

# An Historical Examination of I.E. Nationals Finalists

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In an article in the Fall, 1984 issue of the *National Forensic Journal*,<sup>1</sup> Fryar wrote, "With the rapid turnover in the profession of directors of forensics, and with the replacement of the intercollegiate contestant pool every four years, a special need is created to detail the development of this national championship in intercollegiate speaking." That article traced the growth and development of the first fourteen years of I.E. Nationals. This project seeks to continue this historical examination of the NFA's National Tournament with a look at the winning contestants and institutions during the past sixteen contests. This historical look also serves to give due credit to those schools and individuals who have competed successfully at I.E. Nationals.

There are two major categories to examine in an historical examination of I.E. Nationals finalists. This article will look at how different institutions have fared at the national contest and also how individual contestants have done in competition. The records of finalists for the past sixteen national tournaments have come from the author's tournament results, tournament results from the National Office of the N.F.A., various *Intercollegiate Speech Tournament Results*, and from the N.F.A. archives located at Southern Connecticut State University.

In analyzing the tournament results, the author was faced with an immediate problem. It was not until I.E. Nationals #6 in 1976 that the full nine national events, quarterfinals in all events, and four preliminary rounds were held as were all the succeeding National Tournaments. Are records preceding I.E.N. #6 comparable to those held afterwards? (See Fryar article for changes made at I.E.N. 1-5.) Faced with a problem similar to baseball historians when the major leagues expanded teams and added more games per season, an arbitrary decision had to be made. Even though the first few national tournaments were small in size (it was not until I.E.N. #4-1974 that the tournament went over 100 schools), all of the elements of a national championship existed. Documentation that contestants had placed in final rounds during the year had to be

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<sup>1</sup>Linda J. Fryar, "A Brief History of Individual Events Nationals," *National Forensic Journal* (Fall, 1984), pp. 73-83.

provided with each school's entry. Although the number of preliminary rounds increased and the number of elimination rounds also increased as did the number of events, from the beginning the concept of this being a national championship has been present. Jack R. Howe, in the 1970-1971 volume of *Intercollegiate Speech Tournament Results* wrote, "The Tournament [IE Nationals] is a true 'Nationals' in the sense that every participant must have been previously a finalist in the event entered."<sup>2</sup> While admitting that it is arbitrary, this writer saw no reason to not consider the first five National tournaments in the material for this article.

#### INDIVIDUAL RESULTS

After sixteen National Tournaments, the most difficult individual accomplishment is to repeat as a National Champion. Only nine contestants have ever repeated as a National Champion. The most notable repeat champion would have to be Teresa McElwee of Eastern Michigan University. McElwee won Duo Interpretation in 1979, 1980, and again in 1982. She is the only champion to repeat more than twice. (Each time with a different duo partner.) McElwee almost pulled off a 4 year sweep. In 1981, the only year she did not win, she placed 2nd in Duos! As this article is being written, another contestant, David Bickford of Brown University has a chance to repeat as a three time champion at I.E.N. #17 to be held in April, 1987.

There have been several notable individual performances at a single National Tournament. A great number of competitors have finaled in two and even three different events. I.E.N. #12-1982 saw two very remarkable performances. Kate Joeckel of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln became the first contestant to final in five different events. Joeckel placed in Extemporaneous, Rhetorical Criticism, Informative, Impromptu, and Persuasive. As remarkable as this was, Joeckel did not win the Pentathlon award that year. Teresa McElwee of Eastern Michigan also placed in five finals. McElwee finaled in three events and duos with two different partners for a total of five finals as well as capturing the Pentathlon award at I.E.N. #12. (More about the remarkable I.E.N. #12 later.)

Joeckel's feat of five different finals was matched at next year's I.E.N. #13-1983 by Mike Jones of Eastern Michigan. Jones did win the Pentathlon title in what may arguably be the most outstanding individual performance by a contestant at the National Tournament. In addition to the five finals, Jones also made the quarterfinal round of the other three events he was entered. His record total

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<sup>2</sup>Jack H. Howe, Editor, *Intercollegiate Speech Tournament Results*, Volume X-1970/1971, p. 84.

points in pentathlon still stands today.

One other competitor has made five finals. Greg Dolph of Bradley University duplicated McElwee's record of three finals and two spots in duos for a total of five at I.E.N. #16-1986.

Six contestants have placed in four different finals. Bobbi Rowe of Stetson; William Allen Young of Southern California; Jon Capecci of Eastern Michigan; Roland Spies of Illinois State; Mike Bailey of Eastern Michigan; and, Brad Johansen of Bradley all placed in four different finals at one National Tournament.

Three other contestants had individual performances at a single Nationals that merit attention. I.E.N. #7-1977 saw Michael Garcia of Eastern Michigan win three events. His accomplishment was matched by William Allen Young of Southern California the next year and by George Denger of Eastern Michigan in the following year. No other contestants have won three events in the same year including those who were in four or five finals mentioned earlier.

The National Tournament in 1982 had to be one of the most competitive tournaments on an individual basis. Joeckel and McElwee each placed in five finals. Mike Bailey on Eastern Michigan placed in four finals that year. In addition, Laura Gordon of Clarion University placed in two finals and Duos with two partners for a total of four finals. Between McElwee, Joeckel, Bailey, and Gordon (the top four pentathlon finishers), they accounted for 30% of *all* the finalists at the tournament.

(Chart #1) TOP TEN OVERALL CAREER PERFORMANCES

Contestant	School	# of Finals
1. Greg Dolph	Bradley University	12
2. Jon Capecci	Eastern Michigan	11
Teresa McElwee	Eastern Michigan	11
4. Michael Garcia	Eastern Michigan	10
5. Bobbi Rowe	Stetson University	9
6. Mike Bailey	Eastern Michigan	8
Mike Jones	Eastern Michigan	8
8. George Denger	Eastern Michigan	7
9. Dave Alabach	Bradley University	6
Laura Gordon	Clarion University	6
Kate Joeckel	Nebraska-Lincoln	6
Butch Maltby	Wheaton College	6
William Young	Southern California	6

Garcia won the most career National Championships — a total of five. Dolph and Capecci each had a total of four championships. McElwee, Bailey, Denger, and Young each had three first place

finishes. On a purely subjective level, a strong case for the best career performances at Nationals can be made for Greg Dolph of Bradley University who just finished his competitive speaking career at the last Nationals. In addition to his four first places, Dolph also had six second place finishes as well as a fourth and a fifth place.

Dolph compiled another career record that has been matched by only two other contestants. Dolph, Teresa McElwee, Eastern Michigan and Richard Hill also of Eastern Michigan all placed in a final round all four years that they competed. Hill placed in Duos in 1974-75-76-77. McElwee placed in Duos in 1979-80-81-82. Dolph also in Duos in 1983-84-85-86.

Dolph, McElwee and Hill are the only contestants to have made the same final round all four years. There have been only twelve competitors to have made a final round in the same event for three different Nationals. Two other participants, Garcia (1977-80) and Jones (1980-83), also placed in a final round in all four years of competition although they were not in the same event each year.

#### SCHOOL RECORDS

Since the first I.E. Nationals, more than 400 colleges and universities have attended the tournament. The four hundredth different school to compete entered the tournament in I.E.N. #16 held in April, 1986.<sup>3</sup>

Of the more than 400 different schools to have competed, 131 have placed at least one competitor in a final round. Chart #2 indicates the top schools with the most finalists.

#### (Chart 2) TOTAL # OF FINALISTS — SCHOOLS

1. Eastern Michigan University .....	172
2. Bradley University.....	80
3. Ohio University .....	58
4. Ball State University.....	31
5. Illinois State University .....	29
6. George Mason University .....	23
7. Bowling Green State University.....	21
8. Miami University (Ohio).....	18
9. Stetson University .....	16
10. Ohio State University .....	13
11. Princeton University.....	12
Wisconsin-Eau Claire.....	12
13. Lasalle University .....	11
14. St. Olaf College.....	10
Marshall University .....	10

<sup>3</sup> Records of school attendance at the National Tournament are kept by N.F.A. Historian Dr. Seth C. Hawkins.

It is interesting to note that the list of top schools contain programs that have had continued success over the history of the National Tournament. Of all of the schools on the list, only Princeton University was not in attendance at I.E.N. #16-1986. In fact, Eastern Michigan, Bradley, Illinois State, George Mason, Bowling Green and Ohio State all finished in the top ten schools sweepstakes competition.

Eastern Michigan speakers have won the most national championships with a total of 31. Bradley is next with 17; Ohio University with 11; Illinois State with 7; and George Mason and Princeton with 4. A total of forty-three different schools have won a national title in one of the events at the National Tournament.

Eastern Michigan had a National Champion in every event while Bradley had a national champ in every event except After-Dinner speaking. Eastern Michigan has had at least two National Champions in every event except Rhetorical Criticism.

Clearly, Duos has been the province of just two schools. Eastern Michigan won the event from 1979 through 1983 and Bradley has continued from 1984 through 1986. The event has been held fifteen times yet only seven different schools have won this event. As dominant in the Duo event Eastern Michigan has been, it is not the event that has been their strongest. EMU speakers have captured the After-Dinner speaking title 7 of the 16 times the event has been held.

It is apparent that over the history of the National Tournament Eastern Michigan University has been the dominant school in the institutional category. There are three distinct eras of school competition. A measure of Eastern Michigan's success is that they do play a prominent part in each area.

The first period of time is from 1971-1976. During this period of time, Eastern Michigan placed 42 competitors in finals with Ohio University close behind with 41 finalists. Ball State had 20 finalists and Stetson had 12. Ohio University had 9 National Champions compared to Eastern Michigan's 5 and Ball State's 3.

The second time period from 1977-1980 would have to be the "Eastern Michigan Era." Eastern Michigan totally dominated the competition during this time. EMU placed 63 in the final rounds and had 14 National Champions. Ohio University was the next closest school with just seventeen finalists. The era was highlighted with the National Tournament in 1979. Eastern Michigan had 18 finalists and 6 of the 9 National Champs (66 2/3— another record) and placed 4th and 6th in After Dinner speaking. The Ypsilanti school also had the runner-up in Informative Speaking that year. In the other event, Rhetorical Criticism, Eastern was not as

(Chart #3) NATIONAL CHAMPIONS BY SCHOOL

YEAR	EXTEMP	PROSE	ADS	POETRY	PERSUASION
1971	Lehigh	Ohio Uni.	Georgetown College	Ohio Uni.	Defiance
1972	Georgetown College	Ohio Uni.	E.M.U.	Ohio Uni.	Ohio Northern
1973	Eastern* Michigan	Heidelberg	Ohio Uni.	Montevallo	California Lutheran
1974	Princeton	Albion	E.M.U.	Heidelberg	Defiance
1975	Ohio Uni.	Ithaca	Elizabeth-town	Marshall	Ball State
1976	Princeton	Northern Illinois	Glenville State	Northern Michigan	Los Angeles Valley
1977	Wheaton	E.M.U.	Tennessee	E.M.U.	WISC-Eau Claire
1978	Kansas State	Bowling Green	Marshall	Southern California	Lasalle
1979	E.M.U.	E.M.U.	Ohio Uni.	E.M.U.	E.M.U.
1980	St. Olaf	Clark	E.M.U.	Clarion	Humbolt
1981	Bradley	Illinois State	E.M.U.	Bradley	E.M.U.
1982	Nebraska-Lincoln	Illinois State	E.M.U.	Illinois State	Bradley
1983	Nebraska Lincoln	E.M.U.	Ohio State	Illinois State	E.M.U.
1984	Ohio State	Bradley	E.M.U.	Ohio State	George Mason
1985	Brown	George Mason	Miami	Bradley	Miami
1986	Brown	Bradley	E.M.U.	Illinois State	Bradley

\*Henceforth E.M.U.

fortunate as they did not place anyone in the final round.

