

decision to join the team. (She had heard about it in her small high school.) She relates that upon becoming a member, she — and she thinks most, if not all of the team — “wanted very badly to please Dr. Derryberry, fulfill his high expectations, and live up to the tradition he had built at SBU over the years.” Human resource director Rachel Morrow writes about the pull of the tradition in these words: “By my senior year I continued to stay in the program for the new members — to help, encourage, and pass on the SBU legacy.”

The tradition of excellence that attracts competitors and inspires their loyalty also infuses team traditions such as the chapter's newsletter and service projects. A tradition worthy of special note is the team's culminating activity, the annual Pi Kappa Delta banquet. From its inauspicious beginning in 1968 when the team had fewer than ten members, it now attracts approximately 150 persons. Team members and their parents, faculty, administrators, alumni, and friends of forensics assemble “to celebrate the educational features of forensics” (“Forensics as a Cooperative Agent” 40). The banquet features an address by a distinguished team graduate, the presentation of scholarships and special awards, the year in review, and senior recollections. Printed on gray parchment with back lettering, the six-page May 6, 2000 program manifests the quality and educational focus that characterize SBU forensics.

Having set forth the philosophical grounding and the three-pillared superstructure that Bob Derryberry has built, this essay returns to the question raised earlier: “What manner of man is this. . . .?” The answer: he is a rare forensics educator who has achieved a consonance between idea and implementation. Bob Derryberry is both an architect and a builder. His philosophy of forensics designs, constructs, evaluates, adjusts, and superintends all that transpires under his tutelage. The pillars of ethical standards and behavior, multidimensional student development, and team traditions stand solidly on their educational foundation.

The alumni who once roamed inside the Derryberry structure report that the architect is “approachable,” “helpful,” “patient,” “compassionate,” “dedicated,” “ultra-organized,” and “ethical,” while still maintaining high expectations and standards. Among the pillars they have discovered treasures he never knew he had strewn there. Educator Todd Fuller learned how to transfer his skill from forensics to professional areas. The Assistant Prosecuting Attorney of Clay County Missouri, Alan Reynolds, found out “so much about God, myself, and life from him. . . . I continue to learn lessons each day as a result of all he taught us, often without opening his mouth.”

Among all the adjectives that alumni use to describe this builder of programs, teams, and lives, there is not a trace of “competitive.” The comments of W. B. Tichenor, the Chief Hearing Officer for the State Tax Commission of Missouri, shows why that omission is not an oversight:



I sincerely believe and know in my heart that all of the wins that his teams have compiled over the years are not what have been Bob's goal. His goal year after year, student after student, is to see each individual achieve his or her best. He knows that the results will take care of themselves if he focuses on letting students strive to do their best.

The blueprint from which Bob Derryberry works has been drawn by him, although he, in his generous way, acknowledges his debt to his colleagues of the past and present. No forensics architect-builder, however, has clearer vision, a surer hand, and better results than his.

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## A Tribute to the Lexicon of Bob Derryberry: Words That Build

SHANNON S. DYER\*

If imitation is the highest form of flattery, Bob Derryberry—a.k.a. Dr. Bob is one of the most flattered men in forensic history. Long before I ever met him, I heard former members of the forensic community imitate the man whose distinctive style made him remarkable in a field of expert speakers. For more than a dozen years, I have called his unique word choice *Derryberryisms*, but I propose that there is more to his style than entertaining one-liners or brief colorful phrases. Instead, there is a whole philosophy of learning hidden in these words. I propose that we study the language of Bob Derryberry. There is a method to the word choices that reveal both the caring, excellent forensic educator and the Southern gentleman whose style and humor makes an indelible impression on those who encounter him.

Bob Derryberry is a dichotomy. On one hand, you find the embodiment of the “good man,” a tribute to credibility. On the other hand, you find style—a humorous style that entertains and delights. So, Dr. Bob is both admirable character and animated character. But there is a reason that Dr. Bob is able to be both and exhibit a competence that makes his life worthy of study for those of us who follow him in the field of forensics. Derryberry brings his hill-country, genteel roots to the classroom and forensic coaching, and using this colorful, stylistic speech, he puts into practice his knowledge of communication and years of studying great orators. Thus, it would be hard to honor this notable communication educator without paying tribute to his distinct lexicon. Although there is little doubt of the art of the man’s rhetoric, it is a little more difficult to answer the question, why does it work? Fortunately, we have at our fingertips the tools of the entire communication discipline available to help answer this. This investigation is not simply an analysis of rhetoric, because Dr. Bob’s most interesting language contributions happen in everyday conversations. Thus, the social sciences have insight to offer as well. This paper seeks to understand the language of Bob Derryberry using Coordinated Management of Meaning, the Sapir Whorf Hypothesis, and Aristotles’ *On Rhetoric*.

