

AN ANALYSIS OF IMAGINED INTERACTIONS OF FORENSIC PARTICIPANTS

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Sports psychologists have found it helpful for athletes to visualize themselves giving flawless performances before their actual performance (May & Asken, 1987). It has been suggested that mental imagery can increase self-confidence. Mental imagery after a successful performance is valuable for athletes by enabling them to focus on exceptional aspects of the performance and categorize those for future performances (Orlick, 1980). If mental imagery enables an athlete to enhance or reproduce specific physical behaviors, then mental imagery could be beneficial for forensic competitors enabling them to produce or reproduce successful communication behaviors.

Since forensics is a competitive activity that rewards the most appropriate communication behavior, then mental imagery could provide competitors with examples of ideal communicative strategies to be used in actual competition. Traditionally, forensic coaches encourage mental imagery and appropriate communication behavior by directing their students to concentrate on the upcoming round, get into character, think positively, have a winning attitude, and to evaluate one's last performance in order to improve future performances. Underlying these directives is the premise that forensic participants can cognitively evaluate the round and follow through with the most appropriate rhetorical strategy.

However, this underlying premise has not been tested. No researcher has examined how forensic competitors cognitively evaluate their performances. This research will examine the mental aspects of forensic competition. The purpose of this research is: 1) to determine if competitors utilize mental imagery in preparing and evaluating their competitive performances, 2) to determine what aspects of mental imagery enhance performance, and 3) to provide practical implications for forensic coaches in the use of mental imagery.

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Imagined Interactions

Mental imagery processes have been studied in terms of "imagined interactions" (Honeycutt, Zagacki, & Edwards, 1989). These researchers define imagined interactions as a process of cognition whereby individuals imagine themselves in an interaction with others. "Imagined interactions are an attempt to simulate real-life conversation with significant others" (Honeycutt, et al., 1989, p. 169). During imagined interactions, individuals can actually work through representations of communication events and prepare responses based on those contingencies. Mead (1934) noted that the mental activity of determining who to respond to in a social situation is critical to the development of the self-concept. According to Honeycutt and his associates (1989), during imagined interactions, individuals may consciously take the role of others, imagining how they might respond to one messages within particular situations, and test the consequences of communication strategies. For example, Honeycutt (1988) provides an account of a 21-year-old woman who reported an imagined interaction with her husband in their home. She imagines discussing his negative feelings toward her. The imagined interaction served to fulfill catharsis and rehearsal functions. The woman felt better having rehearsed the message strategy.

Imagined interactions are grounded in symbolic interactionism and Greene's (1984) action-assembly theory. Mead (1934) argues how individuals develop representations of self through imaginary conversations and cited an individual's ability to monitor social action as a distinguishing mark of human intelligence. This type of mental activity, explain Manis and Meltzer (1978), "is a peculiar type of activity that goes on in the experience of the person. The activity is that of the person responding to himself, of indicating things to himself" (p. 21). What is important about this type of mental activity is that (1) one may consciously take the role of others, imagining how they might respond to one's messages within particular situations, and thus (2) one can test and imagine the consequences of alternative messages prior to communication.

Honeycutt and his associates (1989) discuss how imagined interactions may be used as a type of simulation in preparing for expected communicative encounters. Kahneman and Tversky (1982) list five judgmental tasks in which simulation is liable to be used for problem solving: predicting a future event; assessing the probability of a specific event; assessing conditional probabilities; counterfactual assessments; and assessments of causality. These

tasks are characteristic of the forensic setting in which competitors are rewarded for appropriate communication behavior; thus, imagined interactions as a type of mental imagery should be used in forensic settings. Honeycutt and his colleagues (1988) suggest that "imagined interactions can help in predicting a future event and that by engaging in one and even rewriting it, helps an individual to assess conditional probabilities in the form of imagined outcomes for different scripts for the same imagined interaction scene" (p. 6). Thus, an individual can envision a variety of potential messages before the actual encounter.

Edwards and her associates (1988) propose that as individuals have imagined interactions, "they activate (and perhaps reconstitute) procedural records which may inform behavior related to specific situational exigencies" (pp. 25-26). The research findings reported by Edwards et al. (1988) and Honeycutt et al. (1989; in press) on imagined interactions indicate: 1) that individuals vary in the activity or how often they have imagined interactions, 2) that imagined interactions are often with the same person, 3) that imagined interactions perform a rehearsal function, and 4) that the self dominates the interaction. The results in previous research using the Survey of Imagined Interactions (SII) focused on the imagined interactions of individuals not engaged in a particular task (Edwards et al., 1988; Honeycutt et al., 1989; Zagacki et al., 1988). The present study expands the new body of literature on imagined interactions by examining interactions generated in a task-specific situation—a forensic tournament. This is important because message selection is based on situational constraints and audience expectations.

Imagined Interactions and Forensic Competition

Forensics is an activity that requires participants to be cognitively aware of the communication context. This awareness is evident in two areas. First, competitors are engaged in an activity that rewards the most appropriate communication behavior. For example, debaters are rewarded with the ballot when they present "good reasons," advance effective argumentative strategies, and effectively adapt to the judge. Individual events participants in prose, poetry, dramatic interpretation, and duo interpretation are rewarded with a high ranking when they communicate empathy and understanding of textual concerns. In platform and limited preparation events, participants are rewarded when they demonstrate clear understanding of their topics, advance logical reasons, and follow a clear organizational pattern.

Second, in the tournament environment, message selection is in a constant process of evaluation and reevaluation. For example, debaters are required to choose from a repertoire of potential arguments to counter opposing positions. They are required to engage in cross examination, deal with case areas that vary, and answer arguments that reflect the idiosyncrasies of the competition. As a result, debaters are required to select an argumentative strategy that they think will defend their positions and be well received by the judges.

Message evaluation is also critical for individual event participants. For example, in "After Dinner Speaking" competition, competitors are encouraged to "work" the audience. They are often rewarded for identifying and incorporating the peculiarities of the audience in their speech. In impromptu speaking, competitors are rewarded for generating fresh and intriguing insights on a quotation in less than three minutes. In platform speaking events, speakers are expected to appear spontaneous even though they may have previously delivered the same speech a number of times.

Participants also must consider the communicative environment of the tournament. This includes analyzing such variables as the acoustics of the room, audience size, position of the judge, and room furnishing. Honeycutt and his associates (in press) discuss how imagined interactions not only use verbal imagery but visual images. Some individuals imagine the scene of the encounter and are well aware of the surroundings in which the interaction takes place. Using both visual and verbal imagery, imagined interactions can enable forensic participants to mentally rehearse messages and prepare for possible exigencies. Through the rehearsal function of imagined interactions, tension may be released as the imagineer is reducing uncertainty for the anticipated round.

Imagined interaction also may serve a function of increasing self-understanding (Zagacki et al., 1988) and occur after the round is over. The participant can go back and replay what happened while making adjustments for future rounds. The imagineer can "rewrite" the imagined interaction and provide information for the self to use during real interaction (Edwards et al., 1988). This investigation assessed the relationship between imagined interaction activity for individuals engaging in actual tournament competition in order to determine what types of cognitive processes are in operation in this task situation.

Hypotheses and Research Questions

Existing literature made it possible to generate some theoretically relevant hypotheses in the tournament setting. In addition, research questions were posed where no directional hypotheses could be posited. The first question deals with the principle type of competition—individual events or debate. Debate and individual events require a different orientation for the participants. Debate requires more of an evidence orientation and argumentative approach while individual events require more of an audience-centered model of adaptation and persuasion (Wilson, 1978). Thus, we ask:

RQ1: Do debaters and individual events competitors differ in the function of their imagined interactions?

The research by Edwards et al. (1988) proposed that individuals tend to have imagined interactions with the same individual. In the arena of forensics, the most discussed and contemplated individuals are the judge and opponent. Thus we ask:

RQ2: Who are the imagined interactions within forensic settings?

Imagined interactions involve encounters with a real person, the interactions provide a give-and-take dialogical exchange of ideas. Earlier research has found that the self tends to talk more in the imagined interaction compared to the other as well as initiating the conversation. Thus, the imagined interactions affords powers of conversation control (Edwards et al., 1988). Given the nature of the forensic setting in which individuals are rewarded for appropriate messages, they should plan and envision message strategies. Thus we posit:

H1: The self will talk more in the imagined interaction than the dialogue partner.

As previously indicated, mental imagery is used in sports to focus on successful performances. Therefore, forensic participants may use imagined interactions to identify strategies that lead to victorious outcomes. It is also possible that competitors may use imagined interactions to prepare for defeat in order to prepare and bolster oneself for expected "bad" news. Subsequently, we ask:

RQ3: Do forensic competitors experience more success or defeat in their imagined interactions?

The rehearsal function, which indicates proactive imagined interactions, imagined interactions implies that a person selects appropriate messages in order to achieve a desired outcome. Thus,

having imagined interactions before the round should be related to imagined success. Furthermore, the calling up of procedural records allows one to prepare for situational exigencies. Thus, even if a real encounter is discrepant from a preceding imagined one, the experience may result in an outcome of imagined success. Support for this position has been found in journal accounts of imagined interactions (Honeycutt, 1988). For example, individuals report more beneficial outcomes in their imagined interactions when having proactive imagined interactions before an anticipated encounter. While this may not correspond to actual interaction outcomes, the experience of rehearsing is helpful. Presumably, the calling up of procedural records attunes one to the interaction. Thus we posit:

H2: Success in the imagined interaction will correspond with having proactive imagined interactions at the tournament.

If individuals use imagined interactions to generate "success" gaining strategies, then imagined interactions may occur prior to an anticipated encounter. Zagacki and his associates (1988) have discussed "proactivity" as a characteristic of some imagined interactions. A proactive imagined interaction occurs before an important meeting or encounter and involves communicative planning before the actual interaction. Conversely, some imagined interactions occur after an encounter (retroactive IIs) and involve the individual replaying what occurred, and perhaps making changes in order to prepare for future encounters (Honeycutt et al., in press).

Greene (1984) has discussed how individuals may activate "procedural records" for anticipated actions. These records represent a kind of cognitive information bank and specify certain communicative actions associated with particular interaction goals. They provide functional information about interaction goals and related behaviors. Therefore, if the individual uses imagined interactions to identify the behavior that is most appropriate in a specific situation, then we ask when do the imagined interactions occur in relation to the actual event:

RQ4: Do imagined interactions tend to occur before or after the actual round of competition?

Coaches encourage debaters to anticipate questions, answers, and arguments as well as to present the effective argumentative strategy. Individual events participants are told to get into character, concentrate, adapt to the judge, and adapt to the environment. While imagined interactions can be used in a rehearsal function, they may also represent an imagined exchange of infor-

mation between interactants. For forensic competitors, imagined interactions should perform the procedural function of identifying the most appropriate response in a specific situation. Thus, the question arises concerning the discrepancy between the imagined and real interaction.

One of the general features identified in the imagined interaction construct is concerned with the discrepancy between imagined and real interaction (Edwards et al., 1988; Zagacki et al., 1988). In addition, Edwards and her associates (1988) argue that there is a slight, peripheral relationship with having an imagined interaction before important encounters and having discrepant imagined interactions. Given the peripheral relationship discussed in earlier imagined interaction studies, the following research question was posed instead of making a directional hypothesis.

RQ5: What is the relationship between imagined interaction discrepancy and the other imagined interaction features (activity, success, proactivity) in the tournament setting?

METHOD

Subjects

The data was collected at three college tournaments. Each tournament offered competition in both debate and individual events. The colleges and universities represented at the tournaments provided a geographic mix of the United States, ranging from California to Florida and from Texas to Minnesota. The sample population consisted of 73 individuals in which 63% were male and 37% were female. In addition, 60% of the respondents primarily competed in debate, 26% in individual events, and 10% competed in both debate and individual events. In considering the breakdown for forensics experience, 38% had 1 to 2 years of experiences, 27% had 3 to 4 years of forensics experience, and 35% had 5 or more year of forensics experience (high school experience was included).

Measuring Imagined Interactions

Honeycutt and his associates (in press) discuss how investigators of imagined interactions face the same methodological problems facing cognitive researchers in general in the reliance on self-reports. Caughey (1984) has acknowledged this difficulty, noting that the only way to gather data about imagined interactions specifically is through introspection. Ericsson and Simon (1980) address the issue of using self-reports as data and offer some guidelines when retrospective verbalization is made. They indicate

that providing contextual information and prompts to respondents can aid recall from long-term memory. The survey instrument that has been used to measure imagined interaction activity is designed to contextualize respondents through prompting them to think about the concept of imagined interactions. Ericsson and Simon (1980) argue that a portion of the contents of short-term memory are fixated in long-term memory and this portion can, at later points in time, be retrieved from long-term memory. Pelose (in press) has indicated how one can find similar methods of introspective self-report used in communication and "daydreaming" research. For example, Singer (1978) has reviewed questionnaire studies of "daydreaming" which may consist of some imagined interaction episodes and indicates that questionnaires and interviews have proven to be helpful in examining special ways in which daydreaming is reflected in daily life.

Instrumentation

The investigation utilized a slightly revised version of the SII developed by Edwards and her associates (1988). The SII is a multidimensional instrument containing eight factor scales reflecting various features of imagined interactions. Subjects respond to 7-point Likert-type scales ranging from 1) "very strong disagreement" to 7) "very strong agreement" in response to items measuring general characteristics and features of imagined interactions. Items reflecting five dimensions of imagined interaction features were chosen for analysis. The five imagined interaction indices were activity, discrepancy, retroactivity, proactivity, and success. These dimensions were chosen due to the kinds of research questions posed in this study. The revised version reduced the number of questionnaire items from 67 to 24. The questions were also reworded to reflect the terminology shared by forensics participants.

Activity is a four-item index that represents the frequency or how often individuals report having imagined interactions (e.g., "I have imagined interactions all the time."). The discrepancy index contains seven items measuring how discrepant an imagined interaction is from a real one (e.g., "In my real conversations, I am very different than in my imagined ones."). Retroactivity is a three-item dimension in which imagined interactions occur after an important encounter has taken place (e.g., "After important meetings, I frequently imagine them."). Proactivity also is a three-item index and reflects those imagined interactions occurring before important meetings (e.g., "Before important meetings, I frequently imagine them.") Finally, success in the imagined interaction was a

three-item index and was defined as the degree to which the respondent reporting feeling successful in their imagined interactions (e.g., "I imagine more success than defeat."). Reliabilities of these indices were stable as evidenced by Cronbach's alpha: activity (.80), discrepancy (.76), retroactivity (.61), proactivity (.72), success (.80).