The last era is from 1981-1986. The current time period finds EMU still very competitive but bested by the strong showing of Bradley University. Although Bradley had competed at earlier Nationals, the Nationals of 1981 saw the school from Peoria show up and challenge Eastern Michigan. Bradley had 73 finalists to Eastern Michigan's 63. Bradley had 17 National winners to Eastern's 13. Strong school showings from others also characterize

SPRING 1987

IMPROMPTU	DUO	INFORM	RHET. CRIT.
Ball State	Not Held	Not Held	Not Held
Ohio Uni.	Eastern Kentucky	Not Held	Not Held
E.M.U.	Southern Maine	Not Held	Not Held
Ohio Uni.	Ohio Univ.	West Chester	Not Held
California Los Angeles	Ohio Uni.	E.M.U.	Ball State
Princeton	Morehouse	Stetson	Illinois State
Wheaton	Marshall	E.M.U.	George Mason
Southern California	E.M.U.	Southern California	E.M.U.
E.M.U.	E.M.U.	Ohio Uni.	St. Olaf
Oberlin	E.M.U.	Miami	Morehead
Virginia	E.M.U.	E.M.U.	Bowling Green
Bradley	E.M.U.	Morehead	Illinois State
Bradley	E.M.U.	Morehead	Bradley
Bradley	Bradley	E.M.U.	Bradley
Lasalle	Bradley	E.M.U.	Bradley
WISC-Eau Claire	Bradley	Bradley	George Mason

this period. Illinois State had 24 finalists with 6 winners and Bowling Green with 16 finalists and George Mason University with 14 finalists and 3 winners.

Will the trend of the most recent era continue? I.E.N. #16-1986 saw Eastern Michigan stop Bradley's string of 4 national titles with a very slim 5 point margin. With the usual changes of forensic competitors and possible staff changes, the future should be interesting in school competition.

The National Tournament has seen several notable school performances. Eastern Michigan's "blitz" of the 1979 tournament stands above the rest. In that year, Eastern not only won 6 of the 9 events but placed 1st through 4th in Duo *and* 1st, 2nd, 5th, and 6th in Prose Interpretation. This Nationals also saw the only tournament with duplicate winners of a single event. Dan Bernard of Eastern Michigan won Impromptu Speaking. His teammate George Denger was also awarded a first in Impromptu as well because of a very rare tabulation error made in semifinals.

There have been several other notable school achievements. Glenville State College in Glenville, West Virginia swept the first three places in After-Dinner Speaking at the National Tournament in 1976. Eastern Michigan previewed their remarkable 1979 Nationals with another fine showing the year before at I.E.N. #8-1978 when they placed 1st through 5th in Rhetorical Criticism and 1st, 2nd, 5th and 6th in Duo. Eastern's amazing ability to dominate an event continued in 1980 when they placed 1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th and 6th in Duo Interpretation. Bradley University also dominated Duos in 1984 and 1985 when they finished 1st, 2nd and 3rd both years.

#### PENTATHLON AND SWEEPSTAKES

An examination of past individual and institutional finalists at I.E. Nationals also must include a review of the two major award categories at the National Tournament — Pentathlon and Sweepstakes.

The problems created by the addition of preliminary and elimination rounds, new events, and new point calculation systems mentioned earlier do create a problem at this point. Future historians may wish to go back and reassign point values so that respective performances at different contests can be compared. This examination will only mention appearances and overall records in these two events.

The Pentathlon award has been presented at every National Tournament. It is the ultimate award in terms of talent, dedication and no doubt endurance. Contestants must have qualified in five different events to be eligible for this award. Since 1976, competitors in Pentathlon must compete in a minimum of 20 preliminary rounds and a minimum of three elimination rounds for every final they reach.

Of the many participants in this category, there are two outstanding Pentathlon contestants. Bobbi Rowe of Stetson University and Jon Capecci of Eastern Michigan both won the award in two consecutive years. They are the only competitors to have won the

award twice. They join five others to have placed in the top ten Pentathlon finishers three separate times. Both Rowe and Capecci finished 3rd in the year they did not win the event. Scott Krohn, David Beal, and Jack Thomas all of Ohio University; Sam Marcossou of Bradley; and Mike Bailey of Eastern Michigan all placed in the top ten three times.

As might be expected, Eastern Michigan has the best overall Sweepstakes record. In the sixteen years that the award has been given, Eastern Michigan has placed third or higher *every* year. Their sixteen national titles include a record 8 National Championships. Bradley has won 4 titles; Ohio University won 3; and Ball State has a single win. Chart #4 indicates the top schools and the number of times they have placed in the top ten of the Sweepstakes award.

(Chart #4) TOP TEN SWEEPSTAKES FINALISTS

School	# of Times in Top Ten
1. Eastern Michigan	16
2. Ohio University	12
3. Bowling Green State	10
Illinois State	10
5. Ball State	9
6. George Mason	8
Miami (OH)	8
8. Bradley	7
Morehead State	7

UNUSUAL RESULTS

Over the history of the National Tournament there have been several unusual results along with the individual and institutional winners.

The early contests saw a rivalry between two contestants that has yet to be duplicated. Bobbi Rowe of Stetson University and Alberto Coll of Princeton battled in the finals of Impromptu Speaking for three consecutive tournaments. In 1974 Coll won the event and Rowe placed 2nd; in 1975, Coll was 3rd and Rowe 4th; and in 1976, Coll again won the event and Rowe was 5th. Although Rowe was never able to beat Coll one needn't be too sad as she won the Pentathlon award twice and finished 3rd in three attempts.

Other unusual results include Mark Hickman who placed in the final rounds three different times each for a different school. He placed first in After-Dinner in 1976 for Glenville State; 1st in Duos in 1977 for Marshall University; and 4th in Informative Speaking

in 1979 for Miami University.

Several families compiled notable achievements at the National Tournament. Ed Rodden competing for George Washington University beat his brother John competing for Lasalle University. Ed placed 2nd in Extemporaneous Speaking while John placed 3rd in 1977. Twin sisters Carolyn and Ann Marie Mungo instead of competing against each other like the Rodden brothers put together a one-time remembrance. In 1981, Carolyn competing for Bradley University won first place in Poetry while Ann Marie competing for Eastern Michigan won Persuasive speaking.

In 1979, Rick Roe of Ohio University won After-Dinner Speaking and seven years later his sister Kim competing for Eastern Michigan won the same event in 1986. While there may be other relationships that this writer is not aware of, there have been two very successful families that have competed at the National Tournament. Sisters Michelle and Debbie Mueller for Eastern Michigan and brother and sister Kevin and Melissa Dean. Kevin competed for Bowling Green and Melissa for Miami. Both combinations won a total of seven finals trophies for each family mantle. Neither of the Muellers competed together on the same squad and Kevin had finished his speaking career before his sister began hers. It is only a matter of time now that there have been sixteen Nationals that the children of previous finalists will be competing in the near future.

#### CONCLUSION

The purpose of this article is to chronicle the achievements of individuals and institutions who compiled noteworthy records at the National Tournament. These records indicate a great deal of talent and dedication and strong institutional support as well. These achievements are meant to serve as goals to achieve and better by future competitors. It has always been the philosophy of the N.F.A. to encourage the strong educational values of forensics rather than to encourage record setting. Perhaps the findings of this article will serve to record notable performances and to encourage future contestants to try a little harder or practice a little longer to better the records mentioned in this article. Like all records, it is inevitable that these records both individual and institutional will be bettered at future contests. Historians of nationals yet to come must be sure not only to record the achievements and report any new records set but to reiterate the hard work, dedication and support necessary to do well at the national levels of forensic competition.

# An Examination of Male/Female Judging Decisions in Individual Events

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While the educational value of forensic participation has long been established, the parity with which that educational opportunity has been afforded to both men and women is questionable. In 1974, the National Developmental Conference on Forensics at Sedalia included among its conference recommendations a call for research to "determine why certain individuals, women and minority group members, resist involvement" (McBath, 1975, p. 23). During the following decade some demographic descriptions of debaters and tournament participants were developed, but no concerted effort to conduct research recommended by the conference was made; the extent to which female and minority group participation was limited in forensics remained speculative. Ten years later, the Second National Developmental Conference on Forensics at Northwestern University endorsed a resolution "to increase and strengthen forensic participation by identifying ethnic, racial, gender, and handicap barriers which may currently inhibit student participation as well as disseminate findings concerning such barriers throughout the forensic community" (Parson, 1985, p. 43).

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In recent years, forensic educators have begun to examine male/female participation and success in forensics. A 1983 exploratory survey conducted within the forensic community sought to identify the perceptions of male/female participation in forensics (Friedley & Nadler, 1987). In an attempt to compare "perceptions" about forensic participation and success with actual data, Friedley and Manchester (1985a) examined male/female participation and success from three national forensic tournaments in 1984: 1) the National Debate Tournament, 2) the American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament, and 3) the National Forensic Association's Individual Events Nationals. Examination of the actual male/female participation

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level at the 1984 National Debate Tournament indicated that participation in the tournament was largely dominated by males. Though one female did advance to the final round of this national competition, there were considerably fewer male/female teams and female/female teams competing than male/male teams; in fact, no female/female team advanced beyond the quarter-final rounds of competition.

While descriptive data from the preliminary rounds of competition at the 1984 American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament suggested a general balance in male/female participation ratios, analysis of the elimination rounds at these tournaments reflected a sex-based imbalance which emerged—an imbalance that favored male participants in this activity.

Specifically, the data indicated a distinct male domination in the original speaking events and limited preparation events at the American Forensic Association's national tournament while only a male domination in the limited preparation grouping of events at the National Forensic Association's national tournament. Perhaps the most surprising finding, however, was associated with the male/ female participation and success in the interpretive events. While previous research had suggested that these events were generally perceived to be more "feminine" and the ones most likely to provide a barrier to male participation because of conflicting sex-role expectations associated with the events, analysis of the data concerning male/female participation ratios at the two national tournaments did not support this perception; instead, males tended to dominate slightly in this group of events in the elimination rounds of competition, particularly at the American Forensic Association's national tournament.

Finally, to compare male/female participation and success at regional tournaments to male/female participation and success at national tournaments, Friedley and Manchester (1985b) examined male/female participation and success at twenty 1984-85 regional tournaments as well as male/female participation and success at the 1985 American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament and the 1985 National Forensic Association's Individual Events Nationals. In general, the results from these 1984-85 regional tournaments and 1985 national tournaments indicated a slight male dominance in participation and a distinct male dominance in success that ranged from "moderate" (55% male, 45% female) in final rounds at regional tournaments to "overwhelming" (63% male, 37% female) in the final rounds of national competition.

Of the ten events examined at the regional tournaments, women comprised over 50% of the finalists in four events—informative speaking, persuasive speaking, poetry interpretation, and drama. Of the ten events examined at the national tournaments, women comprised over 50% of the quarter-finalists in only one event (informative speaking), over 50% of the semi-finalists in only one event (communication analysis/rhetorical criticism), and over 50% of the finalists in only two events (informative speaking and communication analysis/rhetorical criticism). Women comprised over 33% of the finalists in nine of the ten events at regional tournaments, while they comprised over 33% of the finalists in only four of the ten events at national tournaments. Although individual events is perceived by the forensic community as a sex-balanced activity (especially when compared to debate), national success is still primarily reserved for males regardless of the event grouping.

Perhaps it is important to note that the greatest disparity in both male/female participation and success at both regional and national tournaments was found in the limited preparation events. It appears that it may be far more uncomfortable and difficult for females to violate sex-role expectations and stereotypes in these events than it is for males to violate sex-role expectations and stereotypes in the interpretive events. Because the level of male success in the interpretive events rises slightly in final rounds at regional tournaments and rises overwhelmingly in elimination rounds at national tournaments while the level of female success in the limited preparation events drops considerably in the final rounds at both regional and national tournaments, it appears that males are rewarded more for violating those sex-role expectations and stereotypes than females.

