensics organizations listed earlier in the article do little to nothing to help with committee work, they often provide opportunity for forensics professionals to publish scholarly works (see journal publications listed with the organizations in the appendix). The most logical area of research interest for a forensics professional is forensics. Forensics journals are peer-reviewed journals that actively seek submissions related to forensics pedagogy, administration, research, and philosophy. But in addition to forensics areas forensics publications are also a home for articles on rhetoric, leadership, performance studies, argumentation, persuasion, and other related issues.

In addition to journal articles, forensics organizations are represented at the National Communication Association Convention and regional communication conferences. As professionals we should be active in coordinating panels, writing papers, and even serving on the committees and boards of the forensics groups within these organizations.

While many forensics professionals may find it difficult to conduct an independent line of research in addition to running a forensics program, forensics research is a logical compliment to the time investment in running a forensics program. As forensics professionals we benefit personally from a closer examination of forensics. In addition, the activity benefits from the research and those seeking tenure move one step closer to securing a tenured position.

There is another argument to be made for forensics professionals when it comes to scholarship. Boyer (1990) in his book *Scholarship Reconsidered* suggests that what "we urgently need today is a more inclusive view of what it means to be a scholar" (p. 24). In his book he argues that this broader definition of scholarship should include four types of scholarship: Scholarship of discovery (traditional research), scholarship of application (service activities that are directly tied to one's specialization), scholarship of integration (bringing multiple fields together) and scholarship of teaching (which would include coaching). This broader vision of scholarship allows for forensics professionals to include in "scholarship" the work he/she does with a forensics program.

Coaching students in informative speaking, persuasive speaking, or debate often requires that coaches become quasi-experts in the subject matter being addressed by the students (bringing multiple fields together). Public performances by our students might normally fall under "service to the college" or "service to the community" but under Boyer's rubric it could be considered scholarship of application. Forensics professionals should suggest to the promotion and tenure committee that each of these should be treated as a type of scholarship. Forensics

is what we do, it is our research, it is our scholarship. Our students' performances represent, in many ways, the end product of our scholarship.

### **Conclusion**

Understanding the system within which the forensics group works is essential. Too many times directors become distracted with the maintenance of the program itself without looking at how the program fits within the system. Unfortunately, if programs do not maintain an open channel of communication with the outside groups, they are destined to fall apart. The activities mentioned in this paper may be in motion when a new coach assumes a directorship. If not, directors must develop a plan to implement them. It may be impossible to make these contacts and develop these relationships in a year, but they are manageable over a two or three year period. The key is to develop a program that can become self-sustaining, not one that must be reinvented each year. One of the best ways a director can promote a quality program is through an understanding of the entire system.

When John Donne penned the phrase "...no man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main" he aptly described the essence of this article. No one can successfully direct a prosperous forensics program alone. We are a community within a community of communities. We are interrelated and interdependent. We, as professionals and as human beings, need to embrace these interdependencies and treat them not as "necessary evils," but as opportunities. We need to embrace our internal publics, external publics, and our own community.

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Appendix A

*Debate Organizations*

American Debate Association (ADA) Journal Publication:  
n/a WEB SITE: *Not actively maintained (May 2006)*

American Parliamentary Debate Association (APDA)  
Journal Publication: n/a WEB SITE:  
<http://www.apdaweb.org/>

Cross Examination Debate Association (CEDA)  
Journal Publication: *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate: The Journal of the Cross Examination Debate Association* WEB SITE:  
<http://www.cedadebate.org/>

National Debate Tournament (NDT)  
Journal Publication: *Argumentation and Advocacy: The Journal of the American Forensic Association*  
WEB SITE: <http://www.wfu.edu/organizations/NDT/>

National Education Debate Association (NEDA) Journal Publication:  
n/a WEB SITE: <http://www.neda.us/>

National Parliamentary Debate Association (NPDA) Journal Publication:  
*Parliamentary Debate* WEB SITE: <http://www.parlidebate.org>

*Individual Event Organizations*

Interstate Oratorical Association (IOA-Oratory only)  
Publication: *Winning Orations* (This is not a scholarly journal but rather the manuscripts from the speeches presented at the tournament) WEB SITE: No web site at this time

American Forensics Association - National Individual Events Tournament (AFA-NIET)  
Journal Publication: *Argumentation and Advocacy: The Journal of the American Forensic Association* WEB SITE:  
<http://www.americanforensics.org>

Debate and Individual Event Organizations

Delta-Sigma Rho -Tau Kappa Alpha (DSR-TKA)

Journal Publication: *The Speaker and Gavel* WEB

SITE: <http://dsr-tka.org>

International Forensics Association (IFA)

Journal Publication: n/a WEB SITE:

None available

National Forensic Association (NFA)

Journal Publication: *National Forensic Journal* (archived on website with the exception of the most recent issue.)