Statistical Analyses

Correlations were used to examine the relationship between activity, discrepancy, retroactivity, proactivity, and success. Individual contrasts were used to test mean cell differences between debaters and individual event participants. A discriminant analysis was utilized to identify differences between debate and individual events. Discriminant analysis yields a linear combination of variables that maximally distinguishes between groups (Pedhazur, 1982). A key component of discriminant analysis is its ability to produce classification accuracy estimates based on prior probability due to group size. Thus, knowing someone's scores on the discriminant function can result in differential accuracy in classifying them as a debater or individual events participant.

RESULTS

The first research question concerned whether the imagined interactions of debaters differed from those of individual events participants. For this analysis those that competed primarily individual events and those that competed in both debate and individual events were combined to form the individual events group. This was done because the responses given by individuals that competed in both debate and individual events corresponded more closely with the individual events group. The discriminant analysis revealed a significant function (Wilk's Lambda = .84, canonical $r = .40$, Chi Square (2) = 11.08, $p = .004$). Given the small sample size here, it was necessary to establish homogeneity of group covariance. The Box M statistic revealed homogeneity of group covariances (Box M = 6.19, Approximate F = 1.99, $p = .11$) thus indicating that the multivariate discriminant solution could be interpreted. Table 1 reveals the discriminant function weights in which activity and proactivity loaded on the function. Examination of the group centroids revealed that debaters compared to individual event participants had more imagined interactions and that their imagined interactions were liable to occur before the round. The overall classification for the functions was 67.65%. The function was most accurate at classifying debaters (81.4% accuracy) and not very accurate in classifying individual event participants

(44% accuracy).¹ Part of this differential accuracy could be due to the mixing of debate with purely individual events for the "individual events" group. Univariate contrasts also revealed that debaters had more imagined interactions than individual events competitors. Table 2 presents the univariate contrasts for each index.

Table 1
Stepwise Discriminating Imagined Interaction Dimensions

Step	II Dimension	Wilks' Lambda	Rao's V	Change in Rao's V	p	Function Coefficient
1	Activity	.94	4.46	4.46	.034	1.89
2	Proactivity	.84	12.26	7.80	.005	-1.51

Group Centroids: Individual Events = -.56 Debaters = .32

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics and Results of Individual Contrasts For Imagined Interactions (II) Characteristics

Imagined Interaction Characteristics*	M	S.D.	t**
Activity Dimension:			
Debate Group	17.37	5.09	-2.11**
Individual Events Group	14.60	5.44	
Proactivity Dimension:			
Debate Group	17.05	5.85	-.32
Individual Events Group	16.60	4.81	
I.I. with the Judge			
After the Round	3.2	1.6	2.00**
Recurrent judge	3.7	1.6	
Dominates the Interaction			
Self	5.0	1.4	6.93***
Other	3.2	1.2	
Success in I.I.			
Success in I.I.	5.5	1.4	6.97***
Defeat in I.I.	4.3	1.6	
Retroactivity			
Retroactivity	11.6	3.0	3.51***
Proactivity	10.9	3.6	

*Scale Range: Activity (4-28), Proactivity, Retroactivity (3-21), I.I. with Judge, Dominance, Success, Defeat (1-7)

**p < .050

***p < .001

RQ2 asked if the judge or opponent was the dialogue partner in the imagined interactions. Table 3 presents the results of coding of responses to an open-ended question asking who the imagined interactions in tournament competition were with. There was a significant difference between the number of respondents reporting opponents as opposed to other individuals. Respondents indicated that the principal other in their imagined interactions were mostly opponents as opposed to judges, (Chi Square (4) = 10.3, $p = .03$). However, when the judge ($M = 3.2$) was the other in the imagined interaction, the respondents reported that they had imagined interactions with a recurrent judge ($M = 3.7$, $t = 2.00$, $p = .05$, testwise $\alpha = .05$, experimentwise $\alpha = .008$).

Table 3 Dialogue Partners in the Imagined Interactions

Partner	Partner
Opponent	17
Teammate	11
Coach	10
Judge	5
Missing Data*	<u>25</u>
Total	73

Chi Square (4) = 10.3, $p < .03$

*These individuals failed to indicate who their dialogue partners were.

H1 posited that the self would talk more in the imagined interaction than the dialogue partner. This hypothesis was supported. Individual contrasts revealed that the self ($M = 5.0$) dominated the interaction compared to the other ($M = 3.2$, $t = 6.93$, $p = .001$).

RQ3 asked if individuals experienced more success or defeat in their imagined interactions. Respondents experienced significantly more success ($M = 5.5$) than defeat ($M = 4.3$, $t = 6.97$, $p =$ support indicating that the more individuals were successful in their imagined interactions, the more proactive imagined interactions they had. Table 4 reveals the positive correlation ($r =$ imagined interactions indicating that respondents who experienced imagined interactions before the round tended to report more success in their imagined events. On the other hand, retroactivity did not significantly correlate with success. It is also noted that proactivity was strongly related to the frequency of having imagined interactions.

Table 4

Intercorrelations of Imagined Interaction Variables

II Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1) Past Success	—						
2) Activity	-.05	—					
3) Dominance	-.05	.20*	--				
4) Discrepancy	-.20*	-.26**	.23				
5) Retroactivity	.04	.39***	.18	.08	—		
6) Proactivity	-.05	.83***	.18	-.19*	.33**		
7) II Success	.16	.30**	.39***	.03	.12	.29**	

Note. Testwise alpha = .05, Experimentwise alpha = .002

*p<.05

**p<.01

***p<.001

RQ4 asked if imagined interactions precede or follow the actual round of competition. The data revealed that respondents had significantly more imagined interactions after ($M = 11.6$) the round than before ($M = 10.9$, $t = 3.51$, $p = .001$) the round.

RQ5 was concerned with the relationship between having imagined interactions that are discrepant from real interaction in relation to the other imagined interaction variables. The data revealed a number of interesting patterns. As reports of past success increased, discrepancy decreased ($r = -.20$, $p < .05$). Second, there was a negative correlation between activity and discrepancy ($r = -.26$, $p < .01$). The more imagined interactions experienced, the more accurately they correspond to reality since they were less discrepant. Third, there was a slight correlation between proactivity and discrepancy ($r = -.19$, $p < .05$). This suggests that the more frequently that imagined interactions precedes the actual round, the less discrepant the imagined interaction.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study provide some useful insights into forensics and the role of imagined interactions. First, forensic competitors do experience imagined interactions, but the role of the interactions differ as a result of the forensic task (debate and individual events).

The debate group had significantly more imagined interactions than the individual events group. The explanation could be linked to the nature of the events. The debate event requires participants to assume an active role in the communication process. Debaters are required to interact directly with the specific constraints of the environment. Debaters must adapt to the issues, the opponents,

and critic. On the other hand, individual events participants cannot assume as active a role in the communication process. Individual events function in such a way that participants use the same speech and literary cutting throughout an entire forensics season.

Therefore, the nature of the event varies the frequency of the imagined interactions. Debate requires participants constantly to evaluate and reevaluate possible message alternatives in light of the constraints of the situation, thus more frequent imagined interactions are necessary. Since individual events participants are not in a position to vary their prepared speeches significantly, literary cuttings, etc., then fewer imagined interactions are experienced.

Another function significantly linked to the nature of the event was the timing of the imagined interactions (before or after the actual event). Since debate requires the interactants to pursue an active role that shapes the communication encounter, debaters tend to have more imagined interactions before the actual round of competition. For debaters, it appears that imagined interactions served more of a rehearsal process for testing and evaluating potential messages. In individual events, the participants are actors in the communication process fulfilling prescribed roles rather than shaping the communication encounter. For individual events participants, imagined interactions tended to function as post hoc analysis of the given performance.

These results suggest that if the locus of control in the communication situation is in the possession of the interactant, as in debate, then imagined interactions are more frequent and serve a rehearsal function. However, if the locus of control for significantly shaping the interaction process is outside the individual, as in individual events, fewer imagined interactions are experienced; when they are experienced, they are retroactive.

A second major finding concerns discrepancy and imagined interactions. As the frequency of imagined interactions increased, the discrepancy between imagined and real interactions decreased. Similarly, as the participants reported more past success in forensics, discrepancy also decreased. Consequently, as respondents increased their awareness of the forensic activity, through imagined interactions or actual competition, their imagined interactions begin to more closely mirror reality. These results suggest that imagined interactions can compensate for lack of experience in the forensic activity.

In the forensic activity, past success may act as a guide for future performances. Participants attempt to repeat behaviors that were previously rewarded. Imagined interactions allow participants

to rehearse behaviors and then implement the behaviors in subsequent rounds. The rehearsal function enables the inexperienced competitor to compensate for lack of experience by engaging in imagined interactions. Imagined interactions can act as a substitute for experience by allowing the individual to participate mentally in the forensic activity.

A third insight of interest relates to proactivity and the imagined success construct. When an individual experienced the imagined interaction before the actual encounter, they tended to experience more success in the imagined interaction. This may correspond with Rosenthal and Jacobson's (1968) self-fulfilling prophecy. Before the actual encounter, participants imagined the best possible outcome. They had a tendency to view themselves in a favorable light. This result in conjunction with the finding concerning discrepancy suggests that proactive imagined interactions assist the individual in psychologically preparing for actual competition.

Interestingly, imagined success did not significantly correlate with retroactivity. This would suggest that in the retroactive process of imagined interactions, the individual tends to focus on the shortcomings of the actual performance before knowing how he/she was evaluated by the judge resulting in a two-fold effect on the individual. First, by focusing on the inadequacies of the actual encounter, individuals could be bolstering themselves for anticipated news of low ratings from a judge. If the individual can prepare for anticipated disappointment through retroactivity, then the actual news resulting in disappointment is softened and the ego remains intact.

In addition to protecting the ego, retroactive imagined interactions can play an educational role for the participant. Through retroactivity, the individual can identify the inadequacies of the previous performance and adjust future performances to compensate. Not only can imagined interactions better prepare (proactive) the individual for the actual encounter but they can also provide psychological support after-the-fact (retroactive). Future imagined interactions research needs to explore the precise functions of proactivity and retroactivity in a variety of communication situations.

Unfortunately, this research failed to statistically establish the link between past success in competition and success in imagined interactions. The possible reason for this failure was the inadequacy of the rating scale used to determine past success. Participants were asked to provide a self-report of their past success in competitions by selecting from three possible choices: extremely

successful, somewhat successful, and not very successful. These discrete categories proved inadequate because the participants were very hesitant to rate themselves extremely successful, though their past records would indicate that they have been extremely successful.

For future research, a measure of actual success at the tournament needs to be used. The link between actual success and imagined success needs to be thoroughly examined and understood. Even though a clear link could not be statistically established for past success and imagined success, respondents did indicate that they experienced more success than defeat in their imagined interactions. This result adds to the notion that imagined interactions function in the realm of self-fulfilling prophecies.

A fourth insight provided by the data relates to the role of the dialogue partner in the imagined interactions. Rosenblatt and Meyer (1986) indicated that imagined interactions are attempts to simulate real-life conversations with significant others. The open-ended question concerning who is the focus of the imagined interaction produced the result that the opponent is the significant other. This result was consistent with both groups (debate and individual events). This finding is particularly interesting since the judge holds the decision-making power in the round.

Implications for Coaches

For forensic coaches, this research suggests that imagined interactions can play a critical role in the psychological preparation of competitors, both before and after the actual round. First, coaches need to impress upon participants that imagined interactions can be used for more than merely rehearsing or reviewing their performances. Imagined interactions represent a cognitive evaluation of communication behaviors produced in the round. For imagined interactions to be utilized as a coaching strategy, participants must imagine themselves discussing their performance with critics, opponents, and audience members. The imagined communication with others can enable the competitor to better understand the effects of their performance on the audience. Enhanced understanding can provide the contestant with a foundation for revising their performance to meet the expectations of the situation.

Imagined interactions should not be confused with internal self-talk. Howell (1986) discusses "internal monologue" as talking with oneself. According to Howell, individuals want to concentrate fully on a topic but their mind wanders. Attention is divided

between these thoughts and what the individual should be doing in the encounter. "The more intense and constant the internal monologue, the lower a person's ability to pick up cues from the environment and respond sensibly to them" (Howell, 1986; p. 114).

In contrast, imagined interactions are internal dialogue. Instead of merely responding to our conjured thoughts, we may respond to imagined remarks by the other. For example, if a debater is constantly losing a particular issue, then the debater could imagine discussing the details of the issue with a critic. The imagined discussion could better enable the debater to revise the argument to meet the needs of the judge. In individual events, contestants that are consistently informed on ballots that their selections are not indicative of their talent could use imagined interactions to address the issue and possibly revise their introductions in order to address the judging complaints. However, if contestants merely rehearse their events without cognitively evaluating the effects of the performance on the audience, the cognitive imagery will not fulfill its potential.

In order for imagined interactions to better fulfill their potential, coaches need to encourage competitors to construct imagined interactions with critics. The results of this study indicate that imagined interactions most often occur with other competitors; however, the critic is the decision-maker in the round and therefore should be the significant other in the imagined interaction. Thomas (1981) noted that the round is decided in the mind of the critic and not the perceptions of the competitors. Thus, it might be wise for a contestant to construct imagined interactions with critics.

Imagined interactions with critics could be constructed from judges' ballots, judging philosophies, actual judge interactions, and discussions with other contestants concerning various judges. From the collected information, contestants could generate imagined interactions with critics which would enable contestants to be better prepared to reproduce the behaviors that correspond to the expectations of the various judges. Obviously, this coaching strategy is most beneficial with reoccurring critics. However, such interactions could also aid the participant in constructing a foundation of judging expectations based on the collected data.

Second, coaches should encourage competitors to proactively imagine successful communication behavior. Competitors, like athletes, should mentally rehearse the behavior that is to be reproduced in competition. For example, debaters could rehearse cross examination questions and answers, first affirmative responses, case arguments, off-case positions, etc. Individual events partici-

pants could focus attention on maintaining concentration in the upcoming rounds. Whatever problems that competitors may have in competition could be minimized through positive mental imagery.

Third, coaches could utilize imagined interactions by having competitors cognitively playback the round and attempt to pinpoint exceptional aspects of their performance while trying to reproduce those aspects in future rounds. Through retroactivity, competitors could identify why they were successful and focus on repeating the successful behavior.

Finally, imagined interactions could be useful in supplementing actual practice sessions. The activity dimensions of imagined interactions indicates that the more frequently imagined interactions are experienced, the more accurately they mirror reality as well as corresponding to imagined success. In addition, the data indicates that imagined interactions can compensate for lack of experience and mentally prepare the participant for the demands of competition. Since a significant portion of forensics is in the mind, then it may be wise for coaches to encourage participants to actively imagine the rounds. If control and success in the actual rounds can be linked to concentration and dedication to the task at hand, then imagined interactions may facilitate successful competition.