Few educators would argue that the benefits accrued through participation in the forensic experience should be available to all individuals regardless of sex. In addition, the argumentative and communicative skills fostered by forensics may be especially beneficial to specific groups of individuals who may not otherwise have the opportunity to develop these skills. Since both perceptions and actual data "suggest" there are varying levels of male/female participation and success at both regional and national tournaments, it is necessary to institute exploration of "why" such imbalance may occur.

Perhaps the initiation of such exploratory research should focus on the nature of judging decisions in the activity, since judges determine what is considered "successful" in this competitive activity. An examination of male/female judging decisions related to male/female contestants may provide some insight into why

females are not experiencing more success. Thus, the purpose of this study is to examine male/female judging decisions with respect to sex of contestants in final rounds of competition at selected regional tournaments.

#### METHOD

To provide data for this research, the sex of both judges and contestants in final rounds of competition at ten Eastern regional individual events tournaments were identified and tabulated. The final rounds of competition from these regional tournaments encompassed the following nine national events: 1) *original speaking events* including informative speaking, after-dinner speaking, persuasive speaking, and communication analysis/rhetorical criticism; 2) *interpretation events* including prose interpretation, poetry interpretation, and drama interpretation; 3) *limited preparation events* including extemporaneous speaking and impromptu speaking. Dramatic duo was eliminated from the sample because of the complexity of male/female contestant combinations possible in that event.

Using tournament results provided by the tournament directors, the judges' sex and the contestants' sex was determined by noting obviously sex-typed first names. When a judge or contestant's name was not sex-specific, identification was determined through consultation with various tournament directors and program directors. In all, judges and contestants from 115 final rounds of competition were identified and tabulated. However, twenty-one final rounds of competition (22% of the original sample) were eliminated when computing rank-based data because all the contestants in these final rounds of competition reflected only one sex; therefore, judges in these rounds did not have a male/female option.<sup>1</sup> As a result, ninety-four final rounds of competition across the three event groupings were tabulated for differences in male/female judging decisions.

From the data provided by these final rounds of competition, the following tabulations were made: 1) the ratio of males and females that comprise the judging pool; 2) the mean rank given to male and female contestants by male and female judges, with "1" being the highest rank possible and "5" being the lowest rank possible; 3) the ratio of "first" and "last" place ranks given to male and female contestants by male and female judges. Overall research findings

<sup>1</sup>All twenty-one final rounds of competition eliminated from the sample consisted of only male contestants. These all-male rounds included nine final rounds of original speaking events, seven final rounds of interpretation events, and five final rounds of limited preparation events.

are reported initially, followed by specific research findings related to each of the three event groupings.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### *All Events Combined*

The judging pool for this research consisted of 280 judges—154 male judges (55%) and 126 female judges (45%). This data indicates a relatively equal balance between males and females used to judge final rounds of competition at these regional tournaments.

In ninety-four final rounds of competition, male judges' mean rank given to male contestants was 2.99 while female judges' mean rank given to male contestants was an identical 2.99. Male judges' mean rank given to female contestants was 3.20 while female judges' mean rank given to female contestants was 3.24. Both male and female judges ranked male contestants slightly higher than female contestants. Comparison of the mean ranks given by both male and female judges indicates an extremely high consistency in male/female judging decision—identical mean ranks in judging males and only slightly different mean ranks in judging females.

When comparing the ratio of "first" to "last" place ranks in these final rounds of competition, male judges ranked male contestants "first" 65.0% of the time while female judges ranked male contestants "first" 71.3% of the time. On the other hand, male judges ranked male contestants "last" 57.8% of the time while female judges ranked male contestants "last" 63.0% of the time. In general, both male and female judges ranked male contestants both "first" and "last" in the final rounds of competition more often than they did female contestants. Most often, female contestants neither rose to the top nor fell to the bottom in final rounds of competition at these regional tournaments.

### *Original Speaking Events*

In the original speaking events of informative speaking, after-dinner speaking, persuasive speaking, and communication analysis/rhetorical criticism, the judging pool consisted of 119 judges—67 male judges (56.3%) and 52 female judges (43.7%). While there were slightly more male judges than female judges in these events, a relatively equal male/female balance was maintained in the judging pool.

In final rounds of competition, male judges' mean rank given to male contestants was 2.92 while female judges' mean rank given to male contestants was 2.90. Male judges' mean rank given to female contestants was 3.27 while female judges' mean rank given to

female contestants was 3.44. Both male and female judges ranked male contestants slightly higher than they ranked female contestants in the original speaking events. Comparison of the mean rank scores given by both male and female judges again reflected extremely high consistency in male/female judging decisions—a difference of only .02 mean rank when judging males and .17 mean rank when judging females.

When comparing the ratio of "first" to "last" place ranks in the final rounds of competition in the original speaking events, male judges ranked male contestants "first" 70.0% of the time while female judges ranked male contestants "first" 81.4% of the time. In fact, the highest percentage of "firsts" given to male or female contestants across the three event groupings occurred when female judges ranked male contestants in the original speaking events. On the other hand, male judges ranked male contestants "last" 53.1% of the time while female judges ranked male contestants "last" 61.9% of the time. In general, both male and female judges ranked male contestants both "first" and "last" in the final rounds of the original speaking events more often than they did female contestants. Perhaps it is most interesting to note that female judges ranked male contestants both "first" and "last" considerably more often than male judges.

#### *Interpretation Events*

In the interpretation events of prose, poetry, and drama, the judging pool consisted of ninety-nine judges—forty-nine male judges (49.5%) and fifty female judges (50.0%). With almost identical numbers of male and female judges used to judge the final rounds in these events, the judging pool in the interpretation events was the most balanced of the three event groupings.

In the final rounds of competition, male judges' mean rank given to male contestants was 3.16 while female judges' mean rank given to male contestants was 3.08. Male judges' mean rank given to female contestants was 2.92 while female judges' mean rank given to female contestants was 3.12. Male judges were likely to rank female contestants in the interpretation events slightly higher than male contestants (.23 mean rank difference) while female judges were likely to rank male contestants in the interpretation events slightly higher than the female contestants (.04 mean rank difference). In fact, the highest mean rank female contestants received across the three event groupings (2.93 mean rank) occurred when they were judged by males in the interpretation events. Furthermore, the lowest mean rank male contestants received across the three event groupings (3.16 mean rank) occurred when they were judged by male judges in the interpretation events.

When comparing the ratio of "first" and "last" place ranks in the final rounds of competition in the interpretation events, male judges ranked female contestants "first" 53.6% of the time while female judges ranked male contestants "first" 60.0% of the time. On the other hand, male judges ranked male contestants "last" 65.8% of the time while female judges ranked male contestants "last" 60.0% of the time. Specifically, the only time female contestants received more "first" place ranks than male contestants across the three event groupings was when they were judged by males in the interpretation events. Female judges, however, gave both male and female contestants virtually the identical percentage of "first" and "last" place ranks in the interpretation events.

According to the data collected by Friedley and Nadler (1987) in their 1983 survey, the interpretation events are most often perceived as "feminine" events. It appears that male judges are more likely to reinforce this traditional sex-role expectation associated with the interpretation events by rewarding females with a higher mean rank and a higher percentage of "firsts" than their male counterparts. Female judges, on the other hand, rank male contestants almost no differently than they rank female contestants and give each sex a virtually identical percentage of "first" and "last" place ranks in the interpretation events. Again, it appears that female judges are not nearly as concerned about reinforcing traditional sex-role expectations in their judging decisions in these events as are male judges.

#### *Limited Preparation Events*

In the limited preparation events of extemporaneous speaking and impromptu speaking, the judging pool consisted of sixty-two judges—38 male judges (61.3%) and 24 female judges (38.7%). Of the three event groupings, the disparity between the number of male and female judges was most apparent in the limited preparation events. While such a disparity exists, there is probably a reasonable explanation for the imbalance. Data from previous research (Friedley & Manchester, 1985a; Friedley & Manchester, 1985b) indicates that the limited preparation events are heavily dominated by males in both participation and success. If a qualified judging pool at regional tournaments is selected from those individuals who have most likely participated and succeeded in the events, a predominantly male judging pool is likely.

In final rounds of competition, male judges' mean rank given to male contestants was 2.89 while female judges' mean rank given to male contestants was 3.02. Male judges' mean rank given to female contestants was 3.15. Both male and female judges ranked male

contestants higher than they ranked female contestants in the limited preparation events. In particular, male judges' mean ranks reflected a greater disparity between male contestants and female contestants (.62 mean rank) in this event grouping than in any other event grouping. Furthermore, the highest mean rank for either male or female contestants across all the event groupings (2.89 mean rank) occurred when male judges ranked male contestants in the limited preparation events. Also, the lowest mean rank for either male or female contestants across all the event groupings (3.51 mean rank) occurred when male judges ranked female contestants in the limited preparation events. In comparison, female judges' mean rank for male contestants was only slightly higher (.13 mean rank difference) than their mean rank for female contestants in these events.

When comparing the ratio of "first" to "last" place ranks in the limited preparation events, male judges ranked male contestants "first" 79.3% of the time while female judges ranked male contestants "first" 72.2% of the time. On the other hand, male judges ranked male contestants "last" 55.2% of the time while female judges ranked male contestants "last" 72.2% of the time. In general, both male and female judges ranked male contestants both "first" and "last" in the final rounds of competition in the limited preparation events more often than they did female contestants. Specifically, the second highest percent of "first" place ranks across all the event groupings occurred when male judges ranked male contestants in the limited preparation events. As in the interpretation events, it is interesting to note that female judges ranked male contestants "first" and "last" equally (72.2% of the time) while male judges ranked male contestants "first" considerably more often (79.3% of the time) than "last" (55.2% of the time) in the limited preparation events.

According to the data collected by Friedley and Nadler (1987) in their 1983 survey, the limited preparation events are most often perceived as "masculine" events. As with the interpretation events, it appears that male judges are more likely to reinforce this traditional sex-role expectation associated with the limited preparation events by rewarding males with a higher mean rank and a higher percentage of "firsts" than their female counterparts. Female judges, as in the interpretation events, rank male contestants almost no differently than female contestants and give each sex a virtually identical percentage of "first" and "last" place ranks in the limited preparation events. Again, it appears that female judges are not nearly as concerned about reinforcing traditional sex-role expectations in their judging decisions in these events as are male judges.

### IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

While this research provides an initial analysis of male/female judging decisions in individual events at the regional level, it is only the first step necessary to identify some of the sex-based barriers confronted by participants in this activity. With this initial analysis, however, the authors clearly recognize the need for continued research to discuss if these research findings are generalizable to the larger forensic population.

First, similar research that examines the same type of data including regional tournaments throughout the nation over a period of time would certainly provide a greater sense of "trend" than one isolated study. In addition, data from regional tournaments throughout the nation would provide the opportunity to explore the possibility of regional differences in male/female judging decisions. If such data continues to support a "trend" toward relative consistency between male/female judges, then educators will conclude that the sex of judge may not be a significant variable in understanding male/female differences in participation and success in individual events. As a result, future research may well begin to focus on the qualities that affect participation and success as well as why these qualities may be fostered in one sex more often than the other sex.<sup>2</sup>

Second, male/female judging decisions in individual events should also be examined at the national tournaments. Because the greater disparity in male/female contestant success has emerged at the national level of competition (Friedley & Manchester, 1985a; Friedley & Manchester, 1985b) perhaps the greater disparity in male/female judging may also occur at this level of competition. An analysis of the male/female composition of the judging pool used at the national tournament as well as a comparison of male/female judging decisions at the national tournaments may provide valuable insight into why males tend to succeed more than females across all event groupings at the national level.