WEB SITE: <http://www.nationalforensics.org/>

Phi Rho Pi (PRP—2-year college organization)

Journal Publication: *Speaker Points* (an online publication available at the web site below)

WEB SITE: <http://www.phirhopi.org/>

Pi Kappa Delta (PKD)

Journal Publication: *The Forensic*

WEB SITE: <http://www.pikappadelta.com/>

**Like, You Know, What I'm Saying:  
A Study of Discourse Marker Frequency in Extemporaneous  
and Impromptu Speaking**

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**Abstract**

*The following study examines the relationship between discourse markers, or vocal hiccups such as um, uh, like and you know, and speaker use of such markers in extemporaneous and impromptu speaking. One hundred and fifty speeches were transcribed and the number of markers used by each speaker was calculated. A gender comparison reveals no significant difference between speaker usage of two of the markers (um, uh). The study does however show a significant gender difference in the usage of the other two markers (like, you know). Finally, this study draws conclusions about discourse marker usage, speaker credibility and competitive success.*

"Overall I liked their speech, but the delivery was a little bit shaky." "If this person is a collegiate competitor then why are they using so many um's?" "I think they have the right idea, but they don't sound very professional to me." These quotations came from public speaking students who were asked to watch and later critique five intercollegiate extemporaneous and five impromptu speeches. As with all forms of public address, the audience determines the competence of a speaker (Eastman, 1975, p. 116). Factors believed to influence this judgment of competence or credibility includes how the speaker is introduced, the speaker's perceived social status, and the organization of the speech. In addition, the strength and fluency of the speaker's delivery can have an impact on how the audience perceives the speaker. While many factors influence how the audience views speaker credibility, the degree to which these elements determine perception had not been concluded.

What is evident is how the use of effective language is important to a speaker's ethos, or credibility. In the realm of competitive forensics, ethos plays a pivotal role in competitive success and ranking. Speakers with high ethos who appear to know what they are talking about and have confidence, are generally rewarded more than those with minimal ethos. A speaker's ability to use fluid deliver and language is a critical element of ethos (Gamble & Gamble, 2002; Zarefsky, 2002). One overlooked aspect of delivery is a speaker's use of discourse markers.

Discourse markers, or vocal hiccups such as *um, uh, like* and *you know* are defined as a set of linguistic items functioning in the cognitive, social, expressive, and textual domains (Bright, 1992). This quantitative study examines the placement of discourse markers and answers the following question: how often do collegiate extemporaneous and impromptu speakers utilize discourse markers?

Forensics is an appropriate arena to study the effects of discourse markers for three reasons. First, the typical forensics judge analyzes both the speaker's language and delivery to make a written determination of communicative competence. When ranking speakers in a round, the judge is expected to provide written feedback on how the competitor can increase the perception of their competence (Cronn-Mills & Croucher, 2001). Second, forensics is an educational activity. Competitive speaking provides a setting for students to gain skills beneficial to effective public speaking and critical thinking. Lastly, the nature of the limited preparation events, such as impromptu and extemporaneous speaking, provides a context conducive to studying normal vocal and linguistic patterns. Discourse markers are more likely to occur in these events because students normally do not speak from manuscript and the speeches are typically delivered extemporaneously.

#### Review of Literature

##### *Discourse Markers*

Discourse analysis, the understanding and comprehension of language and its use within conversation (Bright, 1992) has focused on various aspects of linguistic theory. The studies have investigated how language links speakers and listeners, how speakers structurally organize language, and how language coordinates or dictates our daily activities. Linguistic studies serve as precursors to the study of discourse markers. To understand the development of discourse markers as an area of linguistic study, three areas must be addressed: a functional definition of discourse markers, how discourse markers assist in language acquisition, and what textual functions discourse markers serve. Initially, it is necessary to clarify the following studies on discourse markers do not address the use of these markers in forensics. No research has been conducted in forensics on discourse markers. Therefore, the following studies from linguistics and English as a second language serve as exemplars and analogs for what kinds of linguistic studies could be conducted in forensics.

