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The President's Page

The last lap. It's always harder than the first. By the time this appears in print, we will be on the last lap of the forensic season. Are you keeping up?

In September we were all eager for action to start; determined to have 100 note cards by October 1. We would write a really fine oration. Maybe we would even work up an hilarious after-dinner speech. But now, where is your resolve?

Tests come along every few days. School activities occupy every week night, with parties on weekends. Debaters, because they are leaders, get themselves elected officers of campus organizations. Seniors buckle down to study for comprehensives or graduate record exams. What time is left for debate work?

One can find good reasons to quit work: the easily-available material is all used up; there are only a few more tournaments this year. After all, you wrote one oration, and it didn't win; why try again?

And fellow-coaches: Aren't we all tired to death of search and seizure and Mapp and Escobedo (variously pronounced Escobedo, Escabita, and Esco'bidoo)? Those long, dull practice debates that don't seem to sound much better the next time around—aren't you glad of even a committee meeting so you can cancel a set?

Oh, the students and coaches who are winning lots of tournaments don't get these mid-season doldrums. It's those of us who try but never seem to win that gold trophy or shining medal we'd like so much who seem to grow weary and are tempted to fall by the wayside.

The answer to this problem isn't glamorous.

You students who will soon be in graduate college or law school will learn that sometimes it's the last, most elusive piece of research that gets your thesis past your committee. It's sometimes the almost unavailable bit of evidence that win the law case. Persist in finishing the forensic season bravely. The habits you master now will later serve you well.

If that sounds pontifical, I'll come down to earth with some practical reminders to forensic directors: Plan your budget now for next year, and include some new tournament that will be a refresher for you and the returning debaters; insist that students turn in their application forms; don't forget Form B for experienced debaters, so they can progress to a higher degree. Urge a little more strongly the purchase of pins. Arrange an initiation that will be both impressive and socially stimulating. Insist that all your student members read the Constitution and learn about the national organization, as a means of developing lasting interest in the forensic program. It's all just the old-fashioned theme that a job worth starting is worth finishing well.



GEORGIA BOWMAN

A Look At Discussion

James M. Ladd

Gilbert Rau gave us a fine resume of the development of discussion in national tournaments in the October, 1965, **Forensic**. The present article continues a look at the historical development, and the current condition.

Number of participants at National Conventions:

| | Men | Women | Total |
|------|--------------------|-------|-------|
| 1949 | 85 | 23 | 138 |
| 1951 | None Listed | | |
| 1953 | Not in sweepstakes | | 123 |
| 1955 | | | 116 |
| 1957 | 57 | 42 | 99 |
| 1959 | 57 | 34 | 91 |
| 1961 | 52 | 38 | 90 |
| 1963 | 45 | 30 | 75 |
| 1965 | 35 | 33 | 68 |

As Dr. Rau pointed out, the committees through the years, working with discussion have tried to make the event a valuable forensic experience rather than an added contest. The major complaint of those opposed to discussion at nationals has usually taken the form of "you can't combine the need for cooperation which is inherent in discussion with the competitive element of a national tournament." Robert Cathcart gave an excellent answer to this complaint in the May 1956, **Forensic**. In brief, he said, "... These ... elements ... can also be observed, criticized, and appraised by a competent critic judge."

Other articles which reflect serious thinking about discussion appear in the **Forensic** for March, 1952; March, 1956; January, 1957; October, 1961; January, 1958; May, 1960; October, 1961; January, 1966.

The January 1958 article by Tom Olbricht was an attempt to supplant opinion with some factual data by which

honest men could arrive at reasonably sound judgments. For example, does discussion require prior preparation? The survey of the 1957 discussants revealed a definite correlation between rating in the national tournament and:

1. Prior experience in discussion.
2. Participation in debate.
3. Time spent in preparation.

In fact, 35% of the students agreed that discussion required more, or at least as much preparation as debate. The survey also indicated that of the 88 students who answered, 88 percent had debated. Of the 88 students, 66 percent either preferred discussion to debate, or gave it equal preference.

The discussion committee chairman for 1965 sent the following questionnaire to all participants following the nationals:

1. Should discussion be continued as a contest at nationals?
2. Was your participation in 1965 of value to you? Please explain briefly.
3. To what extent did you make special preparation for your participation?
4. Should there be more extensive briefing of participants at nationals before going into the first round?
5. Was the judging method used at Tacoma adequate? (Faculty judges each round; traveling judges evaluating groups; student evaluation of each other within the group.)
6. My opinion of discussion as a contest event.
7. Suggestions for changes of any kind in discussion at nationals.

This survey was limited to students who were engaged in discussion at the

Tacoma convention and so may be considered a one-sided approach.

(The survey was returned by 23 of the 33 women and 20 of the 35 men who were in discussion.)