### CONCLUSION

While this research is somewhat limited in its scope, it does provide an exploratory examination of male/female judging decisions at selected regional tournaments. Perhaps the most significant finding of this research is that male/female judging

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<sup>2</sup>For example, Schein (1973, 1975) reports that both male and female middle managers consistently describe successful managers according to characteristics commonly ascribed to men; if a male-oriented management model is the norm, then women managers will inevitably be judged as deficient by both sexes. Perhaps a similar phenomenon occurs in individual events.

decisions related to the contestants' sex appear to be extremely consistent both within event groupings and across event groupings. While it may be comforting to know that mean rank differences between male and female contestants are not generally related to the sex of the judge, these findings only lend support for the argument that success in the activity may not be as much a result of the judges' sex as it is a result of the contestants' sex. Future research may need to focus on the personal characteristics of the students attracted to the activity as well as the model for evaluating "success" in the activity. Such information may prove most valuable in both recruiting and training successful forensic competitors of both sexes.

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# Rhetorical Criticism: Judges' Expectations and Contest Standards

EDWARD J. HARRIS, JR.\*

In 1974, the National Forensic Association National Assembly convened in Plattsburgh, New York, approved a new event for national competition<sup>1</sup> that was proposed by Professor Gracie Walsh and Dr. Seth Hawkins. Opposition to rhetorical criticism at the Plattsburgh meeting centered on the assertion that coaches would become too involved in preparing speeches, and so a quick compromise was added to the event rules allowing judges to question students to insure authorship.<sup>2</sup> Since then, rhetorical criticism has survived nine national tournaments, at least ten attempts to change its rules, or name, or both, and three separate efforts to end its existence altogether.<sup>3</sup>

These efforts have, for the most part, been sincere efforts to correct a major problem with the event — its lack of definition in the minds of forensic judges, coaches, and students. Rhetorical criticism means different things to different parts of the forensic community and the result is confusion about how the event should be judged and prepared and what expectations we have regarding the final product.

## Methodology

This study examines a content analysis of over 300 student comment sheets from rhetorical criticism competitions held between 1975 and 1984. These ballots were received by some 20 students competing for Suffolk University and the Pennsylvania State University. They are from nine different National Forensic Association National Championships and include five quarter-finalists, one semifinalist, and one finalist in the event. Comments were reviewed by three independent reviewers who made a preliminary classification into as many categories as necessary. The categories were then refined to eliminate duplication. Ten major

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\**The National Forensic Journal*, V (Spring 1987), pp. 21-25.

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<sup>1</sup>The Newsletter of the National Forensic Association, Minutes of the National Assembly, 1974. Raymond C. Beaty, editor.

<sup>2</sup>The Newsletter of the National Forensic Association, Minutes of the National Assembly, 1974. Raymond C. Beaty, editor.

<sup>3</sup>Attempts to change the event rules occurred in 1977, 1978, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1984 and 1985. Motions to abolish the event occurred in 1979, 1982 and 1983. The Newsletter of the National Forensic Association, editors Peters, Harris, Leiboff.

categories emerged and the reviewers reexamined each comment for inclusion in a category. Where discrepancies between reviewers occurred, the majority opinion was followed. This analysis does not make any pretense that this data base is a statistical cross section of comments received by students at the National Forensic Association Tournament, rather it is designed to serve as a selective data base to determine the general areas of concern judges express on ballots and the general expectations judges have for students competing in the event. This is not a detailed content analysis — rather it is simply an attempt to develop categories of commentary about student performance. There is no attempt, for example, to calculate the impact of certain comments on competitive outcome. Given these restrictions, the content analysis does yield ten major categories of substantive comments regarding student performance. These categories can be regarded as expectations that judges have of students entering rhetorical criticism competitively.

The categories are:

1. Organization — appearing on 87% of the ballots (number comments or N = 281). Typical comments involve structure, transitions, phrasing, etc.
2. Delivery — appearing on 83% of the ballots (N = 249). Comments focus on projection, rate of delivery, memorization, etc.
3. Appropriateness of Rhetorical Conclusions — that is, the conclusions reached by the student regarding the effectiveness of the artifact considered, appearing on 81% of the ballots (N = 243). Comments include references to existence or lack of conclusion, depth of conclusions, etc.
4. Application of the Rhetorical Method Employed — appeared on 80% of the ballots (N = 240). Typical comments discuss the method in specifics to the speech considered and mainly deal with the issue of "correct" application of the method.
5. Appropriateness of the Rhetorical Method — as applied to the artifact under consideration, 78% of the ballots (N= 234). Comments refer to typical use of the method by rhetorical scholars, or question whether the method employed is "rhetorical" or question the qualifications of the author of the method, etc.
6. Knowledge of the Historical, Political or Cultural Situation Surrounding the Artifact Considered — 73% of the ballots (N = 219). Comments include questions about the context of the artifact, for example, what was the reaction of a group

- to a message or what was the political climate prior to a speech, etc.
- 7-8. Selection of a Particular Rhetorical Method from the Range of Potential Methodologies Available — 72% of the ballots (N = 216). Typical comments include why did you select this method, why not use Burke instead, why is this better than Bitzer, this method is overdone, this method is boring, etc.
  - 7-8. Knowledge of the Rhetorical Method Employed (i.e., ability to define terms employed in the methodology, origins of the method, etc.) — 72% of the ballots (N = 216).
  9. Knowledge of the Speaker or Author of the Artifact Under Consideration — 68% of the ballots (N = 204).
  10. Ability to Answer the Question(s) of the Judge — 65% of the ballots (N = 195).

As you can see, we clearly have a wide variety of expectations for the students entering rhetorical criticism. Judges expect expertise in speaking and organizing and detailed knowledge of not only the method employed, but of other methodologies as well. As judges, we expect not only the ability to apply the method and reach conclusions, but also to defend the method chosen as being appropriate and intellectually legitimate. We expect not only an analysis of the artifact under investigation, but an in-depth knowledge of the author or presenter of that artifact. We expect not only an analysis of the factors impinging upon the rhetorical occasion, but detailed knowledge of the historical, cultural and social factors of the broad context of the occasion. Having done all this, the student is then expected to answer a question (and often a series of follow ups) where other expectations may be involved that are not even considered on the final ballot.

Such a wide variety of expectations results in only one thing — confusion. Confusion for the judge trying to evaluate the event, confusion for the coach trying to aid students in preparing for the event, but most tragically of all, confusion for the students interested in the event.

In order for rhetorical criticism to remain a viable forensic event, a number of changes seems necessary. First, the question period for each speaker should be seriously restricted. As indicated earlier, the original purpose of the question was to guard against authorship violations. Although this is a laudable goal, the question is an inappropriate mechanism for dealing with authorship issues. Some judges don't ask questions, others ask questions totally

unrelated to authorship. A panel of judges, as in the case of elimination rounds, often appears to try and outdo each other by asking more and more imposing questions. Not only are tournament schedules totally devastated by such practices, but the renown of rhetorical criticism finds as a model for the Inquisition quickly turns novices away from an important educational experience.

If the questioning period for this event is to be useful, then the event rules must be changed to limit both the scope of permissible questions and the duration of the questioning. Perhaps three or four broad areas of permissible questions could be identified that would guide judges in asking questions. For example, the event rules could be amended to read:

One question only is permitted for each judge. Follow up or multiple part questions are not acceptable. Questions are not mandatory but if asked must come from the following areas: explication of the student's conclusions regarding the artifact, clarification of the immediate context of the artifact, delineation of terms used in the criticism, or explanation of the application of the method employed in the criticism.

Although the specific areas of permissible questions are subject to debate, a limitation such as this one would provide a framework for student preparation to answer questions and at the same time serve as a guide for judges to develop meaningful questions.

A second substantive change involves the necessity for the forensic community to develop a clear statement of rhetorical criticism as a competitive event. Such a statement should articulate the key areas of expectation for the event and be appended to event rules. If we return to the ten categories outlined in the content analysis, at least three should be excluded as valid considerations for judging rhetorical criticism. The appropriateness of the method selected seems irrelevant as a contest standard. The legitimacy of a given rhetorical method should be debated by rhetorical scholars, not by contest speakers and judges. The selection of a method seems equally inappropriate for contest evaluation. We do not expect those entered in persuasion to defend their persuasive strategies in terms of the body of persuasion theory, so why do we expect those entered in rhetorical criticism to be expert in the nuances of various rhetorical methodologies. From a coaching perspective, there is usually enough difficulty in teaching students to appreciate a few of the more basic methods. Perhaps a criticism would be more mature if the student understood all the methodological choices available. But, then too, if the student did understand all of the complexities of rhetorical criticism, his or her efforts would be appearing in *Communication Monographs* rather than

quarterfinals at N.F.A. There seems only one methodological standard appropriate for contest rhetorical criticism: does the student apply the method as explained to a given artifact to produce reasonable insights into the artifact. If a judge can answer "yes" to that question, then he or she need not trouble over other aspects of methodology.

Similarly, knowledge of the speaker or author of an artifact, or the broad context of the occasion, are in general inappropriate standards for judging rhetorical criticism. Certainly, one might expect a student to know that Franklin Roosevelt was President when he delivered his fireside chats. One might even expect an appreciation that the nation suffered from the Great Depression when Roosevelt entered office, but Roosevelt's policies as Governor of New York, the number of states he carried in an election, or his cabinet appointees seem less than crucial to a competent analysis of the fireside addresses.

If the forensic community could agree on the criterion we would all attempt to employ for judging rhetorical criticism, we would probably have less people complaining about judging the event and more students interested in entering it. If we could distinguish between rhetorical criticism as a forensic event, as opposed to a classroom exercise or an examination for a graduate degree, we might find the event more enjoyable — perhaps even painless.

## *INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES*

# A System for Evaluating Forensic Participation for Academic Credit

CAROLYN KEEFE\*

During the 1960s when every educational practice was fair game for student activists, the grading system was roundly attacked as archaic, subjective, counterproductive, and unreliable in predicting occupational success. Calls for completely ridding academia of the intimidating pest were urgent. From the protest came minor reforms such as the pass-fail option, contract grading, and "F" removal plans. Yet by 1976, according to Alexander Astin, famed for his longitudinal studies of college students, only a small minority endorsed the abolition of grades.<sup>1</sup> Today what Ohmer Milton has labeled the "symbol scramble"<sup>2</sup> is still the major form of competition on college and university campuses.

No matter how forensic educators regard the scramble for grades, as soon as their institutions grant credit for participation in forensics, they must find or develop a way to assess student achievement. But this is not an easy process. In a study involving 130 coaches from programs affiliated with the American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament, Robert Littlefield found that how to evaluate students in the participation course was the most frequently indicated "content" problem.<sup>3</sup> Considering the nature of forensics, this response is not surprising.

Three reasons, in particular, contribute to the difficulty of grading students who take forensics for credit. First, the range of learning experiences under the aegis of forensics is broad and varied. At one end is the commonality of tournament competition, but at the other end might be team community service, fund raising, or coaching student government candidates. In-between lie all the preparatory and leadership activities that comprise an active program. The problem is: Which of all the possible categories of student behavior should be selected as indicative of student achievement in fulfilling the educational goals of forensics?

\**The National Forensic Journal*, V (Spring 1987), pp. 27-37.

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<sup>1</sup>Alexander W. Astin, *Four Critical Years* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1978), p. 101.

<sup>2</sup>Omer Milton, *Alternatives to the Traditional: How Professors Teach and How Students Learn* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1972), p. 130.

<sup>3</sup>Robert S. Littlefield, "The Forensic Participation Course: What Is It Really For?" *The Forensic*, 70 (Spring 1985), p. 71.