NOTES

Classification accuracy in discriminant analysis is meaningful only to the extent that the prior probability of classification is considered. Based on sample size, the prior probability of classification was .37 for individual events and .63 for debate activities. Thus, the percentage of cases correctly classified was beyond chance accuracy for both groups.

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PREDICTING RANKINGS AT INDIVIDUAL
EVENTS TOURNAMENTS: DO THE OUTCOMES
JUSTIFY CURRENT PRACTICES?

*Robert S. Littlefield**

Students competing in forensic activities have long been self-proclaimed masters in the "art of prediction." These students have predicted how they would finish in a round of competition based upon their speaking order or perceived favorable or unfavorable judge bias towards them based upon previous experiences and knowledge of a judge. Despite the mystery surrounding these predictions by students during any given forensic tournament, and the unwillingness of most coaches to accept the bases for these thoughts, that which is predicted can often become what some call a "self-fulfilling prophecy."

This ability to predict the rankings of judges in individual events has not received attention from forensic scholars. However, Murphy and Hensley (1966) studied the ability of debaters to predict whether they won or lost a debate and whether they could evaluate the skill of an opposing debater. They concluded that debaters could not predict their own abilities or those abilities of their opponents to win rounds.

The effect of the judge who provides the unexpected ranking (commonly referred to as "the squirrel judge") has been the basis of a number of studies. Pratt and Littlefield (1986) examined judges' preferences as a tournament tabulation procedure. They determined that, in general, if a judge were accepted to critique rounds of competition in individual events by a tournament director, the rankings and ratings provided by that judge should be considered as accurate and appropriate as any other judge accepted to critique rounds at a given tournament. They suggested that the term "squirrel" was used inappropriately to identify a judge of perceived "lower quality" because his or her ranks and ratings differed from those of the other judges in a round. In an effort to further clarify attitudes toward judges, Hanson (1987) identified what traits student contestants associated with a "good" judge, and those associated with a "bad" judge. His survey found that students identified "good" judges as providing helpful comments, being attentive, lacking bias, providing feedback, and contributing

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to feelings of "comfort." "Bad" judges were those who were inattentive, rude, and biased.

To compensate for the "squirrel" or "bad" judge, tabulation procedures were developed to nullify the impact of the atypical rank or rating at national tournaments. The procedure of dropping the low ranking and low rating (not necessarily on the same ballot) was instituted and widely accepted by both the American Forensic Association and the National Forensic Association communities. Littlefield (1986, 1987) studied the effect of this procedure on the pool of contestants who advanced to the elimination rounds at national individual events tournaments.

The creation of the procedure to drop the low rank and rating was first based upon a need felt by a number of coaches and contestants. It seemed that contestants who knew their judges from previous tournament experiences and had received a low ranking from these judges, were often predicting that these judges would again penalize them with a low ranking, thereby keeping them from advancing into the elimination rounds. The "psychological effect" of dropping the lowest rank and rating on the contestant who expected the "squirrel" rank or rating was cited as the major reason justifying the creation and maintenance of this practice, despite the fact that, statistically, the group advancing into the elimination rounds would not have been significantly altered by using the procedure as specified (Littlefield, 1987).

Another dimension affecting the ability of contestants to predict their rankings and ratings resulted from the nature of the event in which they competed. Just as Murphy and Hensley (1966) suggested that debaters might be able to judge their performance based upon certain categories, students competing in prepared public speaking events (persuasion, informative, after-dinner speaking, communication analysis) at consecutive tournaments might be able to predict more accurately how their content would be received than contestants in limited preparation events (extemporaneous or impromptu speaking) where the content was untested in previous tournament situations. Similarly, students in oral interpretation events who had become proficient in the delivery of their material might be able to make more accurate predictions of how they were being evaluated by a judge than those who were unsure of their topics and required to develop speeches with a limited amount of preparation time.

The reliability of contestants in individual events being able to predict how judges would rank them, and the absence of research in this area prompted the study of the following research questions:

- 1) Can contestants predict how they will be ranked in rounds of competition?
- 2) Are contestants in "prepared" events better able to predict their rankings than those in "limited" preparation events?

METHODS

Instrument

A survey was developed to explore two questions: (1) Did the contestants recognize the names of specific judges who would be hearing them perform at a tournament; and (2) if they recognized their judge (by name or previous experience), what did they predict their rank would be from that judge in a given section at the tournament. If they predicted that they would receive a first place ranking in the round, they were asked to circle a 1; a second place rank would prompt their circling a 2; and so forth through the fifth place resulting in a circled 5 on the survey form.

The survey form followed the sample format listed below:

<i>Judge</i>	<i>Do You Know This Judge</i>		<i>Predict Your Rank From This Judge</i>				
A	Yes	No (Circle)	1	2	3	4	5

Subjects

There were 241 contestants at the 1987 District 4 qualifying tournament for the American Forensic Association's National Individual Events Tournament. Each student received a copy of the survey as a part of registration materials. District 4 includes in the states of Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. One hundred twelve contestants (47% of the population) returned their surveys. Of these, 57 contestants (51% of the respondents) indicated that they knew at least one judge. The completed survey forms of these 57 contestants became the database for this case study.

Design

These 57 contestants made 226 predictions about how they would fare from judges that they knew. These 226 predictions were matched with the actual rankings received from the judges. The pairs of predictions and actual rankings became the basis for the statistical tests used. A t-test was selected as appropriate for use to determine if the data suggested a significant difference between prediction and actual ranking. A Pearson Correlation Coefficient was also used to produce the correlation between predicted and actual scores. To determine the difference, the actual score was

subtracted from the predicted score (Difference = predicted minus actual ranking).

RESULTS

The results from the t-test indicated that as a group, there was a significant difference between prediction and actual rankings received by students from judges they knew. An alpha level of .05 was established to determine significance on all tests run in this study. The data suggest that for the total population, contestants tended to predict that they would receive higher rankings than they actually received (see Table 1).

N	Mean	Standard Error	T	PR>T	.05
57	-0.420	0.105	-4.00	0.0001	

The various events offered at the tournament were grouped according to the categories "limited preparation" (impromptu speaking and extemporaneous speaking), "prepared public speaking" (persuasive speaking, informative speaking, after-dinner speaking, sales speaking, and communication analysis), and "oral interpretation" (prose, poetry, drama, dramatic duo). The results from the t-test suggested for the "prepared public speaking" events and the "oral interpretation" events, there was a significant difference between predicted and actual rankings. This significance was not found to be true in the "limited preparation" events (see Table 2).

Group	N	Mean	Standard Error	T	PR>T	.05
Limited Preparation	54	-0.296	0.217	-1.36	0.1787	
Prepared Public Spkg	63	-0.444	0.183	-2.42	0.0184	
Oral Interp	109	-0.467	0.157	-2.97	0.0037	

To determine if a correlation existed between the predicted and actual rankings received by the contestants, an r value of .103 was calculated. Significance was found at the .12 level.

DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

Overall, the answer to the first research question must be no. Because a significant difference was found between prediction and actual rankings received by contestants, the conclusion that contestants can predict how they will do in rounds of competition cannot be supported. This finding parallels the conclusions reached by Murphy and Hensley (1966).

There may be a number of reasons why this study produced this finding. The timing of the survey may have influenced the predictions. Students were asked to return their surveys prior to the start of the rounds. Actual performance and satisfaction arising from audience feedback could not be taken into account. Also, due to the nature of competitive forensics, it is unlikely that contestants were most optimistic about the results prior to the start of the competition. Once the tournament began, the contestants may have decided that other variables caused them not to receive as high a ranking as they would have liked. These variables might have included any of the following: 1) The competition was better than expected; 2) ill health; 3) personal distractions; or 4) team problems.

Another reason why the contestants might have predicted higher scores than they received could be related to preparation factors for a particular contest. If a student were to have spent a significant amount of time preparing for a speech contest, s/he may have felt more optimistic about the results than a student who was less prepared for a tournament.

Due to the nature of prepared events versus limited preparation events, one would expect that students might be better able to predict rankings in prepared events because they tend to be rehearsed and the content fairly consistent. However, the data did not allow the second research question to be answered in the affirmative. Students in the prepared events (both public speaking and oral interpretation) were not able to predict their rankings. These contestants scored lower than they predicted. In the limited preparation events, the conclusion cannot be reached that there was a significant difference between predicted and actual scores. However, students also scored lower in this group than they predicted.

Part of the basis for justifying the continuation of the process of dropping the low ranking and rating at the National Individual Events Tournaments sponsored by the American Forensic Association and the National Forensic Association rests upon the premise that students prefer the practice, and if they do have a judge

from whom they have previously received a low ranking and perceived negative comments on a ballot, they can be assured that the "judge" would not be able to "keep them out" of eliminating rounds. By affording them the dropped rank, the students have a more "positive feeling" about performing in a given round when they have judges who they predict will give low rankings.

In this study, 97 out of 112 responded that they believed the policy to be a good one, 15 contestants were unsure, and no students were opposed to the procedure. Despite student support, the results in the following table suggest that for all of the responding students predicting a low rank of 4th or 5th in a round, only five predictions were correct. Three were lower. Sixteen received higher rankings than were predicted (see Table 3).

Table 3
Predicted And Actual Scores for All Contestants
Who Expected to Receive a Low Ranking

Contestant Code	Event	Predicted Rank	Actual Rank
1103	Informative	4	2
	Poetry	4	3
1109	Duo	4	1
1402	Drama	4	3
	Prose	4	5
	Impromptu	4	4
1403	Impromptu	5	4
1604	Impromptu	4	1
1704	Persuasive	4	4
1919	Extemporaneous	5	3
	Impromptu	5	4
2001	Drama	4	1
	Poetry	4	1
	Prose	4	1
2406	Drama	5	3
2603	Comm. Analysis	4	5
2606	Prose	4	1
2705	Duo	4	1
2802	Extemporaneous	4	5
2905	Duo	5	5
3002	ADS	4	3
	Drama	4	3
3003	Duo	5	5
3008	Prose	4	4

What all of this suggests is that students, as a group and based upon this sample, were not good predictors of their rankings.

Knowing a judge did not help the students to accurately predict how they would finish in a given round of competition.

CONCLUSIONS

This study provides some justification for the argument that the dropping of the low rank and low rating (not necessarily on the same ballot) is an unnecessary tournament management procedure. Earlier studies suggested that the procedure did not produce a significantly different pool of contestants emerging into elimination rounds at national individual events tournaments (AFA, NFA, and Pi Kappa Delta), and the process took considerable time to complete. The present study suggests that students may not even be able to predict when a judge they know will award them with a low ranking in a round of competition. Without such an ability, the "psychological factor" of "saving the student's chances for advancing to finals" by excluding the "squirrel" or "bad" judge's ranking and rating becomes less compelling as a reason for continuing to use the procedure. While the intent of this study, in and of itself, is not to call for the elimination of this procedure, a reexamination of the rationale behind dropping the low ranking and rating would be in order. Hansen (1988) called for the forensic community "to create an ongoing critical review of its practices" in order to avoid becoming static (p. 11). While this case study is limited in scope, the results may be useful for national tournament committees as they consider their tabulation practices in the future.

Further research in the area of student predictions of judges' rankings should be conducted on all levels of individual events competition, including the national tournaments. The judge pools at various tournaments could be identified to determine if some judges are more predictable than others. Also, individual student predictions may vary depending upon experience level and type of events. Just as events were grouped in this study, it may be possible to look at groups of contestants and judges to determine if any patterns of prediction emerge.

In summary, despite the occasionally "accurate" prediction made by a student at a given tournament, this study did not provide support for the claim that students can predict the rankings or ratings judges will give them. The inability of students to predict rankings and ratings in this study may provide support for the argument that all rankings and ratings should be used to determine the final scores at tournaments.

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CLARIFYING TOURNAMENT RHETORICAL CRITICISM: A PROPOSAL FOR NEW RULES AND STANDARDS

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In a recent issue of the *National Forensic Journal*, John Murphy has thoughtfully outlined what he perceives to be the ills of competitive rhetorical criticism, also known as communication analysis. According to Murphy,

the event suffers from a rigid obsession with methodology in the speech, from the requirement to add to rhetorical theory at the end of the speech, and from evaluative criteria that often have more to do with history than with analysis of the artifact.¹

To eliminate many of the complaints about competitive rhetorical criticism, Murphy suggests a focus on the text of the rhetorical artifact. In fact, he urges: "The standards of the event need to change to reflect an increasing concern with the texts we study."² While we wholeheartedly agree with many of Murphy's arguments about the problems in rhetorical criticism, we disagree with his solution. In short, we fear that moving away from methodology will produce rhetorical criticisms that are as vacuous and shallow as the methodology-heavy speeches that Murphy decries. To be sure, Murphy does not suggest abandoning methodology; but his claim that "novice critics simply do not have the time nor the ability to create theory in these short speeches" misses the point of the role of theory in competitive rhetorical criticism.³ Rhetorical theory must provide the foundation of a rhetorical criticism, yet also be supplemented by the criticism. Ideally then, the text and theory mutually inform one another during the process of and as a result of criticism. Thus, the goal of criticism—as Murphy aptly argues—is not to prove a method's utility. Nor should the goal be to focus exclusively on a text.

To explicate our claim concerning the goal of criticism we first explore the two extremes of criticism identified above and explain how the rules of forensics organizations encourage each extreme. The methodology-heavy approach we term the "scholarly analogue"; the text-heavy approach, the "popular media" analogue.

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Then, in an effort to bridge the two extremes, we propose a new set of rules for competitive rhetorical criticism. The need for a new, more definite set of rules is noted not only by Murphy, but by Rosenthal as well: "One of the primary reasons rhetorical criticism is viewed with confusion by many members of the forensic community is the lack of an adequate definition of the theoretical purpose and function of the event."⁴ The philosophy behind the new set of rules we propose is explained in terms of the literature and illustrated in practice by excerpts from a student rhetorical criticism dealing with arguments used by the Institute for Historical Review in their denial of the Holocaust.⁵

The Two Extremes of Criticism

A common element of tournament after-dinner speaking and coaches parties is the infamous and frequently tasteless rhetorical criticism joke. Rhetorical criticism, known in some circles as communication analysis, has in its short history emerged as the most maligned speaking event, and perhaps for good reason. Plato, through Socrates in his dialogue *Gorgias*, likened rhetoric to mere cookery, "only an experience and a routine."⁶ If Plato were alive today to observe tournament rhetorical criticism speeches, he would be less than impressed with the rather bizarre recipes for success concocted by many students and savored by as many judges. Students dressed up in their contest finery serve up topics including Harlequin romances, the Jerry Lewis Telethon, and inspirational room decorations. Mix the presentation with heaping helpings of humor, blend in Burke, Bormann, or Bitzer, add a dash of sophistic salt, sprinkle conservatively with critical insight, cook over high heat until hearty laughter results. Yield—a winning rhetorical "criticism."