*The international encyclopedia of linguistics* defines discourse markers as a set of linguistic items in the cognitive, social, expressive, and textual domains (Bright, 1992). Markers (e.g., *um, like, uh, you know, well, by the way*) aid communicators in linguistic or conversational consistency and coherence (Bussman, 1984). Bussman (1984) further contends the use of discourse markers helps speakers develop language skills, feel more comfortable about their conversational skills, and allows speakers to collect their thoughts before officially speaking.

The majority of the research on discourse markers is devoted to how markers assist in language acquisition. Specifically, studies have focused on how discourse markers aid children and students of English as a second language. Sprott (1992) found the use of discourse markers adds to a child's discourse complexity, or ability. Sprott further revealed how during disputes and times of heightened tension or excitement, the use of discourse markers dramatically increases. The

delivery of an extemporaneous or impromptu speech is an example of a time of heightened tension or excitement. Anyone who has done one of these events will attest to their increased adrenaline levels and stress or excitement.

Studies on the discourse organization of children (McTear, 1985; Bamberg & Marchman, 1990) illustrate how the use of markers becomes more sophisticated with age. At first, discourse markers are used at the local level, signifying upcoming talks or turns into a new subject. This level is known as the simple or one-dimensional level. Later, discourse marker usage becomes more advanced and the markers are used on a global level, covering larger units of discourse, such as returns to prior topics of discussions (Spratt, 1992).

Further research on the acquisition of English as a second language has revealed similar results. In a 1996 dissertation, Johnson (1996) discussed how "OK" and related discourse markers in ESL grammar classes serve as linguistic soothers or verbal adapters. While learning English, Johnson argues students use the markers to fill in gaps in speech and comprehension.

Another early study on discourse markers investigated the use of "OK" in service interactions between employees and their customers. By observing interactions and analyzing the conversations' content and context, Merritt (1984) concluded "OK" serves a specific linguistic purpose in interactions between personnel and customers. "OK" in fact "releases" the addressee to take the next step in the dialogue.

Schiffrin's *Discourse Markers* formalized the study of discourse markers. By observing various types of conversation, or discourse, Schiffrin (1987) identified how certain terms and/or phrases indicate understanding or coherence in conversation. Schiffrin concluded each single marker in the communal lexicon has various functions, depending upon the situation of the speaker.

Functions of discourse markers have been outlined in linguistic articles and reference materials from the *Rutledge dictionary of language and linguistics* to Perinbanayagam's (1991) *Discursive Acts*. The research points to four formal textual functions of discourse markers: (1) to indicate a turn in conversation (*you know* and *well*), (2) to identify a digression from the topic under discussion (*oh by the way*), (3) a speaker's attitude or sentiment can be shared through markers (*like*), and (4) discourse markers frame the general conversation. In forensics limited preparation events competition, a small portion of the markers used fill one of the four aforementioned formal functions. The large majority of discourse markers used in limited preparation events are deemed informal discourse markers.

Three informal functions for discourse markers have also been designated. The three informal functions are: (1) to fill pauses in conversation, (2) to act as nervous glitches in speech, and (3) the markers have become part of our collective lexicon (Davis, 1992). Unfortunately, very little academic research has been done on the three informal functions of discourse markers. Two questions in particular remain to be addressed by linguistic or communication researchers: (1) how often are the markers used? and (2) are markers a conscious or unconscious decision? Furthermore, the impact markers have on perception and credibility has not been addressed. These areas are of keen interest because discourse markers

often function informally and are considered a part of the human psyche and intellect (Schiffrin, 1987).

One specific area of communication where discourse markers play a pervasive, but under recognized role is in forensics. Specifically, the limited preparation events are more apt to include heightened use of these markers. Yet, the forensics community has not studied the linguistic side of this educational activity. The following section synthesizes forensics literature.

### *Forensics*

Many scholars have studied non-linguistic specific elements of competitive public speaking. Aspects of both limited preparation events examined in this paper, extemporaneous and impromptu speaking, have been studied: Cronn-Mills and Croucher (2001) conducted a ballot analysis of limited preparation events. White (1997) explored gender as a predictor of competitive success in extemporaneous speaking. Aden and Kay (1988) discussed the education value of extemporaneous speaking.