The results of the survey, as summarized under each question, reveal that the participants enjoyed and appreciated the event.

1. Should discussion be continued as a contest at nationals? Twenty-three women and eighteen men said, "yes." One called discussion an "enjoyable but . . . valueless experience," and one said, "only if revised."

2. Was your participation in 1965 of value to you? Please explain briefly.

Most felt that much was gained. Only two had a negative answer. One stated:

Not particularly. I think everyone in my group had been debating the topic all year—our "discussion" fell into the pattern of reading spare debate cards and statistics at one another.

The other "no" felt that time was too short to do justice to the topic.

Some of the values expressed by many are:

A chance for the exchange of ideas.

Sharing, rather than competing.

An opportunity for making new friends from around the country.

Insights into ideas from other areas of the country.

A relaxed atmosphere to really learn about an important area.

One enthusiastic girl stated:

I was a "misplaced debater" at the national tournament. Indeed, I had never participated in discussion before. Now, I only wish I had more time to devote to discussion! Since I am now a college senior, I'll not be attending any more national tournaments (sniff) but I think I learned how really great discussion can be. I think, perhaps, I learned more in the four rounds of discussion (both about the poverty problem and about

true communication) than I could through debate or reading. I wish I had tried discussion long ago.

Another girl expressed the kind of opinion that has encouraged us to urge the continued use of discussion.

Yes, for two reasons: (1) It's the only event in which there was an adequate opportunity to become acquainted with other contestants (and I think this is one of the major purposes served by a National PKD Convention); (2) I benefited a great deal from the knowledge contributed by other members of the group, especially those concepts and examples which were associated with their particular area of the country. In other words, the event was valuable both as a social activity and as a learning activity.

3. To what extent did you make special preparation for your participation?

Much preparation, including extensive reading and participation in other discussion tournaments—5 students.

Extensive reading of books and periodicals—14 students.

Limited reading, mostly in periodicals—14 students.

No particular preparation — 10 students.

The answers given to this question seem to confirm the results of the Olbright study of 1957. The persons rated high by their colleagues and the judges had almost all done extensive reading and thinking about the topic. Those who reported little or no special preparation were generally among the unrated group.

4. Should there be more extensive briefing of participants at nationals before going into the first round?

About one third of the answers stated quite bluntly that students entering a national contest should know what they are doing and should require no briefing. About one half answered "no," or indicated that the briefing given at Tacoma was about right. The remainder would like more briefing, especially as to what is expected of the leader in each round.

5. Was the judging method at Tacoma adequate?

(Note: a faculty judge, assigned by the committee on judges, observed each round and rated each individual; a traveling panel of judges observed each group for a brief time and assigned a group rating which was given to all individuals of the group; the students within each group evaluated each other. The totals of all these ratings determined the final rating for each participant.)

The general response to this question was favorable to the method used. A few students thought that it was too difficult to rate each other, and some wanted to throw out the traveling judges completely.

The primary criticism was leveled at the judges rather than the method. A substantial group of discussants felt that quite a number of judges were carrying out an unwelcome task in which they had no interest. The question was also raised as to the amount of time spent by the traveling judges with each group. Several expressed the opinion that some of the evaluations may have been hasty.

6. My opinion of discussion as a contest event.

The response to this item was well-nigh unanimous that discussion is valuable, interesting, and very worthwhile.

Some of the statements from the questionnaires:

The event is legitimate in my estimation as it offers a more practical application of speech technique than any other event.

I believe discussion teaches a group of people to cooperate and coordinate their actions . . . it was a very worthwhile experience.

It's fun. It's a change of pace, something different.

An enjoyable and stimulating event.

There were a few who felt that the competitive element tended to destroy

real discussion, but they did not want to discontinue the event at nationals.

7. Suggestions for changes of any kind in discussion at nationals.

The participants had done some hard thinking along these lines, and came up with some positive suggestions that should be heeded by next year's committee.

The most pertinent and most repeated suggestions fell in two main areas: judging and format. Some specific suggestions that were brought up independently by three or more of the participants were:

1. Have judges who **know** and **like** discussion.

2. Eliminate, or give more time to, the traveling judges.

3. Eliminate student evaluation.

4. Have a topic that is definitely different from the debate topic.

5. Require or urge thorough preparation, in advance, by all participants.

I believe that the participants in the 1965 nationals constitute a valid critical group who should be heeded. If the committee for 1967 gives serious consideration to the positive suggestions made by these fine students, the discussion contest will prove to be an outstanding experience for all who share in it.

KEARNEY STATE COLLEGE DEBATERS



Shown with trophies are John Bliese, Bob Lapp, Mary Holoubeck and Phyllis Showers.