Although the preceding may seem hyperbolic, there are serious problems with tournament rhetorical criticism, most all of which flow from one fatal flaw: the lack of adequate rules and standards for the event. Put bluntly, there seem to be nearly as many conceptions of rhetorical criticism as there are students, coaches, and judges. Each of us has an idea of what should be included in a complete tournament rhetorical criticism, but there seems to be little agreement on a specific standard for preparing and judging this type of speech. Rules set by the American Forensic Association (AFA) and the National Forensic Association (NFA) provide some guidance, but ultimately contribute to, rather than alleviate, the problem. Each organization's rules suggest inappropriate analogies to the event, creating two types of criticism,

both of which limit the potential educational value of the event. The AFA rules suggest a popular media analogue approach, while the NFA rules mandate a scholarly analogue approach.

The popular media analogue likens rhetorical criticism to various forms of media commentary, such as the instantaneous commentary offered by newscasters following a presidential debate. Such commentary, while reflecting the personal impressions of the critic, tends to be devoid of critical standards of judgment which are carefully thought out and applied. In particular, the popular media analogue is marked by a conspicuous absence of at least one of three fundamental components of rhetorical criticism: a significant artifact, evaluation of the artifact, and the artifact's role in rhetorical theory. The AFA rules, in particular, encourage criticism in the mode of the popular media:

An original speech by the student designed to offer an explanation and/or evaluation of a communication event such as a speech, speaker, movement, poem, poster, film, campaign, etc., through the use of rhetorical principles. Audio-visual aids may or may not be used to supplement and reinforce the message.⁷

Noticeably absent from these rules is any mention of whether the artifact need be significant, resulting in such questionable topics as wrestling, Harlequin romances, children's books, etc. Second, evaluation is deemed optional by the AFA rules, creating the ail-too familiar criticism which merely accepts the artifact at face value. Finally, the vague term, "rhetorical principles" allows students to devise nearly any kind of analytical scheme—schemes that frequently do not inform rhetorical theory. Although rhetorical criticism speeches falling victim to the popular media analogue may be shallow and impressionistic, they avoid the other undesirable extreme: "cookie-cutter" speeches adhering to the scholarly analogue.

The scholarly analogue suggests that students engaging in tournament rhetorical criticism ought to mimic the efforts of rhetorical criticism scholars housed in departments of speech communication. Coaches encourage students to select a speech or group of speeches, find a neatly-packaged set of labels from a criticism published in a scholarly journal or book (calling it a method), and then begin preparing the criticism.

The NFA rules, with their mention of "critical rhetorical methodology," suggest the scholarly analogue approach:

Contestants will deliver an original critical analysis of any significant rhetorical artifact. The speaker should limit quotations from or summary of paraphrase of the analyzed artifact to a minimum. Any legitimate critical rhetorical methodology is permissible as long as it serves to open up the artifact for the audience.⁸

Although this approach is more desirable than the popular media analogue, it also presents the student with a host of difficulties. Suddenly, the competitor with little or no background in rhetorical criticism is forced to synthesize the complex ideas of eminent scholars. One of two outcomes usually occurs: the student, confronted by a bewildering corpus of scholarly literature, abandons the effort entirely or resorts to the "cookie cutter" approach. Generally, the cookie cutter approach entails reducing the critical methodology to a set of ill applied key terms and then forcing the rhetoric to conform. In short, the student will find exactly what the key terms of the method suggest will be found; neither the text nor the methodology sufficiently enhances the other. Consequently, "rhet critics are generally less concerned with finding out something about the speech than they are in proving the speech fits the methodology chosen."⁹

While both popular media and scholarly approaches exist at tournaments across the country, we contend that neither is appropriate. Speeches influenced by these approaches often contain the following: description and interpretation of the artifact without evaluation. If evaluation occurs, the student equates the task solely with demonstrating the effects of the rhetoric—effects that are often overclaimed by the student; emphasis on popular and titillating subjects, and abuse and misuse of the ideas of rhetorical scholars. Most distasteful of all, students following one of the two analogues may well leave the activity without a proper understanding of the purpose and process of criticism.

To make tournament rhetorical criticism a more appetizing prospect for students and judges (even those unfamiliar with criticism), we propose a set of rules that make clear to both participants and critics the goal and function of tournament rhetorical criticism. The rules we suggest contain three standards. First, the event should be governed by a social significance standard: *the speaker must provide independent insight into understanding the symbolic/language strategies that link us together or tear us apart as a society*. Second, the standard of methodology should be replaced with perspective taking: *the student should offer a critical perspective developed from the ideas of rhetorical scholars to pro-*

vide a theoretical foundation for his or her ideas. Third, the standard of evaluation is mandated: *the speech must persuasively describe, interpret, and evaluate the symbols I language found in the rhetorical artifact.*¹⁰ We believe students attempting to meet these rules will learn to think more independently and will gain a better understanding of the purpose and process of rhetorical criticism.

Social Significance as a Standard

The speaker must provide independent insight into understanding the symbolic/language strategies that link us together or tear us apart as a society.

The standard of social significance contains two parts. First, the student critic must demonstrate that the artifact is socially significant. Secondly, the original insight the student provides must also possess social significance. As Brock and Scott aptly note, "Part of the task of rhetorical criticism is to find a focus, to pick products that will be fruitful to criticize."¹¹

The Artifact. Frequently, judges must endure contest speeches in which the student has chosen an artifact whose message, purpose, and function are merely trivial. Even more frequently, students with *a priori* significant topics fail to provide a justification in their own words for the analysis of their topic. Thus, the judge writes on the ballot something similar to, "This seems like a reasonable topic, but you really never tell us *why* it is worthy of analysis." Clearly, students must not only choose significant topics, but also provide solid reasoning explaining the significance. If we are to teach criticism, then we must surely emphasize the critique of "things that matter." Already, the forensics community demands significance in other events; we should demand significance in all events.

The NFA has recognized the need for a significant topic, but its rules need to be more specific in spelling out this need. As we suggest, the speech should provide insight into understanding the symbolic/language strategies that link us together or tear us apart as a society. While our preference is to limit the event to language strategies, we recognize that students may develop speeches which provide insight into how symbols are utilized in the linking together or tearing apart of society (for example, a speech in the final round of the 1987 Individual Events Nationals illuminated how Iranian postage stamps enhance social cohesion in that country). Let us emphasize, however, that to be socially significant, the

influence of the artifact on social unity or disunity must be clearly explained by the student critic.

EXAMPLE-ARTIFACT'S SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

The student establishes social significance of the artifact by linking it to one of the darkest moments in human history. "The mere mention of such names as Auschwitz, Buchenwald, or Dachau invokes horror at the thought that a modern civilization could have had the capacity for such brutality. And yet, today, an extremist think-tank known as the Institute for Historical Review, would have us believe not only that the Holocaust never occurred, but that it is the invention of what the Institute describes as a conniving race of subhumans, the Jews."

The Insight. In addition to demonstrating the significance of the artifact, the student must also prove that his or her findings are also socially significant. Criticism is valuable because it teaches us something we did not previously know, not because it tells us something we expect to happen. Little is learned from a criticism of a Democratic convention speech, for example, that concludes that the speaker appealed to traditional Democratic values. Such a conclusion does not illuminate or provide insight; it simply tells us what we already know. A criticism ideally should result in "achieving a greater understanding of the event and the importance of rhetoric to society in general."¹²

EXAMPLE-SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF FINDINGS

The student demonstrates the social significance of his findings by pointing out that the rhetoric attempts to destroy the credibility of a group of people and a nation. The Institute's "basic premise," says the student, "is that the United States and the western world support the nation of Israel because of a gross exaggeration, if not an outright lie. The group advances this notion by attempting to establish a thread of doubt in the audience about the very existence of the Holocaust. In so doing, the Institute hopes to eliminate the reason for our support of Israel which, it suggests, is collective guilt about the Holocaust."

Obviously, we cannot expect a student critic to provide a lasting contribution to rhetorical theory in a ten-minute speech. If we do not expect some insight or new understanding into symbolic/language strategies, however, we are not fulfilling the true educational potential of the event and of the participating students. Students can and do analyze texts while informing rhetorical the-

ory. Consequently, the rules for contest rhetorical criticism should also mandate that student critics provide original ideas and analysis about the artifact.

Replacing Methodologies with Perspectives

The student should offer a critical perspective developed from the ideas of rhetorical scholars to provide a theoretical foundation for his or her ideas.

We believe students attempting to meet this standard of our proposed set of rules will learn to think more independently and thus gain a better understanding of the purpose and process of rhetorical criticism. Providing original ideas and insight can be difficult for student critics when they are hampered by the artificial constraints of a methodology. We maintain that the use of methodologies hurts, rather than helps, student efforts to provide original insight. The method tells students what to find and how it should be presented—a recipe in all senses of the word. Thus, we find a proliferation of the dreaded "cookie cutter" speeches in which the student takes the method steps in hand, raises the method above the artifact, then presses down to provide us with "insight" that the method presupposes to exist. As Murphy explains, such a process encourages "classification rather than argumentation."¹³ This process does not teach students or audience members anything new about the symbolic/language strategies, society, the artifact, or standards for criticism. However, if we abandon the idea of theoretical foundation entirely, we find ourselves without standards following the atheoretical popular media analogue. A more reasonable approach is to teach students standards through two "critical" principles—*impulse* and *perspective*.

The critical impulse, put simply, allows students to examine the rhetoric on their own, without "benefit" of methodological blinders, before drawing any conclusions. Brock and Scott describe the critical impulse as a "vague feeling that cannot be defined with precision":

Every day our experiences make us aware of circumstances that seem to cry out for explanations. What we feel moving within us at these moments of special questioning may be called "the critical impulse." But what is this impulse? It is difficult to pinpoint. Perhaps it is a queasy feeling or the urge to run or to strike out. Often it manifests itself by verbalizing agreement or disagreement. At other times the critical impulse is formed into a guarded intellectual statement.¹⁴

Within every human being lies the innate or learned desire—the critical impulse—to explain and evaluate phenomena. The student of rhetorical criticism, of course, also possesses this impulse. To explain and evaluate, the student must immerse himself or herself in the artifact and discover "what's there" by digging around. Historian Robert Lifton calls this process the "use of the self as one's research instrument."¹⁵ In digging, the student may unearth an overarching metaphor, recurring language strategies, improper use of evidence, strategies similar to those used on other occasions, or any other basic standards of criticism which the student critic has been taught prior to his or her rhetorical expedition.

EXAMPLE-DIGGING INTO THE ARTIFACT

By choosing a perspective rather than a set of labels, the student forces an independent analysis of language strategies rather than merely searching for snippets of language that fit the predetermined labels. This process of digging into the artifact results in the student's discovering three major language strategies employed by the Institute. "Initially, the Institute attempts to undermine the credibility of the Jewish people. Second, they attack assumptions regarding Nazi intentions. Finally, they pose questions indicating that the Holocaust was technically impossible." The student's research and analysis is more than a process of matching phrases and labels; it is a critical investigation in which *the student* discovers the language strategies used in the artifact.

In particular, the student can and should consider the following questions articulated by Kathleen German:

1. Is there a prominent element or several elements in the artifact which dominate it?
2. Is the rhetoric an expression of its cultural milieu?
3. Is there an interaction of elements in this artifact which accounts for its unique character?
4. When compared to other artifacts, does this rhetoric reveal unique characteristics it possesses or which characterize a group of similar artifacts?
5. Does the rhetorical theory of the historical period lend understanding to the rhetorical artifact?¹⁶

After digging around the artifact, the student should be able, in his or her own words, to explain the symbolic/language strategies at work—the textual analysis of which Murphy writes. This approach avoids the pitfalls of the scholarly approach by forcing the student to develop his or her own ideas rather than forcing the

rhetoric into the ideas of another. To avoid the dangers of the popular media approach, though, another step must be taken—the incorporation of theory. We suggest employing a critical perspective, rather than methodology, to accomplish this task.

Our call for replacing the standard usage of methodology is certainly not new. Thompson, earlier this decade, decried the misuse of methodologies by students, noting that they often have "a superficial, even mistaken, grasp of the chosen methodology."¹⁷ More recently, Rosenthal highlighted the need for more creativity in choosing a tool to illuminate the artifact. He suggested developing a tool based upon more than one methodology.¹⁸ Hahn and Gustainis take an even more liberal approach, correctly pointing out that "it may well be the student who develops his/her own methodology for criticism has learned more, and can teach more to observers, than can the student who offers the 999th reading of the Burkean pentad."¹⁹ While we applaud the notion of the above authors, we cannot wholeheartedly agree with either Rosenthal or Hahn and Gustainis. Instead, we take more of a middle ground by recognizing the need and desirability of both an established theoretical approach and independent student insight. Thus, we suggest a "critical perspective."

A critical perspective differs from a methodology in that no concrete step-by-step instructions are laid out; a perspective is basically a theoretical foundation from which the student can build his or her own ideas within the province of rhetoric. Students borrow the basic ideas of rhetorical scholars to make their own ideas clearer and more complete. For example, students utilizing critical perspectives would discuss the basics of metaphor or generic criticism rather than Ivie on metaphors in prowar discourse or Ware and Linkugel on apologia. In so doing, student critics will find themselves asserting less and arguing more, a valuable goal since, as Murphy claims, "The state of argument in rhetorical criticism is not good."²⁰ Methodologies naturally give rise to assertions because the student cannot see beyond the fact that the rhetoric "fits" the methodology. On the other hand, following the critical impulse and perspective route forces the student critic to discover his or her own lines of analysis, and consequently the student is better equipped to reasonably argue his or her position. The organization of the speech would follow the ideas of the student instead of the steps of the method laid out by the scholar. Original thinking would replace fill-in-the-blank thinking during the preparation of the speech.

EXAMPLE-CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE

Rather than merely pulling labels out of some published critique, for instance, the student relies on a perspective of political myths he discovered in a book written by Henry Tudor. "In addition to explaining our world view, Tudor suggests that myths also aim to either advocate a certain course of action or justify the acceptance of an existing state of affairs. Tudor further suggests that the mythmaker constructs myths in retrospect, including events which would disprove the myth. Therefore, myths serve a rationalizing function and are constructed in a manner which enhances the position of the mythmaker." The student justifies this choice of perspective by noting that the Holocaust, as currently perceived, fits Tudor's definition of political myth. Thus, the student's goal is to shed light on the "alternative myth" espoused by the Institute.