However, there is no existing research on the linguistic aspects of forensics. A survey of forensics research in communication and forensics journals by Klumpp (1990), and a similar study by Worth (2000) notes studies of competitive public speaking fall into three main categories: (1) descriptive surveys, (2) prescriptive pieces about how to coach individual events and debate, and (3) forensics theory. In addition, Porter states a stronger link needs to be made between forensic research and the theoretical background of the communication discipline. Porter (1990) asserts, "the most significant problem facing the forensics community is that we have neither documented nor articulated the importance of our area of expertise to the community at large" (p. 95). I contend not only does the forensics community need to make a clearer link between forensics and the larger communication discipline, but to other disciplines as well, such as linguistics.

Indeed, if forensics aims to be an educational enterprise by improving the communicative competence of students, and providing them with skills to be effective speakers in and outside of the forensics realm connections between the use of language and the perception of speaker credibility must be made. This paper aims to expand the scope of forensics research by combining the importance of linguistics with forensics pedagogy, two areas not regularly linked.

## **Method**

### *Participants*

The purpose of this study is discover how often discourse markers are used in competitive rounds of collegiate impromptu and extemporaneous speaking. Therefore, the participants in this study are collegiate competitors in either of the limited preparation events. Specifically, 42 males and 28 females were observed in extemporaneous speaking, and 36 men and 44 women in impromptu speaking. All together, the sample for this study is 75 students (N=150).

## Procedures

Speeches were audio-recorded at a number of tournaments throughout the Midwest. Tournament directors granted individual permission for this study before audio taping took place. The students were notified before giving their speech that they were being recorded for a linguistic study. Specific information about discourse markers was not provided before the round. The information was not provided so students would not consciously or unconsciously alter their linguistic habits and language. Moreover, the researcher did not inform the students about the specifics of the study, so the student's performance would not be hindered. Furthermore, students were told the tapes would not be listened to until after the tournament and would not affect their rank in the round. Anonymity was also very important to this study. No student names are on the cassette tapes, only tournament dates, and events.

During the speeches, the researcher kept track of the non-verbals used by speakers when they utilized a discourse marker such as *um*, *uh*, *like* and *you know*. Non-verbals tracked included the following: twitching of fingers and hands, biting of the lip, hand gesturing without an apparent purpose, and rolling of the eyes. All rounds were chosen at random and all of the speakers in those rounds were the ones recorded for this study. After the speeches were transcribed, the number of markers in each speech was counted and documented. The mean of each of the four markers pre-determined by the study, was then established. Averages for each marker were categorized into male, female and combined sexes for quantitative comparison purposes.

## Results

**Table 1**

**Male and female means and standard deviations  
for usage of *um*, *uh*, *like* and *you know***

<u>Utterance</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Males</u>		<u>Females</u>		<u>Combined</u>	
		<u>SD</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	
UM	15.62	5.95	14.36	5.15	14.99	5.55	
UH	17.20	6.21	17.63	4.82	17.42	5.52	
LIKE	3.70	1.57	18.61	9.81	11.12	5.69	
YOU	8.73	3.34	19.16	8.65	13.95	5.95	
KNOW							

Out of the four markers designated for this study, two of the markers (*um*, *uh*) were used equally by both genders, while the remaining two markers (*like* and *you know*) were overwhelmingly used more often by females. There is no significant difference between male and female usage of *um*:  $t(149) = 1.39$ ;  $p = .17$ ;  $M_M = 15.62$ ;  $SD_M = 5.95$ ;  $M_F = 14.36$ ;  $SD_F = 5.15$ . There is also no significant difference between male and female usage of *uh*:  $t(149) = -.474$ ;  $p = .64$ ;  $M_M = 17.2$ ;  $SD_M = 6.21$ ;  $M_F = 17.63$ ;  $SD_F = 4.82$ .

While there is no significant difference between these two markers, there is a significant difference between male and female usage of *like* and *you know*. Females used *like* significantly more than men:  $t(149) = -13.01$ ;  $p < .01$ ;  $M_M = 3.70$ ;  $SD_M = 1.57$ ;  $M_F = 18.61$ ;  $SD_F = 9.81$ . Females also used *you know* significantly more than men:  $t(149) = -9.81$ ;  $p < .01$ ;  $M_M = 8.73$ ;  $SD_M = 3.34$ ;  $M_F = 19.16$ ;  $SD_F = 8.65$ .