Second, when the credit is offered under an arrangement other than the formal classroom, several of the traditional bases for grading — among them attendance, class participation, and tests — need modification or substitution. Audience ratings on speeches delivered at community service clubs, for instance, may be one basis for a student's grade. Habitual approaches to grading prove unworkable.

Third, many student behaviors that are amenable to evaluation occur in settings that cannot be observed directly by the forensic educator who is responsible for assigning a grade. For example, when a student is participating in rounds, that person's coach is usually judging members of other teams. Furthermore, several coaches, none of whom enter the semester grade, may work with a student. This means that the grading system must provide for data collection from all those who have the opportunity to make critical observations.

The diversity and various settings of forensics create conditions that call for unorthodox approaches to grading the participation course. Help in this direction has been meager from the forensic community. As far as the author has been able to discover, apart from the Littlefield study and a brief version of this present article,<sup>4</sup> the matter has not been treated in the literature.

This overdue discussion will show how one university approaches the problem of grading forensics. It is hoped that the description will guide those who have never developed an evaluation procedure for such a purpose and will challenge those who want to redesign their current practices.

#### BACKGROUND ON THE FORENSIC PROGRAM

The school in question is West Chester University of Pennsylvania where the forensic program subscribes unequivocally to the position articulated by the two landmark forensic colloquies. The 1974 National Developmental Conference on Forensics stated: The primary function of the forensics educator is to teach students—to help them develop skills, to cultivate high ethical and scholarly standards, and to establish a climate in which students have an exciting and enjoyable intellectual and social experience.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Carolyn Keefe, "A System for Evaluating Tournament Competition for Academic Credit" (Bethesda, Md.: ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 264 606, 1986). Minor changes have been made in the rating forms since this paper was published.

<sup>5</sup>James H. McBath, ed. *Forensics as Communication: The Argumentative Perspective* (Skokie, Illinois: National Textbook Company, 1975), p. 18.

This view was reiterated and expanded ten years later by the delegates meeting in Evanston at the 1984 National Developmental Conference on Forensics. They specified the purposes of forensics as the development of basic intellectual skills and attitudes through training in a) research, analysis, and critical thinking skills, b) oral communication, and c) interdisciplinary fields. As such, forensics provides a foundation for future careers and a method of self-development and social interaction.<sup>6</sup>

The forensic program at West Chester University has always emphasized the dual purposes struck in these statements, that is, the development of both the intellectual and social skills of the student. Three faculty coaches, as well as approximately five varsity members, guide the participants in research, analysis, speech composition, and practice speaking. Most of the coaching takes the form of tutorials, but during the week prior to a given tournament, one or two group coaching sessions are held. At these sessions, all the attendants have the opportunity to provide feedback and suggestions for improvement. Additionally, some coaching and an occasional workshop are provided by forensic alumni. Thus growth in intellectual and communicative abilities is the direct concern of everyone connected with West Chester University.

Although social skills are fostered by the numerous intra- and inter-squad communication exchanges, team management affords a deliberative training ground for personal development. Annually seven officers—about one-third of the team—are elected, three as Forensic Society leaders and four to represent the Pennsylvania Iota Chapter of Pi Kappa Delta. These students, some who are office holders for the first time, work in conjunction with the Director of Forensics in choosing tournaments, allocating funds, keeping financial records, enforcing the Forensic Society Constitution and disciplining offenders, directing and judging the semi-annual basic speech contest, recruiting and auditioning prospective members, fund raising, running an intercollegiate novice tournament, speaking to community groups, judging service club speech contests, and planning the annual party. These activities encompass the entire school year and involve all members of the team in one way or another.

#### COMPONENTS OF THE EVALUATION SYSTEM

The evaluation system was designed by the author to incorporate the Forensic Society goals. Gronlund points out that measuring

<sup>6</sup>James H. McBath, "Rationale for Forensics," in *American Forensics in Perspective*, ed. Donn W. Parson (Annandale, Virginia: Speech Communication Association, 1984), pp. 9-10.

outcomes in the areas of skills (such as speaking and oral reading) and social attitudes is difficult with the usual paper-and-pen testing. Generally, however, these outcomes can be evaluated through observational techniques, peer-appraisals, and self-reports.<sup>7</sup> The West Chester system utilizes all these methods in four rating sheets.

Credit for participation in forensics is granted under the rubric of SPC 399: Directed Studies in Speech Communication. At the outset of the semester, each student enrolled in the course receives a memo explaining the grading system. It specifies that the final grade will be based upon ratings from the student himself or herself, the student's coach(es), Executive Board team members (the seven officers), and the Director of Forensics. The student will provide a self-evaluation on four criteria: 1) Interest in Personal Development, 2) Attitude toward Forensic Participants, 3) Support of Team Activities, and 4) Tournament Success. The coach(es) will rate the student on the first criterion, Executive Board team members on the second criterion, and the Director of Forensics on the third and fourth criteria. The memo further stipulates that the rating from each rating form will carry a 25 percent weight.

The Self-Appraisal Rating Form (see Form 1) is the first component in the system. It displays a criteria rating scale linking a value term with each of four numbers that correspond from high to low with the grades A, B, C, and D: 8 excellent; 6 good; 4 fair; and 2 poor. Furthermore, the form lists the behaviors and products subsumed under the four criteria on which the rating is to be based. *Interest in Personal Development* is seen as initiative in finding new material and doing research, willingness to try new events (over required number), dependability in keeping coaching appointments, preparation for coaching time, and rehearsing before events. *Attitude toward Forensic Participants* includes friendliness toward own and other team members, helping team members with events, and attending rounds of team members. *Support of Team Activities* is shown by serving on Executive Board, attendance at Forensic Society meetings, support of fund raising, and judging or control room work for speech contest and novice tournament, and community service. *Tournament Success* is defined as ranks and ratings at tournaments and improvement in competence. After

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<sup>7</sup>Norman E. Gronlund, *Measurement and Evaluation in Teaching*, 2d edition (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1971), pp. 409-10. See also John S. Duley, "Learning through Field Experience," in Ohmer Milton and Associates, *On College Teaching* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1978), pp. 314-39. Many of the principles and practices of field experience apply directly to forensics, which it can be argued is a form of experiential learning.

FORM 1

SPC 399: Directed Studies  
in Speech Communication  
Dr. Carolyn Keefe

SELF-APPRAISAL RATING FORM FOR STUDENT

\_\_\_\_\_  
APPRAISER

Criteria Rating Scale: 8 excellent; 6 good; 4 fair; 2 poor  
Total Points: 28-32=A; 20-27=B; 12-19=C; 4-11=D

In the space under each criterion, explain your rating number. No points will be calculated into your grade without this explanation.

POINTS

CRITERIA

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Interest in Personal Development: initiative in finding new material and doing research, willingness to try new events (over required number), dependability in keeping coaching appointments, preparation for coaching time, rehearsing before events.
2. Attitude toward Forensic Participants: friendliness toward own and other team members, helping team members with events, attending rounds of team members.
3. Support of Team Activities: serving on Executive Board, attendance at Forensic Society meetings, support of fund raising, judging or control room work for speech contest and novice tournament, community
4. Tournament Success: ranks and ratings at tournaments, improvement in competence.

TOTAL POINTS

\_\_\_\_\_ GRADE

assigning to each criterion a point value that must be justified, the self-rater adds the numbers and registers a grade according to the total point range shown on the form.

The second component takes the form of a memo (see Form 2) from the Director of Forensics to each of the student's coaches who is asked to rate the student on *Interest in Personal Development*. Here again the behaviors for the criterion are specified and the same numerical rating scale is used. Space is provided for the coach to justify his or her rating.

Input from team members is provided on the third form (see Form 3). Approximately two weeks before the end of the semester, each member of the Executive Board receives a rating sheet from the Director of Forensics. The behaviors constituting *Attitude toward Forensic Participants* appear on the sheet, along with the adopted point range. Below this material is a three-column grid headed by "Points," "Names," and "Comments: Please justify your ratings." The officer then fills out the sheet and returns it to the Director of Forensics by the specified date. The points assigned to each student are added, and the mean is calculated to determine the grade on this criterion.

Lastly, the Director of Forensics completes the evaluation process by filling out sheet number four. Like the other forms, this one displays the rating scale, the appropriate criteria and subsumed behaviors, and space for justifying the assigned ratings. At the bottom of the page, the evaluator enters the total points, the mean, and the resultant grade. (See Form 4)

In order to provide feedback for the student, a grade summary sheet is mailed to him or her. It reminds the recipient of the earlier memo concerning the grading system and then shows the grade for each of the four criteria, as well as the final grade. A space for comments enables the Director of Forensics to summarize the responses from the four evaluation sheets. (See Form 5)

An aid to record keeping was developed for the system. The Tournament Credit Rating Form, see Form 6, enables the Director of Forensics to see at a glance the date the forms were distributed and if and when they were returned. Other information pertinent to grading also appears on this sheet.

#### STRENGTHS OF THE GRADING SYSTEM

1. The system provides the means of linking the forensic program to the intellectual and social aims of the department and ultimately of the university. As such it can help establish the cocurricular basis of forensics and diminish its unfortunate image of being merely an extracurricular club.

FORM 2

SPC 399: Directed Studies  
in Speech Communication  
Dr. Carolyn Keefe

RATING FORM FOR FORENSIC COACH

TO:

Coach

RE:

Student

FROM:

Dr. Carolyn Keefe

Please rate your student on the following criterion by assigning points on this scale: 8 excellent; 6 good,; 4 fair; 2 poor.

\_\_\_\_\_ Points Interest in Personal Development: initiative in finding new material and doing research, willingness to try new events (over required number), dependability in keeping coaching appointments, preparation for coaching time, rehearsing before events.

Fully justify your rating.

FORM 3

SPC 399: Directed Studies  
in Speech Communication  
Dr. Carolyn Keefe

RATING FORM FOR EXECUTIVE BOARD TEAM MEMBER

TO:

Executive Board Team Member

FROM:

Dr. Carolyn Keefe

DUE DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Please rate each student below by assigning points on this scale: 8 excellent; 6 good; 4 fair; 2 poor.

Criterion: Attitude toward Forensic Participants: showing friendliness toward own and other team members, helping team members with events, attending rounds of team members.

Points	Names	Comments: Please justify your ratings.

FORM 4

SPC 399: Directed Studies  
in Speech Communication  
Dr. Carolyn Keefe

RATING FORM FOR DIRECTOR OF FORENSICS

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Semester/Year

Rate the student on the following criteria by assigning points on this scale: 8 excellent; 6 good; 4 fair; 2 poor.

\_\_\_\_\_ Points      Support of Team Activities: serving on Executive Board, attendance at Forensic Society meetings, support of fund raising, judging or control room work for speech contest and novice tournament, community service.

Justification for rating:

\_\_\_\_\_      Tournament Success: ranks and ratings at tournaments, improvement in competence.

Justification for rating:

TOTAL POINTS	MEAN	GRADE
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FORM 5

SPC 399: Directed Studies  
in Speech Communication  
Dr. Carolyn Keefe

FORENSIC CREDIT GRADE SUMMARY SHEET

TO: \_\_\_\_\_  
Student

FROM: Dr. Carolyn Keefe

As you were notified at the beginning of the semester, your grade in SPC 399: Directed Studies in Speech Communication consists of four ratings, each carrying a 25 percent weight. Below is a summary of the ratings you received.