Mandating the Standard of Evaluation

The speech must persuasively describe, interpret, and evaluate the symbols /language found in the rhetorical artifact.

While preparing the criticism, the student should take to heart the words of Brock and Scott: "The primary purposes of rhetorical criticism are to describe, to interpret, and to evaluate. These purposes tend to merge into one another. One purpose prepares for the next; the one that follows reflects back on the one that has been explicated."²¹ These three purposes constitute the process of rhetorical criticism, a process which is inherently persuasive.²² As Brock and Scott succinctly note: "The critic says implicitly, 'See as I see, know as I know, value as I value.'"²³ Assertions and classifications, as noted earlier, are not persuasive. Arguments are persuasive, and student critics should employ them when describing, interpreting, and evaluating. The late rhetorical scholar Wayne Brockriede wrote an article that should be required reading for every rhetorical critic, "Rhetorical Criticism as Argument," in which he outlined the five characteristics of a complete argument: (1) an inferential leap from existing beliefs to the adopting of a new belief or the reinforcement of an old one; (2) a perceived rationale to justify that leap; (3) a choice among two or more competing claims; (4) a regulation of uncertainty in relation to the selected claim—since someone has made an inferential leap, certainty can be neither zero nor total; (5) a willingness to risk a confrontation of that claim with one's peers.²⁴ Criticism by argument is not only necessary to demonstrate how a critic makes an inferential leap, it is necessary for two pragmatic

reasons noted by Brockriede: such arguments are generally more informative, and they also invite "confrontation that may begin or continue a process enhancing an understanding of a rhetorical experience or of rhetoric."²⁵ In short, arguments help us learn more about communication.

EXAMPLE-DESCRIPTION AND INTERPRETATION:

Description and interpretation are interrelated steps. The first illustrates what is happening on the surface of the rhetoric, while the second identifies the symbolic consequences of the rhetoric. In other words, the critic must both explain "what is there" and "how it works." For example, the student describes one aspect of the Institute's rhetoric: "The link between the Holocaust and aid to Israel is stated overtly when the Institute claims 'the main theme for Jewish fund-raising is the Holocaust, and has been for 38 years. When they don't use the Holocaust, the money collection sharply drops off.'" The student then follows up with interpretation: "By establishing a Jewish motive for the perpetration of a Holocaust lie, the Institute hopes to plant seeds of doubt. Moreover, the Institute carefully constructs the rhetoric in an attempt to avoid disrupting the audience's sense of history, thus protecting the believability of the myth."

Student critics learning about communication and criticism often forget or overlook the need for argumentation, especially if they choose to evaluate. When they do evaluate, student critics often make incomplete or faulty arguments, mainly because they equate evaluation solely with an external examination of the effects of the artifact, or they attempt to tie their evaluations to the method and conclude by saying, "It was good; it fulfilled all the requirements of the methodology."²⁶ Since the latter problem is eliminated with the replacement of methodologies with perspective, we will focus on the problem of evaluation by effects.

While we agree with Thompson that effectiveness "is the distinctive dimension of rhetoric," we are even more in agreement with his statement that "evidence of effectiveness is seldom conclusive."²⁷ The student critic may collect published opinions about effectiveness, but he or she must remember that "judgments of effects rely on historical information extrinsic to the speech" and do not equal proof.²⁸ Discovering such proof is incredibly difficult when dealing with a rhetorical artifact, and we have heard far too often a claim of effect unwarranted by the stated opinions and evidence. If the student critic insists on demonstrating effect (and

judges insist on hearing it), we urge following the complete argument form.

More important, we stress the reality that evaluation can also occur internally; that is, the critic can evaluate what is done well and what is done poorly within the symbolic/language strategies. If the strategies are employed unethically or for unethical ends, the critic should also point this out. Evaluation should also include what the critic believes were alternative strategies available and why they were not used, for better or worse.

EXAMPLE-EVALUATION

The student's evaluation of the Institute's rhetoric does not focus on what *other people* get from the rhetoric—an effect orientation—so much as it does focus on what *the student* sees in the rhetoric. This internal evaluation procedure requires the student to truly function as the critic. Judging the rhetoric is the student's responsibility, not the responsibility of pollsters or newsmagazine writers. Thus, the student turns to the rhetoric and evaluates it from an ethical viewpoint. "The suggestion that the Nazis had good intentions contradicts a vast corpus of documented Nazi rhetoric establishing extermination as a goal. Other factual misrepresentations are present as well, such as ignoring the existence of a process whereby Zyklon B can be made to become instantly gaseous. Moreover, the challenging of Jewish motives brings into question the Institute's own motives. . . . Though they try to secure academic credibility, the myth advanced by the Institute is little more than a thinly disguised effort at anti-Semitism without substance, and it must be condemned as such.

As with description and interpretation, evaluation should attempt to provide unique insight and complete arguments about the rhetorical artifact.

Conclusion

Caught between the two worthy desires of teaching students independent thinking and rhetorical theory—classical functions of forensics—we have formulated two extreme types of rules for competitive rhetorical criticism. Unfortunately, each extreme neglects the valuable insights offered by the other. Our goal as forensics educators should be to bridge the two extremes. Students *can* learn about rhetorical theory, and their criticisms, if informed by a critical perspective, can reflect back on that theory. The key to teaching students about this self-reflexive process is not to blind them with methodology or coddle them with atheoretical approaches.

We realize that much has been written about the uniquely valuable event of rhetorical criticism. Yet, despite, despite these writings and the practical experience of the forensic community with the event in the last ten years, rhetorical criticism is still a much maligned event. No doubt, improvements have occurred, but there is equally little doubt that tournament rhetorical criticism can still stand improvement. Much of the improvement will occur if students and coaches understand the purpose and standard of the event as well as they understand those of the other individual events. Hopefully, our rules and standards can make the event more educationally valuable, understood, interesting, well-done, and popular. That is the kind of reputation tournament rhetorical criticism deserves.

Notes

- ¹John M. Murphy, "Theory and Practice in Communication Analysis," *National Forensic Journal*, 6, (1988), 9.
- ²Murphy, 9.
- ³Murphy, 9.
- ⁴Robert E. Rosenthal, "Changing Perspectives on Rhetorical Criticism as a Forensic Event," *National Forensic Journal*, 3, (Fall 1985), 130.
- ⁵The sample speech we use was written by Greg R. Coffee of the University of Nebraska. The speech, "Revisionist Rhetoric: Claims Denying the Holocaust by the Institute for Historical Review," advanced to the quarterfinals at the 1988 NFA National Speech Tournament.
- ⁶Plato, *Gorgias*, translated by Benjamin Jowett, in *The Dialogues of Plato* (Chicago: Great Books of the Western World, Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1952).
- ⁷Taken from the rules for the 1988 American Forensic Association National Individual Events Tournament.
- ⁸Taken from the rules for 1988 I.E. Nationals, sponsored by the National Forensic Association.
- ⁹Dan F. Hahn, and J. Justin Gustainis, "Rhet Crit: It's not Rhetorical Criticism," *The Forensic*, 68, (Fall 1982), 14.
- ¹⁰Rosenthal suggests a standard similar to our third standard on 134.
- ¹¹Bernard L. Brock and Robert L. Scott, (eds.), "An Introduction to Rhetorical Criticism," in *Methods of Rhetorical Criticism*, 2nd Ed. (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1980), 17.
- ¹²Rosenthal, 136-7.
- ¹³John M. Murphy, "Rhetorical Criticism as Argument: A Need for Social Criticism," in *Argument in Transition: Proceedings of the Third Summer Conference on Argumentation*, eds. David Zarefsky, Malcolm O. Sillars and Jack Rhodes (Annandale, VA: Speech Communication Association, 1983), 918.
- ¹⁴Brock and Scott, 13.
- ¹⁵Robert J. Lifton, *History and Human Survival* (New York: Random House, 1961), 5.
- ¹⁶Kathleen M. German, "Finding a Methodology for Rhetorical Criticism" *National Forensic Journal*, 3, (Fall 1985), 86-101.
- ¹⁷Wayne N. Thompson, "The Contest in Rhetorical Criticism," *The Forensic*, 66, (Winter 1981), 18.
- ¹⁸Robert E. Rosenthal, 128-138.
- ¹⁹Hahn and Gustainis, 17.
- ²⁰Murphy, "Theory and Practice," 9.
- ²¹Brock and Scott, 19.
- ²²That rhetorical criticism should be a persuasive effort is also acknowledged by Christine D. Reynolds, "Coaching Strategies in Contest Rhetorical Criticism," a paper presented at the 1985 Speech Communication Association Convention in Denver, CO.
- ²³Brock and Scott, 19.
- ²⁴Brockriede, "Rhetorical Criticism as Argument," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 60 (1974), 166.
- ²⁵Brockriede, 173-174.
- ²⁶Hahn and Gustainis, 15.
- ²⁷Thompson, 18.
- ²⁸Murphy, "Theory and Practice," 5.

A Symposium On The Role Of The Assistant Director Of Forensics

ISSUES IN THE RELATIONAL DYNAMIC OF THE DIRECTOR/ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: REACTIONS FROM THE RESPECTIVE POSITIONS

*Larry Schnoor and Keith D. Green **

Numerous articles and convention panels have addressed issues concerned with various elements related to forensic activities: the coaching of events, sources of materials, the use of original material in forensic competition, the funding and support of forensic programs, and a myriad of other concerns. One area that has not received the same degree of attention is the relationship between the Director of Forensics and the Assistant Director of Forensics; however, this relationship can greatly affect the entire forensic program at institutions with this administrative arrangement. While the impact of such a relationship may appear obvious, many individuals may not realize the conscious effort that is necessary to assure a successful relationship between the individuals involved in such a situation.

Since the Director/Assistant Director relationship is vital to successful operation of an effective program, it is important to investigate the dynamics of this relationship. Through this investigation, the relational dynamics and the effect of those dynamics on the Director, the Assistant Director, and ultimately the team itself are considered. By examining these areas, one gets a clearer definition of who the Assistant is, what his/her role is and/or should be, and one hopefully gleans some practical considerations about the relationship.

The authors' purpose was to utilize their experiences as a foundation for analyzing that relationship. The authors have worked together for the past two and a half years and, in an effort to examine their own working relationship, formulated a list of questions to which each reacted independently. The questions emphasized the interpersonal dynamics, but also considered more practical concerns. These questions were largely based on the out-

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line and discussion of the SCA panel, "The Assistant Director of Forensics: Just Who Is This Person?" presented at the 1988 SCA convention.

The initial intention was to present both the Director's and the Assistant Director's answers; however, after reviewing the respective responses and discovering a high degree of similarity, the authors present a compilation of their answers. While these answers describe the philosophy and attitude of this specific relationship, they are not meant to be prescriptive. Rather, they are intended to describe one relationship between a Director and an Assistant as a foundation for investigation.

QUESTION #1: How may a Director/Assistant Director enhance their ability to work together as a team?

This question assumes that it is desirable for the Director and the Assistant Director to work together as a team; the authors agree with that assumption. In whatever role assignments exist within a program, it is essential that the individuals work together in a harmonious manner. The key element to ensure this harmonious relationship is cooperation.

This atmosphere of cooperation must begin with the initial interview. When interviewing, both the Director and Assistant should address such issues as the purpose of the team, the role of competition in the activity, goals the team and the students should strive toward, and the type of time commitment each is expected to contribute. If these issues are not addressed in the interview process, the Director and Assistant Director are courting potential conflict. Clearly, there are differing attitudes on each of these issues.

Once the school year begins, it becomes extremely difficult and possibly divisive to come to grips with these issues. The Director and Assistant Director should take every opportunity to exchange information between them, and the communication should flow both directions. It would be best if this exchange of information were accomplished in a fashion that avoided the "I am telling you to do . . .," but rather that it be in the manner of, "How should we . . .?" The "we" factor is important. To work as a "team," the team members should observe the practice the basic principles of effective interpersonal communication.

Most important, the Assistant should be made to feel a part of the administrative team. Once the Assistant begins to feel he/she has no input in team decision-making, he/she becomes nothing more than coach and van driver. This situation has the potential to

reduce job satisfaction significantly and can, in fact, create discord in the Director/Assistant Director relationship. This discord could easily be perceived by the team members. If an Assistant is hired with the understanding that he/she will be part of the program administration unit, not to fulfill this expectation may doom the quality of leadership the Assistant will be able to provide.

QUESTION #2: What issues may cause a problem in the relationship between the Director and the Assistant Director, and how may these issues be effectively resolved?

Before addressing specific issues, it is important to assert what hopefully is obvious to most: any and all conflict between the Director and Assistant Director should be kept confidential. While differences of opinion are natural, it is vital that the administrative team present a unified front to the students. This is not meant as a deception; it is meant to give the team a sense of stability and leadership. Once students perceive the Director and the Assistant Director haggling in public or talking behind each others' backs, respect is lost. This creates divisiveness, not only in team administration, but in the team itself. Clearly, this sort of poor management is not acceptable.

First and foremost, the major issue that can cause conflict is a lack of role definition. One reason that role definition is so important is that the Assistant Director's role does not seem as well-defined as the Director's role. In some cases, the Assistant Director is a glorified van driver; whereas, in other cases, the Assistant Director is an integral part of the administrative unit. Typical job listings for a Director of Forensics are more specific in the duties to be associated with that position, such as budget management, tournament administration, scheduling, coaching, and travel. However, the Assistant Director position does not benefit from such common definition; therefore, the two individuals (or more in some cases) must lay out their expectations very clearly to each other.

Perhaps the most typical area for differences of opinion resides in common, everyday decisions; for example, in making decisions on the tournament schedule, budgeting, and so forth, the Director and Assistant Director may differ. Of course, this in and of itself is not bad. It may generate a healthy discussion of alternatives and reasons for those alternatives. Moreover, if a Director/Assistant Director relationship is completely free of any differences of opinion along these lines, the situation may actually reflect the Assis-

tant Director's not being comfortable with approaching the Director.

The point to consider is that any issue has the potential to cause some conflict in the working relationship between the Director and the Assistant Director. The key is how that conflict is resolved. It needs to be resolved in a healthy, mutually-productive fashion. Through a consensus-building process, it is hoped the best decisions for the team will emerge. If both parties utilize effective conflict resolution skills, then conflict will enhance the program, not hurt it.

Finally, it is important to remember that the Director is the one in charge. While teamwork is an ideal, realistically the Director is the person accountable to the administration, the students, and the funding organization for the program. He/she must make decisions with which he/she feels comfortable. It is naive to assume that harmony will always exist; however, by "practicing what we preach," using effective communication skills, the working relationship can thrive.