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## Coordinated Management of Meaning

Linguistic scholars offer many theoretical tools to analyze Derryberry's language, including Coordinated Management of Meaning (CMM). CMM approaches language as a system of rules (Trenholm & Jensen, 2000). Two distinct types of rules provide meaning and to words: constitutive and regulative. Constitutive rules use hierarchical levels to determine meaning. One of these levels includes speech acts such as commands or admonitions. The acts contribute to the meaning of the words. In response to a student's behavior, for instance, Derryberry may state, "be kind" or "act seemingly." But the regulative rules—rules that determine appropriateness—demonstrate the most interesting effects. Students repeat these words to each other in similar situations. Not only are these admonitions repeated in humorous in-group conversations, but the meaning retains its original form even through the imitation. A fellow student may admonish another, "Now, act seemingly" and the meaning and humor are the same as when Derryberry made the statement. It is common for mockery to create opposite meaning from the original content—or communicate derision for the original speaker. But when the imitation occurs, there is an underlying respect to these comments. Modeling occurs through word choices distinct enough to be humorous—making them irresistible to a group of wordsmiths full of nervous energy walking up the sidewalk from van to the tournament check-in building. These repetitive episodes take a place in the life scripts of the students. Perloff (1993) summarizes one viewpoint on behavior change describing all persuasion as self-persuasion:

According to this view, which is accepted by many contemporary scholars, it is technically incorrect to state that persuaders change people's minds...As trite as it may sound, it is the individual who decides whether or not to alter his or her attitudes about the issue (p. 15).

Coordinated Management of Meaning helps us see how this imitative humor brings about the building of a student's own life scripts—through humor and respect.

## Sapir-Whorf

The second social science theory we use is the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis. I choose this theory for its contrast in perspective; language is a system of symbols—distinct units to be studied. Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf claim that language has a strong influence on thought (Darnell, 1998, Davies, et. al, 1998, Rapport, 1996). The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis states that language helps determine the way we interpret the world and that thought is relative to language. Perhaps Derryberrianisms are not a formal language, but the spirit of the theory may still apply.

The symbolic meaning for the term *team* is in many of his phrases. Derryberry stresses team above individual achievement. For instance,



he avoids pitting two students against each other for a traveling position. Sacrifice is stressed and effort rewarded by insisting "to whom much is given, much shall be required." Also, every member of the team is important—and you are a team member by virtue of commitment. The symbolic phrase, "I would crawl to the ad building for every one of you" refers to the "few pennies" in scholarships that might be found. Such phrases demonstrate the importance of each team member whatever experience level. Other symbolic themes found in his phrases include downplaying competition, stressing service, setting standards of quality and practicing humility. Derryberry again models this theme when he assigns the role of "student" to himself. Sapir-Whorf hypothesis states that language both is relative to thought and determines our reality. The language Derryberry and his students use to describe the team alters the forensics experience for each of them. Through his conversational choices, the meaning is internalized creating a heuristic of a forensic team that does not require a lengthy elaboration of rules and regulations, but it relies on simple symbols that define a team such as unity, commitment, service, sacrifice, and humility.

#### Aristotle, *On Rhetoric*

Of course, no analysis of a forensic educator would be complete without using the ancient Greeks for rhetorical insight. Aristotle's work sheds light on the rhetorical integrity of Derryberry's words. Dr. Bob's roots in the field of rhetoric demand the inclusion of this point. The *pisteis*, or means of persuasion, seem obvious at first; it would be hard to find a better speaker on which to focus a study of *ethos*, but his character is not the central text for this paper. The lexicon of Derryberry does not achieve its power from *ethos*—even though his credibility may regulate meaning as CMM suggests. Instead, the messages rely on the *pathe*. Aristotle explains that "the emotions (*pathe*) are those things through which, by undergoing change, people come to differ in their judgements and which are accompanied by pain and pleasure, for example anger, pity, fear, and other such things and their opposites" (Kennedy, 1991, p. 121)