- |                                  | GRADES |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| 1. Self-Rating                   | _____  |
| 2. Coach(es)' Rating             | _____  |
| 3. Executive Board's Rating      | _____  |
| 4. Director of Forensics' Rating | _____  |
| FINAL GRADE                      | _____  |

Comments:

FORM 6

FORENSIC CREDIT RATING FORM

198

Spring

Fall

Name	SS#	Coaches	No. of Credits	Type of Events	No. Req.	Tournaments Attended	SELF-APPRAISAL		COACH(ES) APPRAISAL		EXEC. ED. APPRAISAL		Grade
							Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	

2. The system affords students with feedback on their progress. The Forensic Credit Summary Sheet given to each student serves as a summative evaluation. On it the grade abstracts the responses from all the evaluators. This feedback, along with that from tournament ballots, is an important part of the student's developmental process. C. R. Carlson also makes this claim for feedback, while deploring its infrequency:

Unfortunately, except for grades, most college teachers do not consider feedback important and rarely provide it. Yet many different forms of feedback can contribute to learning, and generally, the more feedback, the more effective the teaching. Feedback is especially effective when used to prevent errors and to provide a student with direction and a sense of achievement.<sup>8</sup>

The approach taken by the author on the summative evaluation is to emphasize the student's accomplishments and show how deficiencies in skills can be improved. This seems to build positive attitudes toward forensic participation and individual development.

3. The system utilizes evaluative input from multiple segments of the forensic program. The advantage of this approach is that observers on all fronts, so to speak, provide data on the student's response in regard to the particular criteria. This vantage point positioning, as we have seen, helps to overcome the problem of the diverse settings in forensics.

In urging college teachers to remain open to nontraditional grading, Fuhrmann and Grasha point out that sometimes students are "the best judges of how well they and other people in class are contributing to course work."<sup>9</sup> This idea was formative to the system but operationally is not without its drawbacks. We shall now turn to that discussion.

#### WEAKNESSES OF THE GRADING SYSTEM

1. As a means of evaluation, the peer ratings may well be problematic. In the Kane and Lawler summarizing study of three types of peer assessment—rating, nomination, and ranking—the first emerged as the least valid, reliable, and unbiased of the group. The researchers advise that a way to mitigate against these problems is to use peer assessment as part of a multisource approach to performance assessment.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup>C. R. Carlson, "Feedback for Learning," in Milton, *On College Teaching*, p. 126.

<sup>9</sup>Barbara Schneider Fuhrmann and Anthony F. Grasha, *A Practical Handbook for College Teachers* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1983), p. 190.

<sup>10</sup>Jeffrey S. Kane and Edward E. Lawler III, "Methods of Peer Assess-

Even though the system under discussion has adopted this advice, the contamination effect of peer ratings may nevertheless be operative. The data collected since the inception of the credit-granting program have not been analyzed statistically for this factor; thus a claim one way or another cannot be made with any certainty.

2. The self-assessment component carries some inherent weaknesses. Lacking the broad, comparative perspective of the teacher, the self-evaluator may only see a single dimension of accomplishment: his or hers. With such limited vision, the assessor can readily grade too high or too low. Motives may further complicate the self-assessment. Even if a person has a realistic conception of the deserved grade, pressure to achieve may result in an inflated mark.<sup>11</sup>

To some extent the ratings from the coach(es) and the Director of Forensics may counter these negative influences, but again no specific claims can be made on this score.

3. Due to the multiplicity of forms and evaluators, the system can become unwieldy. A further complication is the failure of some evaluators to observe deadlines, thus necessitating time-consuming follow-up.

If the person responsible for the system takes certain steps, however, the administrative difficulties can be minimized. First, develop throughout the team positive and serious attitudes toward the grading process. Second, give the evaluators written notice of the deadlines and expect compliance. Third, use the Forensic Credit Summary Sheet to insure accurate and efficient record keeping.

## CONCLUSION

The system used at West Chester University for grading forensic participation utilizes four rating forms that collect observational data from the student, team members, the coach or coaches, and the Director of Forensics. On the positive side, the system helps wed forensics to educational goals, provides feedback to students and employs multiple observers as raters. On the negative side, the use of peer assessors may create validity and reliability problems. Furthermore, administering the system may prove unwieldy. Certainly not every forensic educator who is faced with the problem of grading students for their participation in forensics will find this system adaptable, but at West Chester University it has served important educational purposes.

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ment," *Psychological Bulletin*, 85 (1978), p. 555.

<sup>11</sup> *Encyclopedia of Educational Research*, 1982 ed., s.v. "Marking Systems."

# The Use of Metaphorical Topoi in Impromptu Training

GLORIA M. BOONE\*

Mark Twain once said, "It usually takes more than three weeks to prepare a good impromptu speech."<sup>1</sup> Many novice impromptu speakers may feel that Mark Twain was correct in his assessment because it seems that they take that long to think of something to say. Despite the apprehension of some novice speakers, impromptu is a very important speaking event. In 1984-85 at least 177 forensic tournaments around the nation offered impromptu speaking competition.<sup>2</sup> The popularity of this event has grown so that today it is one of the largest events in local and national competitions. Coaches encourage students to compete in impromptu to enhance quickness of thought, to improve organizational skills, and to develop a conversational "spur-of-the-moment" speaking style.

Impromptu speeches abound outside of the forensic environment in school, business, and politics. Public speaking courses sometimes use impromptu speaking exercises to acquaint students with the common presentational mode of business and politics.

Despite the significance of impromptu speaking, the information available on impromptu training has been meager. As Randall L. Bytwerk noted in 1985:

The impromptu speech, perhaps the type most often given, is also the one most neglected in public speaking courses and textbooks. Many texts give the subject a page or two; a few omit it altogether. Research on the matter is equally limited.<sup>3</sup>

Recent forensic-focused impromptu research is almost nonexistent. The few forensic articles on impromptu training are outdated because they ignore current rules, expectations, and practices. For example, one text on forensics states, "the student is typically given three topics, selects one and immediately begins to speak. . . from two to four minutes."<sup>4</sup> Another text discusses "two types of

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\**The National Forensic Journal*, V (Spring 1987), pp. 39-47.

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<sup>1</sup>Richard and Linda Heun, *Public Speaking: A New Speech Book*, (New York: West Publishing Company, 1979), p. 276.

<sup>2</sup>Edward J. Harris, Jr., ed. *Intercollegiate Forensic Tournament Results Book*, (Arlington, Massachusetts: Harris-Kropp Associates, 1985).

<sup>3</sup>Randall L. Bytwerk, "Impromptu Speaking Exercises," *Communication Education*, 34 (April, 1985), pp. 148-149.

<sup>4</sup>Don F. Faules, Richard D. Rieke, and Jack Rhodes, *Directing Forensics*, (Denver, Colorado: Morton Publishing Company, 1976), pp. 213-214.

impromptu contests, and the more common type utilizes a pre-announced subject area . . ." while the "more radical approach" uses a newspaper editorial.<sup>5</sup> The nature of impromptu competition in forensics has changed in the last fifteen years. One important change has been the standardization of the event's format and rules across the nation as influenced by the NFA impromptu rules:

IMPROMPTU SPEAKING: Contestants will receive short excerpts on general interest, political, economic and social issues and will have 7 minutes to divide between preparation and speaking. Speech should be at least 3 minutes. This is not mini-extemp. To remove the topic as a variable decision factor, all contestants in the same section will speak on the same topic<sup>6</sup>

A standard practice today is for students, even the most advanced, to use some preparation time. For the national competition the preparation time will range from one-half minute to two minutes. A novice speaker will normally take up to three minutes to prepare. The main concern for a novice speaker is the generation of ideas or simply coming up with enough ideas to discuss. At this level students need confidence that they can talk about three or four ideas that relate to the topic. The advanced speaker at NFA's and other tournaments, needs to generate *creative* ideas because all speakers in a round have the same topic. When all the speakers in a round have a political topic and everyone just uses political examples (such as Hitler, Nixon and Reagan — how many times have forensic judges heard those examples) the round seems dull and unimaginative. The creative speaker thinks of other *relevant* ways to interpret the topic, or transcends the common examples to a higher level of analysis.

A forensic coach can teach both the novice and advanced speakers ways to generate ideas for impromptu speaking by using topoi systems. Let's examine the nature of topoi and conceptual behavior, the uses of topoi in speech education and forensics, and the relationship of metaphorical topoi and creativity. By analyzing these areas forensic coaching practices will more closely approach theoretical advances in communication and creativity research.

The concept of topoi evolved from the classical rhetorical theories of Aristotle and Cicero. Topoi were thought of as lines of arguments, places of discovery, points of memory, common themes, places of clashing arguments and as warrants in syllogistic reasoning.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup>Donald W. Klopf and Carroll P. Lahman, *Coaching and Directing Forensics*, (Skokie, Illinois: National Textbook Corporation, 1973), p. 208.

<sup>6</sup>National Forensic Association, 16th Annual National Championship Tournament Invitation, 1986.

<sup>7</sup>See Aristotle, *The Rhetoric*, trans. by Lane Cooper (Englewood Cliffs

Topoi were traditionally placed under the general heading of invention or the generation of ideas. Usually with this placement came several attached ideas:

- (1) Topoi can be discovered.
- (2) Topoi can help the speaker create messages.
- (3) Topoi can be both universal and specific to a given context.
- (4) Topoi are analytic guides.
- (5) Topoi can help the speaker produce reasonable ideas to justify arguments to some audience.
- (6) Topoi demonstrate some relationship among ideas.
- (7) Topoi can help speakers to remember ideas.

The problem of this view is that topoi are seen as a "sequential. . . temporal or logical progression."<sup>8</sup> This narrows the potential range of topoi's heuristic value. It also seems to conflict with the growing evidence on human conceptual behavior. William Nelson, in his article "Topoi: Evidence of Human Conceptual Behavior," summarizes the conclusions of decades of research on human conceptual thinking by many authors:

- A kind of categorizing behavior (contiguity transfer) is intrinsic within man.
- Categorizing behavior is a necessary antecedent to language propensity.
- Categorizing is of significant utilitarian value in virtually all forms of human behavior.<sup>9</sup>

Nelson suggests that meaning, cognitive activity, and rhetorical arguments cluster according to categories. The categorizing behavior is not always sequential but is always associational. Mednick points out the relationship of associations and creativity: "The greater the number of associations that an individual has to the requisite elements of a problem, the greater the probability of his reaching a creative solution."<sup>10</sup>

J.P. Guilford believes that factors involved in creativity include associational fluency, adaptive flexibility, spontaneous flexibility, and redefinition. These factors led Guilford to propose convergent

Prentice-Hall, Inc.), 1932 and Cicero, *Cicero on Oratory and Orators*, trans. by J.S. Watson (Carbondale, Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press), 1970.

<sup>8</sup>Michael Leff, "Topical Invention and Metaphoric Interaction," 48 *The Southern Speech Communication Journal* (Spring 1983) p. 216. It should be noted that this is NOT Leff's viewpoint.

<sup>9</sup>William F. Nelson, "Topoi: Evidence of Human Conceptual Behavior," 2 *Philosophy and Rhetoric* (Winter 1969) p. 2.

<sup>10</sup>Sarnoff A. Mednick, "The Associative Basis of the Creative Process," in *The Creativity Question*, ed. by Albert Rothenberg and Carl R. Hausman, (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1976), p. 232.

and divergent production of ideas.<sup>11</sup> Using somewhat different terminology, Edward de Bono makes a distinction between lateral and vertical thinking in creativity. Vertical thinking is selective, sequential, analytical and, therefore, has to be correct at every step, uses the negative to block off certain pathways, concentrates and excludes what is irrelevant, uses fixed classifications, and focuses on problem solving of critical judgment. Lateral thinking is generative, provocative, makes jumps to new points, does not have to be correct at every step, welcomes chance intrusions, has open classifications, focuses on changing patterns and gains new ideas without being judgmental.<sup>12</sup> What needs to be recognized is that rhetorical invention should not be strait-jacketed into dealing only with justifying arguments to an audience. Before justification must come the generation of ideas and discovery:

Some people are unhappy about lateral thinking because they feel that it threatens the validity of vertical thinking. This is not so at all. The two processes are complementary not antagonistic. Lateral thinking is useful for generating ideas and approaches and vertical thinking is useful for developing them. Lateral thinking enhances the effectiveness of vertical thinking by offering it more to select from.<sup>13</sup>

Modern rhetorical invention and topoi need to consider both lateral and vertical thinking.