QUESTION #3: What can the Director do that would enhance the position of the Assistant Director in the forensic community?

This question assumes that the Assistant Director wants to be "enhanced" in the forensic community. There could be situations where the Assistant Director has elected to remain in the background as much as possible. If there is clear and open communication between the individuals involved, the Director should be aware of the Assistant Director's desires along these lines.

On the other hand, assuming the Assistant Director desires more visibility, the Director could help in this process by doing any of the following:

- encouraging participation in convention programs;
- allowing the Assistant Director to attend tournaments without the Director being in attendance;
- local, regional, and/or national committee appointments;
- allowing for high visibility in tournament management.

By demonstrating to other programs that the Assistant Director is an involved member of the program, the Assistant Director will hopefully gain the reputation needed to achieve his or her professional goals.

QUESTION #4: What should be the role of the Assistant Director in the administration of the program?

The element of role-taking may be affected by the experience level of the individuals concerned. In some cases, it may be that

the Assistant Director has more experience than the Director does. Whatever the experience level, it should be remembered at most institutions the individual who is recognized as the Director is the person in charge and who is responsible to the institution for the workings and management of the forensics program. This is not to say that the Assistant Director should have no involvement; instead, it simply means that there could be those situations in which the Director may have to assume total control. Ideally, the most harmonious working relationship would be for the administration to be a shared function.

If the Assistant Director is to be considered a forensic professional, he/she should have some responsibility for all aspects of team management. Granted, specific situations will tend to dictate a certain division of labor. For example, a program with a Director of Forensics who is also accompanied by Directors for Individual Events and Debate calls for a specific breakdown of duties. A graduate student as Assistant Director may also present limitations from the standpoints of authority and accountability. Moreover, there are certain needs of those who serve in a fulltime faculty Assistant Director position.

The fulltime faculty member hired specifically as an Assistant Director of Forensics should be an active part of the program's administrative team. On one hand, if that Assistant Director is intent on moving on eventually to become a Director of Forensics (as many are), then he/she needs the experience of duties required to run an effective program. On the other hand, what about the Assistant who is content to be the Assistant? If the person does not anticipate assuming the Director's role (at least not in the foreseeable future), should he/she also share these duties? The answer is a resounding "yes," for several reasons.

First, by having a consensus-oriented management team, both the Assistant Director and the Director will be able to communicate with other programs, state and national organizations, and the local institution's Administration with a consistent philosophy and direction. An established Assistant Director is often called upon to voice the stance of his/her program on issues.

Second, interpersonal relations with team members can be consistent among the leadership of the team. One job of the Director and Assistant Director is modeling discipline and professionalism for the students, as well as directing the maintenance of that discipline. Student behavior at tournaments, student coaching sessions, and team dynamics all have to be monitored. If the Assistant Director and Director are not consistent in their approaches to

handling these matters, divisiveness can again result. Students have been known to play one coach off against another, developing mini-games that cause conflict not only between the students and coaches, but among the coaches as well. Assistant Director involvement in the development of team atmosphere, policies, and rules of behavior is essential to maintain these team dynamics effectively.

Finally, the Assistant Director should be considered a professional able to fulfill all duties of the Director. Unfortunately the ideal of a smooth transition does not always exist due to illness or other incapacitating situations. The Assistant Director should be able to assume the direction of the program any time.

QUESTION #5: If graduate assistants are used in the program, where do they fit into the relationship between the Director and the Assistant Director?

In those programs which have the luxury of graduate assistants' participation, a chain of command should be established. The normal assumption might be that the graduate assistants would function under the Assistant Director. The staff might decide that the Assistant Director have responsibility for the supervision of the graduate assistants.

Team members will perceive the graduate assistants in a supervisory role if the Director and Assistant Director treat the graduate assistants in such a manner. Moreover, since the graduate students are in an intermediate position between the team members and the Director/Assistant Director, they can play a special role in team maintenance. Since team members may have more direct contact with the graduate assistants, the communication between the two may tend to be more informal and open. These communication channels are quite normal and can, in fact, allow for a healthy venting of frustration and doubt. Thus, the Director and Assistant Director should treat the graduate students as an integral part of the program staff who can assume coaching and team maintenance duties.

The role of graduate assistants in a forensic program should be an issue that is clearly understood and agreed upon by the Director and the Assistant Director. It should be handled carefully in order to avoid the possibility of the graduate assistants playing the Director and the Assistant Director against each other. Again, the decision may be that the Director is the person in total control and at the top of the chain of command.

QUESTION #6: What should be the roles of the Director and the Assistant Director in their interactions with team members?

A situation which may, on the surface, seem ideal is one in which both the Director and Assistant Director can function equivalently. However, there are some advantages to having different, but clearly understood, roles for interacting with team members. For example, since the Director will usually be seen as the ultimate authority for the team, he/she might assume the role of disciplinarian while the Assistant Director might assume a role of listener and counselor. Of course, this is not to say that the Director should be a cold-hearted beast. Rather, giving the students two avenues of approach allows for multiple problem solving methods. What is important here is that the Director and Assistant Director remember that, as two unique individuals, they may have very distinct styles of interaction.

One situation that should be avoided, however, is one in which the Director and Assistant Director have each identified specific students as "their" students. This has the potential of creating intra-team conflict as well as conflict between the Director and the Assistant Director. Even greater care toward impartiality must be taken if graduate assistants are involved.

Clearly, common understanding and agreement as to the roles played are important. Staff should be clear about avoiding the types of interactions with students which can cause disruption to the overall harmonious development of the team as a total unit.

QUESTION #7: How should the situation be handled in which the Assistant Director is seeking a new position as a Director of Forensics? And, what role should the Director now play in this situation?

This situation will be affected by the type of relationship that already exists between the individuals concerned. If the relationship has not been positive, the Assistant Director may look for a new position and may not want the Director to be informed nor involved in the process at all. Needless to say, this may be an uncomfortable situation. If the relationship has been positive, the Director should endeavor to be as encouraging as possible, especially if it would mean an advancement for the Assistant Director. This encouragement might take the form of information about any openings that are known to the Director, by giving strong, positive recommendations, and by serving as a resource for professional information about possible positions.

A potential danger can arise out of differing commitments to the program. If a Director sees his/her Assistant Director as an

integral part of building the program, and if the Director has a personal vested interest in the team, it is possible that he or she may feel threatened by the desire of the Assistant Director to leave. However, what any Director must remember is that forensics is a job; in other words, even though it is the chosen profession for the Assistant Director, ultimately it is a means of support, ego satisfaction, and personal growth. If the Assistant Director believes he or she can better fulfill these goals elsewhere, the Director should be understanding and supportive.

To discourage the Assistant Director from considering other avenues of employment, whether those avenues are in forensics or elsewhere, courts potential danger. If the Assistant Director maintains his/her position merely out of a feeling of obligation, how effective can that individual really be? Due to the commitment required to be an effective forensic educator, if the Assistant Director is not satisfied, he/she will not have the personal stamina necessary to help the program grow. The area of personal growth will be the first area directly influenced by the quality of the relationship and communication patterns that have been developed between the Director and the Assistant Director.

QUESTION #8: Should the Assistant Director's position be regarded as a professional (terminal) position?

From the answer thus far, it is clear that the answer is a resounding "yes." In fact, there could be some distinct advantages to the Assistant Director's position. If one wishes to engage in research, whether in forensics or other areas, more time is available to the Assistant Director due to lack of administrative duties which are associated with the Director's position. If the Assistant Director gets significant pleasure out of classroom teaching, not being the Director can allow for a heavier class load, thus potentially increasing that avenue of job satisfaction. Simply put, for some the combination of forensics, classroom teaching and research time found in the position of Assistant Director of Forensics is what he/she is seeking. For this person, it is a satisfying "terminal" position.

From these ideas, several themes emerge that seem important to an effective Director/Assistant Director relationship. First, open communication should be conscientiously employed. Through clear and frequent interaction, the Director/Assistant Director relationship can develop a level of trust and mutual understanding necessary to help ensure a smooth working rapport, effective job performance, job satisfaction, and maintenance of team cohesion.

Second, role definition is necessary to establish clear expectations and duties. Through this role definition, each party may be more comfortable in his/her expectations of each other and themselves. An important conclusion here seems to be that this role definition should begin as part of the initial interview process. Furthermore, it is equally important to note that just as with any relationship, each Director/Assistant Director team must work out their own understanding and dynamics.

Third, the Assistant Director should be considered as a professional seeking self-fulfillment and personal growth through the Assistant Director position. Just because the Assistant Director is not in the Director position does not make him/her any less committed or involved in the profession. For some, the Assistant Director position is a quality, terminal position, just as the Director position is for others.

Considering these areas from the perspective of the authors is but one approach. Research, especially quantitative in nature, to define the status quo and to give a statistical base for further delineation of the role of the Assistant Director of Forensics is certainly warranted.

Through a clear understanding of who the Assistant Director of Forensics is and what role he/she is to play in a program, the knowledge and talents of that Assistant Director may be put to best use. Without quality interaction and the utilization of sound management principles, the effectiveness of the Assistant Director, the Director/Assistant Director relationship, and ultimately the team itself may suffer.

SECOND AMONG EQUALS: THE GRADUATE STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

*Kathryn Elton**

"First Among Equals" is a common phrase used at the University of Minnesota to refer to the Director of Forensics (DF). The Assistant Director of Forensics (ADF) is "Second Among Equals." These "titles" are particularly appropriate for the Minnesota positions because they reflect the way the program is currently administered—under a co-directorship. The most striking explanation for this format is that the DF and the ADF are graduate students. Although it is not unique to have a forensic program completely administered by graduate students, it is rare. There are some issues unique to such a program and some issues that apply to all programs. The University of Minnesota Forensics Program itself has already been described (Endres and Anderson, 1986). Numerous articles have been written and panels have addressed the Director of Forensics position. However, there has been a significant lack of discussion on the role of the Assistant Director of Forensics. Therefore, this paper will add some new insights into the role of the Assistant Director of Forensics as seen through the eyes of a graduate student.

What does it mean to be an Assistant Director of Forensics who is a graduate student? Three areas will be discussed in answering this question: 1) being a student of Forensics at the graduate level; 2) the graduate student Assistant Director of Forensics working under a graduate student Director of Forensics; and 3) the Assistant Director of Forensics as a graduate student. Much of the information for this paper will be drawn specifically from the author's experience at the University of Minnesota and the experience of the students on the forensics team. The University of Minnesota program will be used as an example numerous times throughout this paper. The data is further supplemented by the panel discussion at the SCA Convention in November of 1988 in New Orleans, LA. It was titled, "The Assistant Director of Forensics: Just Who Is This Person?"

There are many issues to consider when examining the two roles of being a graduate student and being an ADF. In order to gain a more complete picture, it is important to examine both the

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positive and negative aspects. Whenever possible, it is also appropriate to examine not only the author's perspective, but also the perspective of the undergraduate students participating in forensics, the Speech Communication Department or other sponsoring group, and the forensics circuit.

What does it mean to be a student of forensics at the graduate level? For the undergraduate students of forensics, they see someone who is learning about the program just as they are. Even if an ADF has worked with a team before as a participant or a graduate student assistant, there is a lot to learn when making the switch to an ADF. Many hours are spent digesting information and learning the various roles to be fulfilled; it is a different perspective. Files need to be examined and skills need to be practiced to master the role of the ADF. The preparation is similar to creating a persuasion or a prose piece for competition. It requires a lot of work and then practice. The team members have fun watching this struggle for knowledge. It helps build rapport and trust to see someone in authority go through the same frustrations and eventual triumphs.

Yet, the undergraduate students on the forensic team may not like having to learn from another student. They are paying a lot of money to attend an institution of higher learning. They expect and deserve to work with top professors and other highly skilled individuals. In forensics, as with regular classes, the students deserve better. They feel a bit cheated when they do not have the benefits of a professor or a regular staff person as a coach. The graduate students are learning about forensics along with the undergraduate students; it may be unfair.

The Speech Communication Department (or other sponsoring group) finds itself in a position to offer a very unique experience. They are giving graduate students the opportunity to work with a forensics program. This work is much more than these individuals could gain in any other program. Unfortunately, the department is also giving itself a headache. Every two or three years the positions must be staffed again. Once people finish the MA or PhD, they move on to other work. The department is constantly finding new people to run the forensics program.

Personally, graduate students of forensics can learn a great deal by moving from the participant role into a judging and coaching role. By changing positions, students will learn new perspectives and gain new insights. The best advice for any graduate student of forensics is to become a vacuum. Everyone encountered can be a potential resource. The education may come from an undergraduate student on your own team or another team, other graduate

students on the circuit, or other coaches on the circuit. Most people in forensics are very supportive. They are willing to listen to any questions or issues that may arise. After all, people in forensics are in the business of communication. Every person becomes a teacher, and every place becomes a classroom. Every experience can help define the appropriate role of Assistant Director of Forensics.

However, a graduate student of forensics will probably find more frustration than gratification. Graduate students are placed on an emotional and intellectual roller coaster, because very few are ever taught what it means to be a DF or an ADF. They are also rarely taught how to administer a forensics program or how to administer a tournament. Fifteen years ago at the National Developmental Conference on Forensics, participants agreed that departments have a "responsibility to support forensics by providing training to forensic scholars." Yet, Brand and DeBoer (1986) found very few colleges or universities currently offer formal training for graduate students of forensics. This has continued unchanged for a long time. The University of Minnesota is one of the many programs that offer *absolutely no* training on any aspect of forensics. For a program completely administered by graduate students, this situation is appalling. It is more often than not a learn-by-doing, hands-on experience.

Once in a while, there is an occasion where a PhD student receives some training at the MA level before transferring to a program like the University of Minnesota. This does not happen very often. Usually, the student will not receive any training at the MA level either. This obvious lack of resources only harms students and programs, yet graduate students know when applying to work with a forensics program that no training exists. If the person does not know, he/she should check into it. Ironically, as the Brand and DeBoer study brought out, the graduate student experience is viewed as a training ground for future coaches.

Also, graduate students may find it difficult to be scholars in forensics. Many programs may have only one or two other students working with forensics in the entire department. It is a small field, yet if the university does not actively support a forensics program with full-time faculty, it cannot draw this type of scholar. There will be no one there to discuss topics and ideas; learning does not stop at the classroom door.

What does it mean to be a graduate student Assistant Director of Forensics working under a graduate student Director of Forensics? In many ways, the answer to this question is completely

dependent on the individual personalities involved. After all, there is already a sense of equality because the two people are both graduate students; the titles do not change this fact. It seems more appropriate to examine this issue in light of the roles of the ADF and the DF regardless of the graduate student situation. Yet, some of the reasons these two people work well together or work poorly together may be strictly *because* they are graduate students.