The Controversy Over Judges' Qualifications

Donald Klopf, Diane Evans and Sister Mary Linus DeLozier

Controversy continues over the question of who constitutes the most qualified type of speech contest judge. Should the judge be a layman who bases his decision on the persuasibility of the speaker's performance, or the expert in the subject area who bases his decision on his knowledge of the subject, or the professional speech teacher who is trained in the particular speech act being judged? The dispute has never been resolved; advocates still argue the merits of each type of judge.

The purpose here is threefold: (1) to review briefly the aspects of the controversy, (2) to explain past and present efforts to meet tournament judging needs, and (3) to present a plan which may resolve the controversy.

The Controversy

The controversy over who should judge has flared up intermittently for the past fifty years. Frequent disputes in print have brought the issues involved into sharper focus.

1. The Wells-O'Neill Dispute. The Hugh Wells and James O'Neill judging debate seems to be the best known and perhaps the first to appear in print. They argued over the merits of decisions rendered by a "juryman," or layman, as opposed to those rendered by the professional speech teacher. Wells felt that the judge should act as a "juryman." He need not be an expert in debate. He needed merely "to place himself in the position of one who has no

opinions or knowledge of the subject, other than what has been presented, and to make the decision which any reasonable and intelligent person would predicate upon the premises." Wells supported the contention that over-concentration upon the mechanics of debate (e.g., analysis, use of evidence, organization) might make them ends in themselves rather than the means for presenting debate materials acquired through exhaustive preparation.¹

O'Neill believed that the decision must be given to the team that has done the best job of debating; that is, the best job of "studying, organizing, presenting . . . the material available on the question." This decision, he argued, was the decision delivered by the speech teacher or debate coach.²

According to Wells, the layman could competently award a debate judgment if he functioned as a "juryman." According to O'Neill, only the speech teacher or debate coach could make a competent decision.³

Following the Wells-O'Neill dispute, others expressed their feelings about who should judge. Principal among these were Carter,⁴ Hadaller,⁵ Holcomb,⁶ McCarty,⁷ Pease,⁸ Seeley,⁹ and Woolbert.¹⁰

2. The Baker-Graham Dispute. Roy T. Baker and Donald Graham brought the controversy into current focus. Baker contended that a qualified judge should be one with a knowledge of the rules of debate.¹¹ Graham differed. He

argued that "a reasonable adult though not possessed of expert knowledge of procedure and techniques of debate can recognize superior skill in the debate situation." Graham felt that the layman was more effective because he was not so familiar with the arguments and thus more objective.¹²

3. The Wigley-Taylor Dispute. In 1961 Joseph Wigley and Mrs. Anita Taylor added a new dimension. Wigley contended that neither the debate coach, the audience, nor the layman was the "ideal" judge. The "ideal" judge could only be the "expert" in the specific subject area of the debate proposition. The "expert" was the teacher of the subject, or a layman well-informed on the subject.¹³

Mrs. Taylor disagreed. She argued that the real "expert" in the subject area was the debate coach. Since the coach assisted his students to prepare to debate, he knew the intricacies of the subject as well as the informed layman or teacher.¹⁴

The controversy as to who is best qualified to judge seems to revolve around four types of judges: (1) any layman who can use his common sense and good judgment, (2) the layman who is an expert in the topic area, (3) the teacher who instructs in the topic area, or (4) the speech teacher who possesses knowledge of the speaking skills involved in the speech contest.

Methods to Reduce the Judging Need

While the controversy over judges' qualifications continues, practical tournament needs for judges have dictated the types actually utilized. Not enough judges of any one of the types exist in the quantity needed for most speech tournaments. Regardless of the tournament director's preference, he often is forced to use several types.

This need has concerned tournament directors for years. Sarett noted that the problem of securing enough qualified judges was present in 1917.¹⁵ Johnson mentioned that the problem existed in 1935.¹⁶ Walsh called attention to it in 1959.¹⁷

Numerous methods have been devised to reduce the number of judges needed for tournaments. The basic intent behind most of these methods appears to be to keep the number of judges needed as equal as possible to the available supply of speech teacher judges without drastically reducing the number of student participants.

1. The No-Decision Open Forum Debate. William Schrier recommended that open forum discussion among the members of the audience follow a debate and that this open forum replace the judge.¹⁸ Although this method eliminated the need for judges, it proved unsatisfactory to the debaters and the audience. Both groups felt the forum led to a prolonged and aimless boggle.¹⁹

2. The Non-Decision Debate. William Lamers in 1932 experimented with high school debates in which no judges were used and no decisions were awarded. To test its merit, he questioned high school coaches about the method. The coaches agreed that the no-decision debates resulted in a loss of debater interest. They maintained that debaters lost the benefits of judges' written or oral criticism, that they lost a strong motive for research, and that they grew careless on the platform.²⁰

3. The Baccus Method. Joseph Baccus in 1937 suggested that debaters judge each other in the preliminary rounds of a debate tournament in order to compensate for the lack of qualified judges. His plan called for six debate rounds without judges. At the conclusion of the sixth round, each team member ranked in order from one to six the teams he and his colleague had met. The best team received the rank of one, the poorest the rank of six. The eight teams with the lowest point totals competed in the final elimination rounds. Speech teachers judge in these final rounds.