Another inadequacy is in the use of topoi in educational settings. Unfortunately, topoi in any form — classical or modern — are rarely given the treatment they merit in public speaking courses or in textbooks on public speaking. Michael Leff points out that there has been a lack of scholarship on speech composition as it relates to educational use.<sup>14</sup> Kneupper and Anderson found that:

... in current pedagogy, the most important of the classical rhetorical canons, invention, is seriously neglected. A survey of textbooks in public speaking will show that there is seldom any significant or extended treatment of invention. What most contemporary textbooks present is a fairly detailed discussion of the extrinsic sources of content.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>11</sup>J.P. Guilford, "Creativity: Its Measurement and Development" in *A Source Book for Creative Thinking*, ed. by Sidney J. Parnes and Harold F. Harding, (New York: Charles Scribener's Sons, 1962), pp. 156-168.

<sup>12</sup>Edward de Bono, *Lateral Thinking: Creativity Step by Step*, (New York: Harper Colophon Books), 1970, pp. 7-14 and 39-59.

<sup>13</sup>Bono, p. 50.

<sup>14</sup>Michael C. Leff, "In Search of Ariadne's Thread: A Review of the Recent Literature on Rhetorical Theory," *Central States Speech Journal* 29 (Summer 1978), p. 90.

<sup>15</sup>Kneupper and Anderson, "Uniting Wisdom and Eloquence," pp. 320-

In impromptu students need to learn the process of creating intrinsic arguments. How to come up with ideas, or how to think about a topic needs more attention. Ruth Anne Clark and Jesse G. Delia, in 1979, suggested that topoi could be used to examine and develop rhetorical competency since it can provide us with an understanding "of the *message choices* made by the potential persuader."<sup>16</sup> In the article, they advise that topoi systems should be used more often in theorizing, research and teaching. Clark and Delia state that there are at least four steps involved in message strategy and development. These steps are: (1) identify communication objectives; (2) identify obstacles to communication objectives; (3) discover lines of argument; and (4) examine ways of casting argument.<sup>17</sup> This four-step process can be used by teachers and forensic coaches when using topoi for training and development. Otis M. Walter as early as 1954 expressed the need for the teaching of creativity in public speaking. He suggested the use of a four-step process: the preparation process, a plateau period, the moment of insight, and the process of verification.<sup>18</sup>

A few topoi systems are currently used in speech education. Wilson and Arnold offer one topoi system based on classical rhetoric: existence, causality, degree, spatial, attributes, correlation, attributes of time, genus-species relationships, motion, similarity or dissimilarity, form, possibility or impossibility, substance, capacity to change, potency, desirability and feasibility.<sup>19</sup> Karl Wallace presents a topoi system that focuses more on values, value hierarchies, affective states and character traits of the speaker along with some of the more traditional terms like Classification, Fact, Causation, Disagreement, and the Possible.<sup>20</sup>

Debate and forensic coaches have been far ahead of most of their colleagues in the use of topoi as an education technique.<sup>21</sup> Four

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321. Two exceptions to this problem were noted by Kneupper and Anderson. John F. Wilson and Carroll C. Arnold, *Public Speaking as a Liberal Art*, 3rd ed., Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1974; and Otis M. Walter, *Speaking Intellegently: Communication for Problem Solving*, New York: MacMillan, 1976. Some other books mention brainstorming but few other intrinsic inventional techniques are usually mentioned.

<sup>16</sup>Ruth Anne Clark and Jesse G. Delia, "Topoi and Rhetorical Competence," *The Quarterly Journal of Speech*, (1979), pp. 187-206.

<sup>17</sup>Clark and Delia, p. 199-202.

<sup>18</sup>Otis M. Walter, "Creativity: A Neglected Factor in Public Speaking," p. 160.

<sup>19</sup>John F. Wilson and Carroll C. Arnold, *Public Speaking as a Liberal Art*.

<sup>20</sup>Karl R. Wallace, "Topoi and the Problem of Invention," pp. 393-394.

<sup>21</sup>For a recent example see John E. Crawford, "Toward Standardized Extemporaneous Speech Competition: Tournament Design and Speech Training," *National Forensic Journal*, 2 (Spring, 1984), p. 49.

modern conceptions have received the most notice in forensics. The topoi of policy argument or stock issues (need, inherency, policy, practicality, advantages, counterplan, etc.) are often used in debate.<sup>22</sup> Ralph Towne develops a system of nine topoi that deal with public policy (justice, waste, confusion, security, morality, efficiency, strength, prestige, and destruction).<sup>23</sup> B.G. Blackburn suggests a typology of anxiety-arousing arguments (such as: loss of security, loss of democracy, death, loss of a loved one, professional loss, social disapproval, financial hardship, loss of status, failure, lack of meaningful relationships, mental anxiety, etc.).<sup>24</sup> Wayne Minnick presents a topoi of American values (theoretical values, economic values, aesthetic values, social values, political values, and religious values).<sup>25</sup>

There are several problems with the aforementioned classical and modern topoi systems. First, they are often viewed as proving logical arguments and fail to adequately consider the discovery process. They tend to emphasize verticle thinking to the exclusion of lateral thinking. Second, some of the systems are not expandable. They do not challenge the student to add to the list of topoi. Third, the categories are hard to remember. The problem with most of the topoi systems discussed is that students would have to memorize a rigid classification system that does not easily correspond to their lives. For example, Aristotle's topoi of 'correlative' terms, division and crisscrossed consequences do not come right to mind when looking for ideas for an impromptu speech.

The fundamental problem with the classical and modern topoi systems is that they fail to link the two major creative processes in communication — topoi and metaphor. This is probably due to the traditional rhetorical division of topoi with invention and metaphor with style. Metaphors are usually thought of as a stylistic figure of speech that compared two unlike ideas. Classical rhetorical theorist usually viewed metaphors as beautiful ornaments that would be added to the speech *after* the ideas were developed by the invention process. Modern theorists view metaphors as associational clusters that produce creative arguments or ideas. Instead of metaphors coming after invention, metaphors may come before or along with the invention process. Metaphors are essential to the creation of ideas as Lakoff and Johnson state:

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<sup>22</sup>James C. McCroskey, *An Introduction to Rhetorical Communication*, 4th ed., (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.) 1982, pp. 154-155.

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

<sup>24</sup>McCroskey, pp. 156-157.

<sup>25</sup>McCroskey, pp. 158-160.

Metaphor is thus imaginative rationality. Since the categories of our everyday thought are largely metaphorical and our everyday reasoning involves metaphorical entailments and inferences, ordinary rationality is therefore imaginative by its very nature . . . Metaphor is one of our most important tools for trying to comprehend partially what cannot be comprehended totally: our feelings, aesthetic experiences, moral practices, and spiritual awareness.<sup>26</sup>

By joining the concepts of metaphors as imaginative rationality with the educational function of topoi, the impromptu speaker could enhance their production of creative ideas.

The following metaphorical topoi system is offered for the impromptu speaker:

Arts  
 Biology  
 Business  
 Chemistry  
 Communications  
 Economics  
 Education  
 English  
 Film  
 Foreign Affairs  
 History  
 Law  
 Military  
 Philosophy  
 Psychology  
 Religion  
 Politics  
 Science  
 Sociology  
 Sports  
 Television . . .

This flexible and expandable list follows the already existing academic categories or majors. This list provides the students with associations to develop ideas about their quotation. After determining the meaning of the quote, the student could go through such a topoi list and ask:

How does this relate to the arts?

How does this relate to biology?

How does this relate to business? etc.

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<sup>26</sup>George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, (Chicago, Illinois: The University of Chicago Press) 1980, p. 193.

These questions produce associations between the speech topic and the topoi. The topic for an entire impromptu could be generated by using such a set of topoi.

For example, if the student had received the quotation "Guilt is what civilizes" by Philip Lopate, they could associate guilt with any of the metaphorical topoi. Speaker number one associated guilt with art by discussing guilt in religious art of the middle ages, in Picasso's work and in the Vietnam War Memorial. Each work of art was shown to be part of the civilizing process brought about by the guilt of the artist or of their society at the time. This same student went on to associate biological guilt to society's fears about overeating, overpopulation and genetic accidents. This biological guilt created controls imposed on people and science that helped the civilizing process. Another student with the same quote discussed guilt in religion from sin, social guilt from peer pressure, and guilt in sports when the team leader fails in a crucial situation. Each of these students usually selected the topoi they were comfortable or familiar with, however, the topoi structure often allows students to associate two concepts that would normally not be associated. Student number one normally would not have associated guilt with biology but did so when she saw it on the list.

This topoi list is easily expanded. A student could add any other major (math, agriculture, journalism, engineering, medicine, fashion design, etc.) or any subdivision of a major with which they are familiar. Someone knowledgeable about biology might discover topics under the subdivision of anatomy, bioethics, botany, ecology, genetics, microbiology, or zoology. Such a set of topoi would allow the student to explore both the familiar and the novel in the development of ideas. Students would be encouraged to develop intrinsic ideas first and then look for extrinsic examples from books and articles.

Students at different levels of development would use the metaphorical topoi differently. The beginning student needs to learn to relax and generate a few ideas. To help the beginning speaker, the coach can suggest that the student pick 4 or 5 favorite areas from the topoi list. One beginning student selected his major (history), his minor (communication) and his three favorite pastimes — sports, film and television. To develop greater confidence for novice impromptu speakers, written speed drills were used. In a written speech drill the student is handed a quote and is told to list as many ideas as possible on a piece of paper. To get the speaker used to the time element in impromptu, the student was told to draw a line across the page when 1 minute, 2 minutes and 3

minutes had passed. This practice establishes confidence and a sense of timing. Novice speakers realize that most of their ideas are generated in the first two minutes. After several drills, a regular verbal impromptu practice is held where each speaker is encouraged to use concrete examples. So instead of talking about talent in sports they would discuss specific teams or players such as the Boston Celtics or Larry Bird. Speakers are encouraged to have a thesis, a preview and a summary. Previews are easily generated by listing the main topoi areas — "Let's see why this quote is accurate by examining business, communication and politics." General previews allow novice speakers more flexibility to avoid using too little speaking time because they can add examples to the general topic areas already selected.

The more advanced impromptu speakers need to work on generating more ideas in less time so that they can select the most appropriate or interesting topics. During practice rounds, the advanced student could experiment with topoi they usually don't use at tournaments. For example, some speakers will consistently use examples from history and literature in almost every impromptu round. Coaches should encourage their students to explore other topoi that may be more appropriate for a particular quotation. Another problem of a speaker at this level is developing a transcendence for an impromptu quote. A transcendence tells the audience how the examples interrelate to one another and to the topic. Often transcendence explains the common denominator, the philosophical point or the unifying theme for the examples and the quote. For example, the first student, who spoke on the quotation "Guilt is what civilizes," transcended by pointing out that guilt civilizes only indirectly by placing constraints on artists and by placing controls on biological process. By using the metaphorical topoi system a student could break the typical associations of one field by inserting the ideas of another field in order to generate a creative transcendence.

In summary, the training practice for impromptu speaking can be enhanced by using the metaphorical topoi system. The classical notion of topoi can be transformed into a modern associational aid to help forensic students discover, create and remember ideas for impromptu. The metaphorical topoi system meets the needs of students at various levels in competition. A beginning student might generate ideas only from topoi of their major interests. But as the speaker gains confidence and knowledge, other more creative and challenging approaches might be tried. A more experienced speaker may use the topoi to develop extended metaphors across fields.