As far as the undergraduate students are concerned, they see very little distinction between the ADF and the DF in the University of Minnesota program. The ADF and DF both teach classes, both take classes, and both coach the team. The only difference they could identify based on *title* is who has the final say on money. This is a bit ironic, however, because the DF may not exercise power as he/she could. Some students may not even know there is a title difference, depending on how the ADF and DF run the program. Their students do not see a difference in the ADF and DF position.

The Speech Communication Department or other sponsoring program has made a conscious decision to appoint graduate students to the ADF and DF roles. Within these confines, they will usually try to appoint a PhD student to the DF position. The ADF may be a MA student or a PhD student. They will also tend to communicate with the person designated as the DF; they simply use the stated chain of command. This may make an ADF feel left out. However, the ADF and DF get paid the same amount of money and are given the same amount of release time. The DF does have the added responsibility of keeping the books. He/She also completes the necessary paperwork. Other programs may be administered a little differently; the differences between being an ADF and DF are affected more by title designations than graduate student status.

On the circuit, the graduate student ADF and graduate student DF seem to be treated the same way; there is no great distinction. Both are graduate students; however, there are occasions where the DF will be called upon because he is the DF. His/Her graduate student status is not a concern.

An ADF who finds him/herself working under a graduate student DF will have a very rewarding experience. There are some drawbacks, but they are far outweighed by the positive aspects. Personalities will dictate the terms of the relation of ADF to DF. At the University of Minnesota, the work and decisions are shared. This means a horizontal line can be drawn between the ADF and DF positions. It is seen as a co-directorship rather than

as superior and subordinate position. This definition of role is largely due to the fact that both people are graduate students. There is no built-in hierarchy due to experience or education level. As co-directors, responsibilities are shared; both are starting at the same level for the most part. Both do not know what to do at times. Both make housing and transportation plans. Both decide what tournaments to attend and who will travel with the team. Both decide whether students are ready to go to a tournament with an event. Under a co-directorship, the graduate students work together on every aspect of administering the forensics program.

In their relationships with the students, the coaches in a graduate student-administered program will probably not make a distinction between the ADF and DF. Students are encouraged to go to either person to ask questions and gain information. This is due to a belief in working with strengths, but developing weak areas. However, the roles with the students will probably be different. Each person will be good at different aspects of coaching. Sometimes the students may want to talk with a female and other times a male. Some coaches may be better at coaching oral interpretation and others better at coaching public address. Students decide who they are more comfortable working with on any one issue. The students are bright enough to pick up on what each coach has to offer, and these undergraduates will go to the appropriate coach.

In the University of Minnesota's forensics program, the ADF and DF are very different from one another. These differences help create a balance within the program. The philosophies tend to be the same, but the approaches are *very* different. The ADF and DF encourage one another to handle situations on their own. Yet they share their encounters afterwards to check whether the situation was handled well. This keeps the other one up-to-date with what is happening on the team. It also prevents power struggles the students may want to create between the ADF and DF. In other words, the key is communication between the ADF and DF. Also, people should work with strengths regardless of whether the role they are filling is as ADF or DF.

There is one aspect that makes it difficult to work under a graduate student DF. Many graduate students assume they can develop a mentor or a role model in forensics like in any other field. The ADF naturally turns to the DF for this role model. Yet, there is no role model for graduate students when a program is administered completely by graduate students. There is not a lot of opportunity to develop a mentoring relationship with someone in the same position as yourself and the same age. A problem exists

because the ADF position is often seen as a stepping stone to a DF position; yet, this is no way to train an ADF. When the Forensics field is asking for *formally* trained coaches, this type of situation is poor preparation for learning how to direct a program. Learning about forensics from the graduate student position adds a whole new dimension—not all of it pleasant.

What does it mean to be an Assistant Director of Forensics who is a graduate student? It basically means that the person is forced to be able to switch hats from coach to teacher to student and back again in an instant. Granted, these roles are probably not any different from some roles full-time faculty must fill, but the graduate student is feeling the pull of this demand for the first time. As has been discussed for years, the ADF has to be a coach, counselor, administrator, teacher, professional, and friend at the same time. Being a graduate student Assistant Director of Forensics has its pros and cons.

The graduate student Assistant Director of Forensics can provide some wonderful opportunities for the undergraduates involved in the program. For the students on the forensics team, they like having another for a coach. During some interviews conducted in December of 1988, the University of Minnesota students made several interesting comments. "You can relate to us better by understanding what we are going through." They see a graduate student who remembers what it is like to be a college student. They also feel a graduate student is more in touch with what goes on—what works and what does not work. "I like being able to relate to you as a peer—not a coach—sometimes." "You give more time to the team." Even though the undergraduate students know graduate students are students, they see this person giving a lot of time to their needs. Finally, they feel that graduate students like to have more fun and have more energy to work with a team.

On the negative side, the undergraduate participants in Forensics feel that it is difficult to work constantly with new coaches. They just get to know and trust a coach, and the person leaves. They also notice the high turnover and do not like it. They see how difficult it is to build a program with the staff constantly changing. The undergraduates also feel a bit cheated that they are missing out on some information. The graduate student may not have as much experience as a full-time faculty member. Finally, the undergraduates do not like to see skills being "shipped off" to other schools. The undergraduates experience fear and apprehension over what happens when the ADF and DF go off to other teams. This issue exists whether the ADF and DF are graduate

students or not, since it is a fact of life that people change positions; this issue is simply more prevalent with a graduate student-administered program. Students may find themselves asking a lot more questions.

For the Speech Communication Department or other sponsoring group, a graduate student is a lot cheaper to appoint than a full-time faculty member to the ADF position. Brownlee (1988) points out that graduate students help reduce program costs. They are "cheap, ignorant labor." The Department must still commit some staff and money, but it is more cost-effective if graduate students are used. Even if the program cannot find a full-time faculty member, they can keep the program afloat with graduate students. It pacifies most of the vocal people by keeping the program alive.

Unfortunately, the department or other sponsoring group must keep finding the staff to fill the position of ADF. Sometimes, it can be difficult to find qualified people to administer a forensics program. Some people have never worked with this area of communication. Others know it takes a great deal of time to work with a program—time they are not willing to invest. These people are qualified, but they are not interested. They want to finish their programs as soon as possible, or they may have other interests filling their time.

As for the forensic circuit, they see a graduate student ADF as another potential employee upon graduation. This person could work as an ADF or as a DF. It would depend on the particular university or college, whether the ADF would move into another ADF position or up to a DF position.

There is a problem in having a graduate student ADF on the circuit. This person is not fully included by the other coaches. The graduate student ADF is administering a program and has all the responsibilities this includes. This person must attend various district or state meetings; yet it does not seem to matter. The graduate student is usually excluded from committees and many other decision-making bodies (Endres and Anderson, 1986). Sometimes, the person is treated as a graduate student and sometimes as an ADF.

A person who is a graduate student and the ADF will find the opposing roles both rewarding and problematic. One area to note is the experience gained. The graduate student ADF is given the rare opportunity truly to administer a program. This will look good on the resume. This person actually has a position of power which involves making real decisions all year long. It is more than letting

a graduate student assistant be in charge of one complete tournament sometime during the year.

This person is not simply a graduate student either; he/she has a title. As a result, the graduate student ADF may be treated a little more like a colleague in the department than the graduate assistants not working with the forensic program. The quality of that experience is obviously debatable, however.

Personally, the negatives are outweighed by the positives. One problem is determining the roles that must be fulfilled. With no mentor, no role model, and no formal training, some graduate students may discover their roles simply by accident. These roles include safety monitor, career counselor, administrator, teacher, coach, chauffeur, parent, counselor, and friend. For instance, I had no idea that I would have to be a counselor to the students, yet little is done to prepare graduate students for these roles (Kostoll & McKeever, 1988; Kirch, 1988). This lack of preparation becomes frustrating for both the students and the coaches.

There are also a lot of high expectations. A graduate student must be a graduate student first. It is drilled into everyone's head beginning the day they arrive on campus. In fact, our chairman always mentions he never worries about our teaching responsibilities; he worries about our forgetting our own education. We spend too much time educating others through the classes we teach. This becomes more of a problem for graduate students *administering* a forensics program. This requires even *more* time than the normal teaching assistant position. These time commitments may force some people to take longer getting the MA or PhD. It is easy to see where all the time goes—coaching, going to tournaments, and tending to administrative duties.

There is also a problem of rank. A graduate student is not faculty, so it is often more difficult to get through all the lines and paperwork at the university. It is an education to learn through experience, but the process is slow. There are a lot of stumbling blocks; a lot of doors are not open, and a lot of people are not there.

Finally, the "coaching" role may have to be forced upon the individual graduate student ADF as well as on the undergraduates. This is particularly true if the graduate student goes from his or her undergraduate program directly into the graduate program. Some graduate students may be friends with some of the undergraduates on the team or undergraduates on other teams. This situation may require the graduate student ADF to distance him or herself from

people. The graduate student ADF must never forget the position he/she is holding within the university.

Success or failure as an Assistant Director of Forensics seems to depend more on the individual person than on being a graduate student. Success depends on the person's recognizing the need to balance life as a graduate student and as an ADF toward the goal of an advanced degree; the ADF position must come second. Second, the person needs to work out his/her relationship with the Director of Forensics ahead of time. Philosophies need to be discussed before the students arrive on campus. Third, as in any job, everyone should pay attention to his/her strengths. The graduate student ADF needs to recognize these strengths and weaknesses. Then, each person should work within this knowledge. Finally graduate students need to be a vacuum. Information can come from any place, person, book, article, or convention. To learn about forensics, graduate students are still on their own for now. At the University of Minnesota, we are still on our own to fulfill our roles as first and second among equals as well.

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THE DIRECTOR OF FORENSICS, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR AND STAFF: AN ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION PERSPECTIVE

*Gary Dreibelbis**

In his now famous book, *The Practice of Management*, Peter Drucker recounts the early struggles in the medical profession when performing surgery. Drucker writes that until the seventeenth century, barbers and not doctors would perform surgery. Doctors took their oath literally and refused to inflict pain or bodily harm on their patients. Actual operations were presided over by a doctor who would sit on a dais removed from the actual surgery, and the actual surgery was performed by the barber. The doctor would read the procedure from a Latin medical text (which the barber usually did not understand), and the barber would try to follow the doctor's instructions. If the patient died, it was always the barber's fault; but if the operation were successful, the doctor took the credit. In any event, the doctor always received the higher fee for the surgery.¹

Those who are Assistant Directors of Forensics and assistant coaches may appreciate the spirit of Drucker's medieval medical example. Assistants in forensics programs may feel that they are required to do most of the work in their programs while receiving vague directions which sometimes seem as if they were given in Latin, not to mention, additional financial benefits for the Director of the program, additional recognition, and additional praise.

Most people involved as professional forensic educators are aware of the high stress level due to long hours of coaching and travel, and the resulting burnout of many who have been involved in the activity for more than a few years. Working as a forensic educator can be difficult enough in ideal situations, but it can be a hellish experience if the various coaches/educators in a particular program have differing philosophies regarding their program or if basic managerial and interpersonal communication principles are not followed.

The situation may be complicated by the fact that the director of a forensics team may be at a different academic level than the other members of the coaching staff. In some cases, the director and assistant director of a program may have the same academic ranks and similar experience levels; however, there are situations

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where the director and assistant will vary in their professional experience. There are cases where a tenured faculty member is the director of a program and a non-tenured person or temporary person is the assistant. There are also cases where the assistant may be a graduate student, or the entire program may be run by graduate students.

Obviously, there are many organizational variations in forensics programs throughout the nation. Despite these structural differences and the differences in academic rank with the various people involved, it seems as if the task of managing a forensics program, either large or small, may be simplified by adhering to some basic principles of management/organizational communication. The perception of some forensic administrators is that forensics is an extracurricular activity that should not be managed the way one would manage other organizations. It is ironic that some of these same people teach, as part of their academic assignment, courses dealing with elements of organizational communication. This article will present three basic elements of management that can assist in establishing a positive working relationship between the director and assistant director (and other coaches) while also maintaining a better climate within the forensics program. Many elements of management and organizational communication would be appropriate for discussion; however, the three concepts that will be discussed in this article are unity of command, delegation of authority and responsibility, and leadership style.

UNITY OF COMMAND

The principle of unity of command is certainly not a new idea in the area of management. A technical definition for unity of command is that the coordination of activities is easier when each person has only one superior.² In other words, each person in the organization has one supervisor, and the supervisor is ultimately responsible for the organization's functions. One may also add the famous phrase attributed to President Harry Truman, "The buck stops here." One person has to take ultimate responsibility for the overall management of the forensics program when dealing with various administrators at different managerial levels within the college or university. Some people may disagree with this contention by saying that their program has prospered with "co-directors" or more than one person at the helm of the program. Indeed, some programs may survive and even prosper for a short duration with two "chiefs," but the possibility for confusion

on the part of team members and administrators as to the leadership identity of the program is a problem over the long term. Administrators want to know whom to call when problems arise or when they need to know information about the forensics program, while students want to know where final decisions lie concerning team policy, financial aid, and other issues. Having two or more individuals as directors is somewhat analogous to the "College of Coaches" situation initiated by the Chicago Cubs baseball team in the early 1960s, where coaches took turns at being manager of the team for several days at a time on a rotating basis. The situation was disastrous from an organizational point of view, because the players had to continually adjust to various personalities and leadership styles. Granted, the Cubs had poor player talent during this period, but the confusion of different managers throughout the season certainly had to affect the performance and morale of the team.

The concept of unity of command may seem threatening or discouraging to an assistant director and other assistant coaches, but unity of command should not be perceived as an autocratic style of leadership. Instead, unity of command should minimize confusion and facilitate the smooth operation of the team.

If a team adheres to the concept of unity of command, one may ask, "Where does this leave the assistant director of the program?" Depending upon the experience level of the individuals involved, there may be very little "organizational line" difference between the director and the assistant director. Traditional organizational charts often show vertical lines running from the director to the assistant, but in the forensics world the slope of the line is a very slight one; in some ways the director is a first among equals in many situations, taking ultimate responsibility for the program but also involving the assistant director, other assistants, and in some cases, student team members in the decision-making process.