When expressing emotions, Derryberry employs a dialectic approach. He often pairs emotions unexpectedly when he expresses his message. For instance, the concept of *proates* (calmness) can be found in the explicative: "great gobs of goose grease!" or "horse feathers!" The startling imagery robs the phrases of their expected judgements when they are introduced. One rhetorical change is anticipated—anger—and another is received: vivid, intriguing and humorous imagery modifying the effect of the change. Similarly, *nemesan* (being indignant) creates dilemma for the listener when they hear "you skunk" or "you scamp." There is little doubt as to the speaker's sincerity. He has managed to diffuse the negative emotion with a trademark rhetorical diplomacy. Without apparent effort, his words express emotion with style, engender emotion in his audience, and



are sympathetic to those who differ from him. George Kennedy (1991) explains to the reader the importance of this mastery of emotion:

The primary rhetorical functions of the account is apparently to provide a speaker with an ability to arouse these emotions in an audience and thus to facilitate the judgement sought. But some of the emotions are not ones a speaker is likely to want to arouse toward himself, and a secondary purpose emerges—how to arouse emotion against an opponent and how to refute and opponent's claim to the sympathy of an audience (p. 135).

Dr. Bob has mastered the ability to communicate negative emotions with diplomatic moderation. While he certainly is able to capture the sympathy of an audience, one of his greatest rhetorical gifts is his ability to claim the sympathy of the opponent as well.

## Conclusion

Perhaps these theories have served more as a philosophical framework for understanding than an actual analysis of conversational style. Nonetheless, I think the point is made that this distinctive conversational style has been an effective tool of one of the great forensic educators of our time. Scotton (1986) even advances a position that lexical coloring in speech has power. Power comes through the control of ambiguity, social distances, rhythm, and evaluations. It would be interesting to evaluate the power of Dr. Bob's colorful lexicon. Certainly these are only a few areas that give us insight into the lexicon of this remarkable forensic educator. Politeness theory, ethos, and agenda setting hold the promise of even more perspectives. Bob Derryberry is a communication teacher and forensic coach who models the mastery of words that build.

So, in the language of Dr. Bob, I leave you with these memorable words of advice: I urge you to "act seemingly," "kind scholars," because in forensics, "there are no superstars." Further, "sincerity covers a world sins," and "if you do your best, all of your coaches will be proud." "Don't avoid your coaches", or you may hear: "What is your name?" "I don't want to be a Johnny one-note," "you scamp," but "we need a rededication." And finally, the best advice I have received from Derryberry: "Take a vow of poverty and become a teacher," because "the rewards are better than payday."

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# A Forensics Icon as Citizen-Educator: The Citizenship of Bob Derryberry Within the Forensics Community

SCOTT JENSEN\*

Overriding all that we attempt is the assurance that what we do really matters in the lives of developing speakers and in our communities where ideas, values, and the best of our literary past await challenge and communication (Derryberry, 1993).

This important relationship between our students and the world in which they live is expressed as part of the keynote address at the 1993 Pi Kappa Delta Professional Developmental Conference. These words capture the essence of the life-long mission of one of our greatest forensics educators and Pi Kappa Delta members. Dr. Bob Derryberry, in over 40 years as a professional educator, has consistently promoted forensics as an empowering and vital tool for training great communicators.

A great citizen in one who serves his or her community in a responsible manner, acting in ways that better the lives of each person within that community. Within the community of forensics in general, and of Pi Kappa Delta specifically, such a person is one who teaches, coaches, mentors, writes, and speaks in a manner that promotes the ideal of persuasion as "beautiful and just." Such citizenship can blend any of several goals, including competition, mentoring, and education. There is no doubt that Bob Derryberry, or "Dr. Bob" as students, colleagues, and friends know him, has lived his professional life as the epitome of a citizen who serves his community with passion and pride. This citizen-educator has touched the lives of countless individuals, students, and colleagues alike in ways that are meaningful and enduring. Bob Derryberry's service and dedication to the Pi Kappa Delta honorary and the forensics community recently earned him PKD's highest honor—election to its Hall of Fame. The article promotes Derryberry as a forensics icon, and his citizenship as most deserving of tribute. Forensics fulfills a number of missions; similarly, forensics community participants seek their own missions to justify their involvement. These missions are not in any way mutually exclu-

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sive. In fact, it is the personification of many of these goals that represent the greatness of Derryberry. I focus specifically on three—competition, communication, and how each of these is integrated as education.