As for non-verbals, all speakers, male and female used a non-verbal device while uttering a discourse marker in 97.8 percent of all cases. The typical non-verbals used for *urn* and *uh* included: twitching of the fingers, biting of the lips, and rolling of the eyes. The typical non-verbals used for *like* and *you know* differed by gender. When men used one of these terms the non-verbals were nearly identical to the non-verbals used for *um* and *uh*. However, men also gestured toward the audience with their hand(s) in many cases. Women on the other hand almost entirely, 99 percent of the time gestured toward the audience or randomly moved their hand/arm when saying either *like* or *you know*. Non-verbals such as gesturing appear to be more controlled and conscious, when compared to twitching fingers or rolling eyes. The subject of conscious vs. unconscious will be addressed in the following section.

One conclusion arising from this data is the correlation between frequency of discourse marker usage and gender. Specifically the results show women used two of the discourse markers significantly more often than men (*like* and *you know*). The use of terms such as *like* and *you know* do not represent natural pauses in speech, while *um* and *uh* do represent pauses (Schiffrin, 1987). These two markers are cognitively processed and used by a speaker, thus this study reveals how females more than men choose (consciously or unconsciously) to use markers, which serve no proper linguistic function. Therefore the question is why? Why do females use these markers more than men, and what purpose do the markers serve?

While no research has addressed why women use these markers more than men I contend the primary reason is cultural. The large majority of the speakers (male and female) in this study were between 19 and 24-years-old. The two markers in question (*like* and *you know*) were implanted in the American culture by a popular cultural creation in the 1980s, "Valley Girls." The "Valley Girl" phenomenon was according to Wood (1999) a product of:

a softening reaction by women to the hard-edged political activism of the baby boom generation. The new Valleyspeak - from "freak me out" to "gag me with a spoon" - was milder than the antiwar rhetoric and free-love speech of the 1960s (p. 1).

Adolescent television programs and films in the 1980s and 1990s, particularly *Fast Times at Ridgemont High*, *Melrose Place*, *Beverly Hills 90210* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* fueled the "Valley Girl" phenomenon and in turn the negative stigma placed on "Valley Girls" diminished as many "Valley Girl" terms became an accepted part of the communal lexicon (Wood, 1999). Thus, it is arguable many of the females in this study do not notice their usage of such terms, and others (particularly judges) may not even recognize them unless used exces-

sively, because the terms are part of our language now. Further research needs to address this issue. In particular research should explore where or when speakers learn to use markers in specific manners, and if speakers realize their discourse marker usage.

#### Limitations

This study's results are limited as a result of two particular extraneous variables, which might impact marker usage and credibility: competitor competitive history, and coaching. It would be assumed the longer a person has been competing they would use less markers or verbal fillers. In this study, the year in competitive speaking for a competitor was not included as a variable because this study simply wanted to quantify how many times a marker is used in a limited preparation speech. The addition of this variable may yield different quantitative comparisons.

A second extraneous variable is the student's coaching. Students were not asked, nor was any information gathered about their team's coaches, or coaching styles and preferences. This variable could impact the number of markers used because different coaches look for different things when coaching, a team with multiple coaches may or may not address markers, and student or graduate student run programs may or may not distinguish markers from general conversation. Coaching was specifically left out of this study because there are too many questions to be addressed and quantified in regard to this variable.

#### Areas for Future Research

This project alludes to two areas of future research: the link between markers and non-verbal devices and the potential relationship between marker usage and speaker credibility. The results of this study clearly indicate a correlation between marker usage and non-verbal communication. As stated earlier, the majority of the speakers used some non-verbal cue when delivering a discourse marker. Why do speakers use specific non-verbals when uttering a discourse marker? This relationship warrants future study.

The impact and importance of discourse markers on perceptions of communicative competence and credibility should also be addressed. Individuals judge others based on the manner in which they communicate. It is necessary to determine whether the use of markers hinders the perceptions of competence, or credibility. In particular, research needs to examine the potential relationship between discourse marker usage and rank in a round. With further exploration of the possible link between rank and discourse markers, communicative ability and possibly rank can be enhanced.

Ultimately, with research questioning and forcing forensics educators to re-evaluate their educational or competitive agendas, increased and broadened scholarly research must be conducted in the discipline. Forensics research needs to do more than provide how to lessons or life stories, it must address normally overlooked aspects of communication and forensics pedagogy. Not only will this kind of research increase the existing base of forensics pedagogy, it will poten-

tially show the forensics community and scholars outside the realm of forensics concrete qualitative and quantitative results. Research into the linguistic aspects of forensics may also give coaches and competitors a method to enhance the art and practice of public speaking and thus heightening the educational prowess of our students and discipline.

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