There are situations where the director should probably work solo on some projects, because in the creative process there are times when an individual works more effectively than a group. The idea of the individual vs. the group brings to mind the familiar group theory exercise, "Lost on the Moon," where participants are told that they have crash landed on the dark side of the moon and they must rendezvous with the mothership many miles away. The participants are given a list of fifteen items, and they must rank them in order of importance from one to fifteen regarding which items are the most important to take on the hike to the mothership. The first time through the exercise, individuals rank the items

in order of importance, and then they discuss their rankings with group members to determine a group ranking. In most cases, the group will produce a more correct ranking than an individual because of the concept of synergy, where more people are sharing their collective knowledge. Synergy can be a useful component in the decision-making process, but one can also imagine situations where it could be detrimental.³

Several people sitting down together and actually determining the line items for a team budget is probably not an ideal group project. The director and the assistant should probably share the same philosophies regarding the administration of the program. It is difficult to imagine a situation where the two administrators want different things for their program—one person wants a nationally competitive program while the other person desires a more *laissez-faire* or non-competitive approach. The two directors may have different means for arriving at the same ends while also having different leadership styles or personalities, but the overall philosophy of the program should be the same.

One may question how unity of command affects the students' perceptions of the various coaches in the program and whether or not assistants carry the same authority as the director. The response to this question is that the student should perceive all coaches as having authority, and that all coaches assist in the policy-making and administration of the team. It can be difficult to establish this perception among students, especially when there is a wide range of experience levels between the director and some of the assistants. For example, it would be easy for students to dismiss any graduate student coaches as not having the authority to make decisions concerning discipline or policy.

Program directors must reinforce the idea that coaches should be viewed as a staff or *gestalt* with regard to decision- and policy-making. Directors who fail to represent their staff as unified concerning authority and policy-making are not only asking for problems concerning student satisfaction and discipline, they are also encouraging staff discord and divisiveness.

A way of minimizing negative student perceptions and maximizing staff satisfaction and productivity is the management concept of delegation of authority and responsibility. This concept could include responsible students where appropriate.

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

Delegation of authority and responsibility is another basic principle of management that is applied in most successful organiza-

tions.⁴ It is difficult for the director of any forensic program to do all the tasks that need to be accomplished without the assistance of others. Tasks must be delegated to assistants and to students, because, from a practical point of view, the director cannot do all the work of the program plus maintain a satisfactory level of teaching in the academic area.

One of the major mistakes made by many managers in the private sector is that they often give assistants a great deal of responsibility with little or no authority to carry out the tasks assigned to them. Forensic coaches can probably empathize with this mistake and recount examples from their own experiences. In some ways, this is similar to the doctor and barber situation given in the introduction of this article, where the doctor was delegating the actual task of performing surgery and making the barber responsible for the surgery only if something went wrong (the doctor, of course, was willing to accept the responsibility and the praise if all went well.)

Assistants can become frustrated in a situation in which they are given the responsibility for completing a task without also getting some amount of authority and resources for getting the job done. This can result in the proverbial "toothless tiger" effect, where the assistant is powerless to carry out the expectations of the director.

Directors should give assistants authority, realizing that authority allows individuals to make decisions within the scope of their capabilities and that assistants may assign specialized tasks to others (including students). The assistant also has the right to expect that any assigned task be carried out in a timely and satisfactory manner. In order for this to happen, the assistants should be allowed a certain degree of power.

Power is often given a negative connotation, especially when associated with what are perceived to be democratic or participatory groups or organizations. Power is related to authority, but the two are not synonymous in the context of organizational theory. Authority is the right to accomplish certain tasks or to ask others to perform various duties, but power is what backs up authority.⁵ Power is something that must be shared by the coaching staff in order for delegation of authority and responsibility to succeed in an organization or team environment. Students cannot perceive the director of a program as being the only individual who possesses power in matters of influence and discipline. Power allows assistants some autonomy in decision-making, especially when the director of the program is not available to make deci-

sions, and aids in the ability of the assistants to complete tasks and expect that others will assist in the work of the organization.

An organizational concept that further refines the element of delegation and authority is the specialization of work. Specialization of work can help larger teams assign tasks in such a way that most of the work is completed, and can help in the small team situation by ensuring that the director of the program doesn't have to do all the work involved with the team.

SPECIALIZATION OF WORK

Specialization of work is defined as dividing work in such a way so that people perform simple activities and jobs rather than complex activities and jobs.⁶ Work is divided into small components so individuals can specialize in the performance of a limited set of activities. One can see how this concept is closely associated with the delegation of authority and responsibility. Delegation of authority and responsibility is probably a prerequisite for specialization of work because without authority and responsibility tasks would probably be completed in an unsatisfactory manner, if they were completed at all.

One can also imagine numerous larger activities associated with forensic programs where specialization of work is necessary. Tournament management is an area where many small tasks comprise the gestalt of the actual tournament. Obviously, it would be unfair for a director to assign the managing of a tournament to an assistant without giving the assistant the personnel to assist with the numerous tasks involved in hosting a tournament. The same could be said for other larger activities involved in managing a forensic program such as travel arrangements, who coaches what event, recruiting, etc.

Implementation of specialization of work can result in some initial time spent by the director and assistant discussing not only how work is to be divided, but also which persons are best suited to do particular tasks. In order for specialization of work to work as a concept there must be a proper "fit" between people and tasks. People must be given tasks that they are either well prepared to complete, or tasks that they are willing to learn, and a "nervous system" that is compatible with the particular tasks in question. It is obviously frustrating for an individual to be given a task which they have no idea how to complete or a job for which they are not temperamentally suited. The person who cannot function well in the tournament tabulation room may excel at budget planning and the various aspects of team finances.

The director and assistants must be open with each other in determining the organizational strengths of each individual. All leaders must realize that an individual has both strengths and weaknesses in the organizational environment, and that each person needs a proper "fit" between personality and task. Specialization of work has the effect of increasing ability. If people are motivated to do a certain task (and in most cases they usually are if they avoid frustration and feel they can succeed with the assigned task), the performance of the individual increases:

$$\text{Performance} = \text{ability times motivation}^7$$

From a productivity point of view the specific benefits of work and specialization are the higher levels of individual performance. One may infer that from a more humanistic point of view, individuals who succeed and perform well are probably more satisfied with their positions and feel a sense of accomplishment with their jobs.

CONCLUSION

No matter the size of a forensic program or whether the forensic director is the sole manager or works with an assistant (s), basic principles of management such as unity of command, delegation of authority and responsibility, and specialization of work can assist in the management of a program.

As stated earlier in this article, there may be a tendency on the part of some individuals not to utilize management and organizational communication principles when directing a forensic program because forensics is an extracurricular activity.

Some might argue that such principles turn the forensic program into a "business" and eliminates the learning and social rewards associated with the activity. Organizational principles do not have to be considered mutually exclusive from learning and group satisfaction. Individuals achieve satisfaction from attaining goals, working and socializing with others in an organization, and so one may certainly expect there to be a transfer of this satisfaction to a well managed forensic program.

The program director and assistant can do much to promote team satisfaction by utilizing the elements discussed in this article while also increasing their own job satisfaction and improving their mental health. There is certainly no reason why the director has to serve in the same way as the physician and the assistant as the barber mentioned in this article's introduction. If the director and assistant were to function as physician and barber, they would probably have few patients (students) involved in their program.

NOTES

¹Peter F. Drucker, *The Practice of Management* (New York: Harper and Row, 1986), p. 193.

²Aubrey C. Sanford, Gary T. Hunt, Hyler J. Bracey, *Communication Behavior in Organizations* (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill), p. 99.

³Robert S. Cathcart and Larry A. Samovar, *Small Group Communication: A Reader* (Dubuque, Iowa: William C. Brown), p. 26; see also Michael Doctoroff, *Synergistic Management* (New York: AMACOM, 1977), pp. 51-70.

⁴Sanford, Hunt and Bracey, p. 103. See also Gary T. Hunt, *Communication Skills in the Organization* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1980), pp. 180-182.

⁵Ibid. See also Charles Conrad, "Organizational Power: Faces in Symbolic Forms," In Linda L. Putman and Michael E. Pacanowsky (eds.), *Communication and Organizations: An Interpretive Approach* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1983).

⁶Ibid., p. 98.

⁷Ibid.

REVIEW

OF PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

JACK KAY, EDITOR

Larry Norton, *The History of Pi Kappa Delta, 1913-1987*,
Pi Kappa Delta, 1988, (\$25.00)

The year 1987 is significant in the history of Pi Kappa Delta because it marked the seventy-fifth anniversary of the organization. From its beginnings at Ottawa (Kansas) University in 1913 with about fifteen Charters/Chapters to a current 210 active Chapters with 36,000 enrolled members, Pi Kappa Delta is the nation's largest forensic honorary.

The History of Pi Kappa Delta, however, is much more than a compendium of dates and names. Under the editorship of Larry Norton, Professor Emeritus of Bradley University, the volume goes beyond the usual "stuff" of historical chronicling; it is also a manual, guidebook, handbook, and archival reference. Norton has divided the volume into four parts. Part One covers the general history of the organization; Part Two focuses on the structure of Pi Kappa Delta and how the provinces and local chapters relate to the national organization; Part Three concentrates on tournament activities; and Part Four concentrates on convention activities and concludes with an Appendix which includes the national constitution, rituals, officers, conventions, contest subjects, a complete Chapter list, and all names of superior contest winners during the seventy-five year history of the organization.

Part One is probably the most interesting reading in the volume because the founders were quite thorough and meticulous in recording the events that surrounded the genesis of the organization. Egbert R. Nichols was Pi Kappa Delta's first National President as well as Editor of *The Forensic*, the organization's quarterly journal. He later became National Historian. The second National President, John R. Macarthur, also served in the offices of Secretary and Editor. These two gentlemen were ideally suited to record the early history of Pi Kappa Delta. It is through their recollections and writings that much of Part One is based. Unfortunately, from 1936 to 1965, the office of Historian was vacant and as a result,

some information is not available. Nevertheless, the first twenty-five years are well documented and provide some most interesting reading about an infant organization with an uncertain future.

Part Two details the structure of the organization based on the first constitution. Following that there is a convention-by-convention record of constitutional amendments. Subsequent chapters deal with the National Organization, The Provinces, Local Chapters, Publications, and Alumni.

Part Three focuses on debate and speaking as Pi Kappa Delta tournament events. It is interesting to note that for the first two National Tournaments, oratory was the only competitive event. In 1924 extempore speaking was added, but oratory and extempore speaking were divided into men's and women's categories. Two years later, men's and women's debate were offered for the first time at a National Tournament. The full range of individual speaking events was not offered until the mid-1980s.

Part Four of *The History of Pi Kappa Delta* records the evolution of the Convention. Dinners, banquets, and luncheons used to be prominent features of conventions along with prominent speakers. Convention speakers of the past included Congressmen Karl Mundt and Francis Case; A. Craig Baird; Waldo Braden; and Senators Ralph Yarborough and Henry Jackson. More recently, however, conventions have gone from 6-7 day events to 4-day events, and tournament competition occupies more convention time than business/social meetings. Featured speakers have not been part of the convention format since 1977. It is somewhat ironic that an organization given to recognizing oral communication, whether in individual events or debate, would discontinue the practice of having a prominent and featured speaker as part of its biennial tradition.

It is to be hoped that the motto of Pi Kappa Delta, "the art of persuasion—beautiful and just" does not become "—forgotten and lost." To guard against such a possibility, Larry Norton has done a tremendous job of preserving the seventy-five year history of a vital organization that has served students and faculty for many years. Contemporary forensic concerns such as budgets, travel, ethics, and death of debate, and an over-emphasis on awards instead of educational gain are topics that have confronted the forensic community for over fifty years, and are not likely to be resolved in the near future. Whether one is interested in the history of Pi Kappa

Delta, a record of all tournament winners over the years, or a list of convention sites and dates, *The History of Pi Kappa Delta* will provide enjoyable and useful reading, especially to those who like a bit of nostalgia.

The book may be obtained by writing to:

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1010 No. Heading Ct.
Peoria, IL 61604

Charles L. Johnson
Ohio Northern University
Ada, Ohio

EDITORS FORUM: The Conference on Forensic Education

*Sheryl A. Friedley**

The National Federation of State High School Associations will host a Conference on Forensic Education to be held at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, on December 27, 28, and 29, 1989. Recognizing that high schools and colleges have common concerns regarding forensic education, the National Federation hopes to encourage dialogue among educators with this conference, its papers, and its proceedings.

A primary goal of this conference will be to determine criteria for evaluating summer institutes. If recommended, the National Federation will determine criteria for evaluating summer institutes and use these criteria to establish and publish an annual list of accredited summer institutes. Once developed, students, coaches, parents, and administrators could use such a list to make more informed choices for attending summer institutes.

In addition, the following list of topics will be the focus for individual papers and small group sessions throughout the conference:

Role and Mission

Chair: Daryl Fisher, Isidore Newman School

- will develop a role and mission statement for summer institutes

Instructional Practices

Chair: Bob Branham, Bates College

- will explore such issues as the emphasis of practice over theory, the use of handbooks and squad cases, the selection of instructors, instructional time, and library access

Administration

Chair: David Rein, Clear Lake High School

- will consider such issues as student supervision, the relationship between institute and host institution, and financial accountability

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Enhancing Opportunities for Students

Chair: Brother Rene Sterner, Calvert Hall College High School

- will consider such issues as minority recruitment, the need for different types of institutes, one-day workshops, and financial/time barriers

Accreditation

Chair: Richard Sodikow, Bronx High School of Science

- will develop a procedure for accrediting summer institutes

The Role of Competition

Chair: Paula Nettles, Woodward Academy

- will examine such issues as the role of institute tournaments, partner pairings, and awards

Information Dissemination Responsibility

Chair: Lee Turner, Pine Crest Preparatory School

- will examine the responsibility of institutes to alert consumers of their goals, practices, and expectations

Evaluation and Assessment

Chair: Ann Sullivan

- will consider how institutes will be evaluated

Recruiting by Colleges

Chair: Melissa Beall, Lincoln Southeast High School

- will examine the concerns of high school and college coaches in recruiting practices

Mutual Interests

Chair: George Ziegelmueller, Wayne State University

- will evaluate current high school and college relationships as well as suggest new joint endeavors

Recruitment and Retention of Coaches

Chair: Steve Hunt, Lewis and Clark College

- will examine steps the forensic community can take to insure an adequate supply of qualified coaches, including continuing education and the role of institutes in providing such education

Organization Relations

Chair: Pat Ganer, Cypress College

- will examine the proliferation of forensic organizations and how both high schools and colleges may better engage in joint ventures

Individual Events

Chair: Barb Seng, Henry Sibley High School

- will examine the role of individual events at summer institutes

Lincoln-Douglas Debate

Chair: Frank Sferra, J. K. Mullen High School

- will examine the development of Lincoln-Douglas debate at high school level and will consider the role of summer institutes in developing this forensic event

If you have questions about the Conference on Forensic Education, please contact Dick Fawcett or Lynn Goodnight at the following addresses:

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