### Forensics as Competition

The reality of our activity is that students compete for wins in debate rounds, high rankings in individual events, and tangible awards that acknowledge excellence within particular forensics events. There are a number of contexts in which students illustrate their forensics talents, but the arena most common to the forensics community is the competitive tournament. As Brand (1997) argues, “forensics promotes training in communication skills which can go further than in-class experiences” (p. 262). There is often a resistance to promoting the competitive dimension of forensics for fear that it will de-emphasize the educational missions of our programs. In reality, the competitive arena is an essential extension of the forensics classroom. In fact, the competitive arena, for most programs, is the laboratory in which forensics skills and theories are put to the test. The de-emphasis on other missions of forensics programs is often a question of the mindset of the educator in charge. There is a difference between holding competitive success as THE important end for a program and seeing such success as only a component of a program’s overall success.

The story of Bob Derryberry is an interesting one. There have been few programs that have enjoyed the consistent and pronounced competitive success that characterizes Derryberry’s programs at Southwest Baptist University. Yet, Derryberry consciously balances the considerations that come together to create this success in an effort to achieve ends that are greater than the competitive success. Foremost in the mind of Dr. Derryberry is the student and team. He strives to build and maintain a framework in which his students can excel as individuals and as a team. He wrote in 1995 “the forensic team can utilize its small group status and derive benefits from cooperative learning to enhance team cohesiveness and productivity while maintaining individual accomplishment and growth” (p. 31). Derryberry added, “strategic choices can highlight and reinforce the team concept” (1995, p. 31).

Southwest Baptist University has, for the past 16 years, reigned as one of the top two superior award winners at Pi Kappa Delta’s biennial national tournament. Southwest Baptist students have won the overall sweepstakes championship at all but one of the Missouri Association of Forensic Activities state tournament since 1980. In addition, Derryberry’s students have earned more national, regional, and state championships than anyone can imagine. Yet, Dr. Derryberry’s philosophy of team over individual is echoed in his students. One student is quoted in 1997 as preferring “the PKD practice of presenting multiple awards because the tradition tells us that we



are competitors while we are also working as a team within a fraternity" (p. 13). Derryberry celebrates the accomplishments of each of his students. But what is most impressive is how his students come together to celebrate their team's success, and how team accomplishments trump any honors they might have received as individuals. Hundreds of present and former students attend Southwest Baptist University's annual forensics banquet each year. Is it any surprise that ties between a Southwest Baptist University student and his/her collegiate forensics program would be so enduring?

### Forensics and Communication

Bob Derryberry has always been a crusader for sound communication practices being at the heart of what we do in the world of forensics. Speaking to the 1993 Pi Kappa Delta Professional Developmental Conference, Derryberry cautions that "we must not neglect the bedrock principles and development of effective public speech" (p. 4). Derryberry has consistently upheld participation in forensics as an ideal avenue for speech training. With particular regard to Pi Kappa Delta, Derryberry writes "we can make a compelling case for facilitating the experiences we offer through Pi Kappa Delta in 1993 because our societal and educational structures often fail to provide avenues for developing essential oral communication skills" (1993, p. 4).

Derryberry's call for developing communication skills in our students is made more credible by his example. It is difficult to think of any other person who better characterizes what he professes. Bob Derryberry is consistently the epitome of an ethical, passionate, fair, and engaging communicator. In all of my experiences I have never known a person to be more fair and respectful of others. Derryberry and I have had a number of discussions during which we disagreed. He always considered my ideas to be equally valid, even when his mind remained unchanged. We teach the importance of objectivity and openness as characteristics of sound forensics practice. Derryberry implores that "despite our individual backgrounds, as adjudicators, we must guard against our preferences and biases becoming the sole focus in evaluating forensics performance" (1993, p. 6). As is his adjudication, so too is his communication in life.

Beyond his respect for difference, Bob Derryberry lifts up others. Teachers and students alike have much to learn from Derryberry's example. It is difficult to ever remember him engaging in an *ad hominem* argument, or not finding something positive to say about even the most difficult personality, and not demonstrating sincere concern for others, even at the expense of attention to himself. As an exemplary communicator, Bob Derryberry brings people together. He consistently demonstrates an ability to mediate when differences exist. Likewise, he appreciates that what is true in a world of forensics is true in life—people disagree and that disagreement can be celebrated and not feared.



## Forensics as Education

If you were to ask Bob Derryberry what he views as the most critical mission of forensics, he would immediately highlight education as essential. In his developmental conference keynote from 1993, he notes that “the critical need for speech training continues, and Pi Kappa Delta can and should accept increased responsibility for oral communication development by being inclusive and insisting that our educational premises are solid” (p. 7). Bob Derryberry strives for these educational ends in his teaching and scholarship.