# Persuasive Speaking: A Review to Enhance the Educational Experience

BRADLEY J. BALLINGER and  
JEFFREY D. BRAND\*

While persuasive speaking is the oldest event in intercollegiate individual events competition, it has certainly not maintained a status as the most popular. Coaches find it difficult to get students excited enough to bring in some form of a speech for coaching. Many judges find it difficult to get excited enough to fulfill their judging commitment for a round of oratory. Christina Reynolds (1983) expressed this feeling when she wrote, "All too often, coaches/judges grimace when they are handed a ballot envelope for an oratory round. The typical response to this situation may very well be 'Why are *they* assigning *me* to judge this round?'"<sup>1</sup>

What has brought on this attitude, this apprehension for a coach/judge to look at the final round postings in dread of seeing his/her name as a judge for persuasive speaking finals? To help uncover an answer, think about what a judge is likely to hear in a final round. Speakers one through six will probably say the same thing. They will be using the same skeleton for a preview, "We must first examine the problem, then we will pinpoint what has caused the problem. Finally, I will offer some viable solutions to help alleviate the problem." These speakers will follow this structure because the handful of competitors that did not are not in this final round. Throughout the years, coaches and judges have condemned certain topics as "done to death" but the same organizational pattern has been tolerated over and over, year after year.

An effort to provide some suggestions for improving the quality of persuasive speaking requires an examination of the event itself (current practice and tournament descriptions) and the attitudes held by coaches, judges, and competitors toward the event. With this understanding of how persuasion is currently being practiced, it will be possible to provide some recommendations to help

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\**The National Forensic Journal*, V (Spring 1987), pp. 49-54.

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<sup>1</sup>Christina L. Reynolds, "Winning' Orations? A Study of Select Interstate Oratorical Speeches," *National Forensic Journal* 1 (1983), p. 119.

enhance the competitive and educational quality of persuasive speaking.

Research is limited with respect to how prevalent the problem-solution format is although most indications show that it is the most common organizational pattern being used. In 1971, William Schrier estimated that "probably 90 percent of college orations are of the problem-solution variety."<sup>2</sup> Larson and O'Rourke (1981), in their evaluation of contest ballots, concluded that the "problem-solution format would seem to be the most recognized persuasive approach."<sup>3</sup> Reynolds, in her look at Interstate Oratorical Association speeches on the dread disease topics, also found problem-solution to be the primary pattern of use.<sup>4</sup> Many judges and coaches would echo the thought that most persuasive speeches today are of the problem-solution variety.

Persuasive speaking, as an event, is not clearly defined. Tournament-descriptions vary from school to school and from region to region. National tournaments also employ different descriptions. Some descriptions are broad, including several genres of speeches. Others are limited in their focus, allowing only a specific pattern.

A look at the event descriptions for the NFA and AFA national tournaments shows how descriptions differ. The National Forensic Association Individual Events Nationals Tournament description reads:

An original speech to convince, to move to action, or to inspire on a significant issue delivered from memory. Qualifies from sales, persuasion, oratory, peace oratory, original oratory, public address, epideictic, etc.; event must have required an original speech the purpose of which was the speaker's persuasion of his/her audience.<sup>5</sup>

The American Forensic Association National Individual Events Tournament describes persuasive speaking as:

An original speech by the student designed to inspire, reinforce, or change the beliefs, attitudes, values or actions of the audience. Audio-visual aids may or may not be used to supplement and reinforce the message. Multiple sources

<sup>2</sup>William Schrier, *Contest Oratory: A Handbook for High School and College Contestants and Coaches* (Metuchen, N.J.: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1971), p. 39.

<sup>3</sup>Suzanne Larson and Sean Patrick O'Rourke, "Predominant Forms of Argument in Individual Events," *Dimensions of Argument: Proceedings of the Second Summer Conference on Argumentation* (Annandale, Va: Speech Communication Association, 1981), p. 330.

<sup>4</sup>Reynolds, p. 124.

<sup>5</sup>Taken from the American Forensic Association 1986 National Individual Events Tournament invitation.

should be used and cited in the development of the speech.

Minimal notes are permitted. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes.<sup>6</sup>

Neither of these tournaments require the use of the problem-solution format. There is a written expression that allows students to deliver speeches to inspire, convince, or stimulate. Despite this broad definition, many speeches that are not following the problem-solution pattern receive comments after the tournament to the effect that "this isn't really persuasion."

There are some tournaments that do limit and focus their descriptions of persuasion to specific organizational patterns other than problem-solution. The Great Eastern Forensic Tournaments and the Southern Connecticut Forensic Tournaments do provide categories for non problem-solution speeches. The inclusion of events such as Convince (which includes straight proofs of any important or interesting theory or issue from any area of knowledge or problem-solution speeches for which the solving agent is NOT the audience) and Epideictic (in which each speaker gives an original ceremonial speech; praise, blame, or mixed of a living, dead, or mixed real or mythical individual, group, or entity) seeks to encourage the student to enter the realm of persuasion that is not as rigid as the problem-solution domain. The Ohio Forensic Association also took this into consideration by adding Epideictic as their experimental event for the 1984-85 season. It was described as "An eight (8) minute maximum original speech to praise or to blame some person, organization, institution, practice, etc. The purpose of this speech is inspirational." Guidelines for preparation and judging were also included, for example, "the subject should concern ideas, feelings, and beliefs rather than problems and solutions."<sup>7</sup>

While these tournaments are good steps toward encouraging patterns other than problem-solution, their potential for success is never realized due to lack of support on the national level. Although such alternative persuasion events have been recognized to qualify a student for nationals, these speeches are rarely heard at national tournaments. Coaches and students often take the attitude that if a speech to convince or an epideictic speech qualifies, the speaker should write a new speech along the lines of problem-solution for national competition. To an extent, the existence of alternative persuasion events has resulted in the national events being, by

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<sup>6</sup>Taken from the 1986 National Forensic Association National Championship Tournament in Individual Speaking Events invitation.

<sup>7</sup>For more information on the epideictic speech consult the Spring 1983 issue of the *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, pp. 274-78.

default, considered the domain of the problem-solution format.

Understanding how persuasive speaking is being practiced and described, however, does not explain why the problem-solution format is dominant. Since there is no explicit requirement for the use of problem-solution, other factors must be influencing the organizational pattern choices being made by coaches, judges, and contestants. Some recent investigations into how coaches/judges view the event might help explain the popularity of the problem-solution format.

In a study on the evaluation criteria used for judging the persuasion event, Benson and Friedley (1982) asked coaches to indicate the criteria they use while coaching and judging persuasion. The top eight criteria were:

1. establishment of a significant problem,
2. indication of how the problem was related to the audience,
3. clarity of organization,
4. use of a problem-solution format,
5. quality and sufficient amount of supporting evidence,
6. balance in types of evidence (emotional and logical),
7. well-developed, workable solution, and
8. sincere, conversational delivery.<sup>8</sup>

These criteria are ideal for the persuasive speech following the problem-solution organizational pattern. Criteria 2, 3, 5, 6, and 8 are also applicable to any type of persuasive speech (with the substitution of topic or issue for problem). With these being the primary considerations in the mind of the critic, the student is discouraged from attempting the persuasive speech that is attitudinal, inspirational, or convincing. Both the competitors and coaches know that to use a pattern other than problem-solution will invite criticism.

Competitors and coaches are using one of the most basic speech preparation techniques that is taught in public speaking classes, audience analysis. When preparing a competitive persuasive speech, the coach and competitor are taking into account what they know about their audience, the forensic judge. Manchester and Friedley (1981) point out that judges "are not particularly concerned with encouraging a variety of structural patterns; rather, judges are more concerned that the speaker utilize a familiar organizational pattern and one that is clearly presented."<sup>9</sup> This pattern,

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<sup>8</sup>James A. Benson and Sheryl A. Friedley, "An Empirical Analysis of Evaluation Criteria For Persuasive Speaking," *Journal of the American Forensic Association* 19 (1982), p. 2.

<sup>9</sup>Bruce B. Manchester and Sheryl A. Friedley, "Do Judging Standards in Individual Events Reflect an Argumentation Perspective?" *Dimensions of*

they conclude, is "the use of some form of a problem-solving format."<sup>10</sup> Speakers are simply reacting to the type of standards that forensic judges are employing. We are determining which pattern and type of speech our students deliver as a result of our coaching and judging habits. Despite the wording of event descriptions and our awareness of other available approaches to persuasion, a set of unwritten criteria biased toward the problem-solution pattern is directing how persuasive speaking is practiced in forensics. This overemphasis by critics on the problem-solution format, and the attitude of judges toward persuasion expressed at the beginning of the paper (dreading the judging assignment) results in a paradox when these same judges take the role of coach and encourage the problem-solution approach. Rather than treating other formats as refreshing and innovative, they are treated as violating, off-base, non-competitive, and inadequate.

An effort to revitalize persuasion and to encourage other organizational styles would not have to entail any radical changes in the way we approach this event. Change would be required in three areas: event descriptions, judging standards, and coaching habits.

As far as event descriptions go, we should be thankful that existing national descriptions do not specify problem-solution patterns. There is, however, room for improvement. Descriptions should focus on stating clearly the types of patterns that may be used. Speech types that should be included might be inspirational, ceremonial, epideictic, convince, or value. This larger description would serve to remind judges of the varied types of persuasive speaking. This alone would help encourage other types of persuasive speeches. Larson and O'Rourke (1981) suggest that "in the case of both persuasion and expository speaking the statement of the speech's purpose helped the contestant to formulate arguments."<sup>11</sup> By identifying explicitly the types of approaches available, the contestant has a better basis from which to begin deciding on a topic and organizational pattern.

A second area where improvement can occur would be to employ a clear set of judging criteria. The Second National Conference on Forensics (1984) discussed the need for judging guidelines. Judges need to know more about other organizational patterns available for persuasion. A set of criteria could be developed to help the judge evaluate not only the familiar problem-solution speech, but also the

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*Argument: Proceedings of the Second Summer Conference on Argumentation* (Annandale, Va: Speech Communication Association, 1981), p. 400.

<sup>10</sup>Manchester and Friedley, pp. 400-01.

<sup>11</sup>Larson and O'Rourke, p. 333.

epideictic, inspirational, convincing, and value oration. Our lack of experience with these other approaches is no excuse. As coaches and judges we should be capable of evaluating a persuasive speech regardless of the pattern being used.

Along these same lines, there are two additional things that can be done to encourage more responsible judging of student speeches. Judging workshops could be set up to educate critics on how a persuasive speech can be constructed and evaluated. Tournaments might also wish to encourage the use of non-forensic judges in persuasion rounds. Benson and Friedley's (1982) results seem to indicate that the problem-solution format is less important to a lay judge.<sup>12</sup> A wider diversity of judges would help to encourage diversity in persuasive approaches used by contestants.

Finally, as coaches, we need to teach and foster the growth of persuasive speaking. Familiarity with other styles is necessary so we can coach and judge persuasive speeches fairly. With effort and awareness, there is no reason why concerned coaches cannot encourage greater diversity and growth in the way persuasion is being practiced in collegiate forensic competition.

The National Developmental Conference on Forensics (1974) spoke of individual events tournaments as "laboratories" for improving our understanding of communication. Laboratories are where we experiment, research, and refine our ideas. They should promote growth and expansion. They should not be stifling. Yet, in the laboratory of persuasion, the only development has been the cloning of problem-solution speeches. We must utilize all of the instruments available to us and learn to develop and refine the event of persuasive speaking. Perhaps through some inspiration, stimulation, convincing, and problem-solving, we can experience a renewed excitement toward persuasive speaking and turn the grimaces and apprehension evoked by monotony into smiles and eagerness toward persuasion.

<sup>12</sup>Benson and Friedley, p. 11.