A small sampling of Derryberry’s scholarly efforts reveals one common denominator: each of his articles and papers focus in some way on the pedagogy of forensics. Specific subject matter in his research ranges from developing team ethics to integrating forensics within a broader undergraduate curriculum. He has authored chapters in texts, as well as co-authored texts. State and national organizations have recognized Bob Derryberry as an outstanding educator. There is no shortage of evidence for the claim that, for Bob Derryberry, education shapes his professional activities.

The importance of education is that it integrates other missions of forensics. Forensics is a co-curricular activity—an extension of the classroom. Our forensics students have the unique opportunity to apply a variety of academic and personal skills within a single arena that is characterized by learning, competing, and socialization. In all instances we LEARN to communicate effectively in an effort to win awards. We LEARN about people and places unfamiliar to us through our socialization within forensics contexts. Learning is the ultimate justification for what we do as participants in the world of forensics. Throughout my nearly 20 years as a forensics educator I have held Bob Derryberry as the example of what I strive for in my professional life. I have never sat in a Bob Derryberry classroom, or taken a ride in the infamous Southwest Baptist “purple people mover.” I can only imagine the intensity of this self-imposed mentoring relationship had I enjoyed more direct contact with Bob Derryberry during my forensics education and training.

## Reflections on Derryberry: The Citizen-Educator

Derryberry’s citizenship within the world of forensics has struck me in too many ways to mention in a single paper. As I reflect on my own experiences as a forensics professional my encounters with Derryberry stand out in my mind. I will never forget our discussions about comprehensive forensics. I will forever remember the discussions over sweepstakes formulas for what seems like every tournament we attended. But what I will remember most is his example. Dr. Bob Derryberry is the Pi Kappa Delta model of balancing education, competition, and citizenship in an effort to share ideas in a manner that is beautiful and just.

It is this example that is the cornerstone of his citizenship, or his



acting in a responsible manner that betters members of his community. For well over 40 years Derryberry has traveled to tournaments, judged students in the broadest range of forensics events, served his profession as an officer in countless organizations, and shared his ideas through a number of scholarly efforts. The debate over what is ideal forensics practice and philosophy will rage on and likely never reach a resolution that is satisfactory to all who participate in that debate. But Derryberry continues to personify an approach to forensics that should be acceptable to all members of the forensics community—be consistent in philosophy and practice, hold ethical communication as paramount, and give back to the activity in a way that promotes education and communication as meaningful ends realized through participation in forensics. This approach is Derryberry's legacy as forensics' consummate citizen-educator.

As much as I would like to deny it, Dr. Bob Derryberry will not always walk the halls of forensics tournaments and Pi Kappa Delta events. As I bemoan the reality that one day Bob will re-claim forensics weekends as time for himself and his family, I am most troubled by the reality that my students and my colleagues will no longer have the model around which I have shaped many of my professional forensics decisions. But Southwest Baptist will forever be available, and with it comes the legacy of Bob Derryberry. The citizen-educator has impacted his profession and all who have come into contact with him. For that influence I am forever indebted.

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## Editor's Notes: Passing the Torch

This concludes the work of the current Editor and Editorial Board. I have been blessed to work with an outstanding editorial board who put time, energy, and passion into their reviews. I have also been lucky enough to have some very outstanding submissions with which to work. I know that the new editor, Nina-Jo Moore and her editorial board will receive the same help and courtesy I received from the forensics community and Pi Kappa Delta. I also want to acknowledge the professionalism of Ripon Printers, who have always produced a timely quality product. Joyce Harvey has been a joy with whom to work.

It has been a busy four years for this journal and this Honorary. The basic values which guide this Honorary remain, although the organizational and constitutional structures are evolving. There remains a lot of work to do, both for the Honorary and the activity which so many students, faculty and alumni direct their energies. There is a strong need for disciplined research in forensics. There are many questions yet to be answered; innovations to be considered; positions to be argued; and values to be celebrated.

The *Forensic* is the oldest continuous journal dedicated to intercollegiate speech and debate. It is a significant part of what makes Pi Kappa Delta the special organization it is. But for the journal to continue to play the important role in shaping the agendas and pedagogies of intercollegiate forensics it requires a constant infusion of research and writing. See you down the road.

Michael Bartanen



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