Although this method currently is used, it has never won popular acclaim. The participating debaters objected to it because they found that the opinions which they formed about certain teams before the tournament affected their ranking of them during the tournament.²¹

4. Current Practices. Three methods currently are practiced:

A. Competing schools provide judges. This widely followed method requires that each participating school must supply one qualified judge per several student speakers, usually four, or pay a judging fee. The tournament director hires judges for those schools that can not supply their own. This method, however, does not preclude the use of laymen or other-than-speech faculty.

B. Tournaments use only debate coaches. Some tournaments employ only debate coaches as judges and restrict entries to the number for which judges are available.

C. Tournament sponsors provide judges. Tournament directors which follow this plan impose no requirements that competing schools provide judges nor do they restrict the number of speakers. They provide most of the judges needed, although they will use all types of judges.

These methods (no-decision open forum, non-decision, the Baccus method, and the current ones) have been practiced to meet the need for judges, but the need still exists. The demand is so great that all types of judges have to be employed as the results of a 1962-63 survey of intercollegiate speech tournaments show. During that season students judged in 28% of the 210 tournaments studied, laymen in 32%, and other-than-speech faculty in 62%.²² In interscholastic tournaments, the incidence of other-than-speech teacher judges being used undoubtedly is higher.

A Proposal to End the Controversy

Although the need for judges is met by calling upon students, laymen, and

other faculty, the controversy over who is qualified remains. Little has been done to actually evaluate their ability to judge. But what has been done suggests an end to the controversy may be forthcoming.

The limited research which has been undertaken to evaluate the qualifications of these types of judges reveals:

1. In ranking a series of orations, the decisions of groups of undergraduate college students with no formal speech courses or with one speech course correlated significantly with the decisions of a group of speech teachers.²³

2. In judging an intercollegiate debate, the win/loss decisions of groups of laymen, other-than-speech faculty, and students trained in debate correlated significantly with the win/loss decisions of a group of speech teachers.²⁴

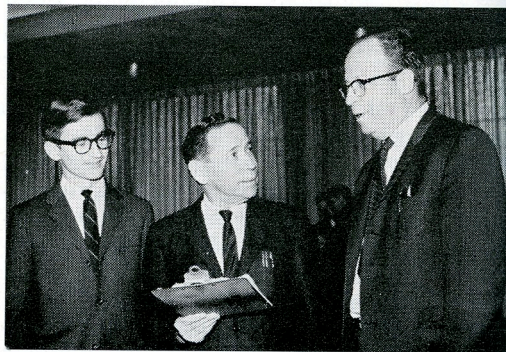
3. In judging an intercollegiate debate, the quality ratings awarded by a group of students trained in debate correlated significantly with those of a group of speech teachers, while the ratings of groups of laymen and other-than-speech faculty with no training significantly disagreed with the speech teachers.²⁵

This limited research indicates a course of action to resolve the controversy: a thorough and comprehensive experimental investigation of the judging ability of the various groups—laymen, students, speech faculty, and other faculty. Such an investigation would involve the combined efforts of a number of experimenters working on many college campuses and at numerous contests and tournaments. Such an investigation would involve several changes in experimental design to accommodate the different systems of evaluation (e.g. win/loss, quality ratings) for debate and the various individual events, and to accommodate the various judge types in a variety of judging situations.

The results of an investigation of this magnitude may provide the support necessary to prove the capability of these types of people to judge speech contests. The product of this investigation may be the end of the controversy.

FOOTNOTES

1. Hugh N. Wells, "Judging Debates," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, III, 4 (October, 1917), 341.
2. James M. O'Neill, "The Jurymen's Vote in Debate," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, III, 4 (October, 1917), 349.
3. See George Musgrave, "The Wells-O'Neill Controversy," *Debaters Magazine*, II (December, 1946), 218-20, 251-54, for a complete review of this controversy.
4. Reginald Carter, "The Use of the Critic-Judge in Debating," *Hawaii Educational Review*, XX (October, 1931), 34.
5. J. A. Hadaller, "The One Judge System in Debate," *Forensic*, X (May, 1924), 380-81.
6. Martin, Holcomb, "The Critic-Judge System," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, XIX (February, 1933), 28-38.
7. Leon McCarty, "The Expert Judge of Debating," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, XV (June, 1929), 417-20.
8. Raymond B. Pease, "Audience as the Jury," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, III (July, 1917), 218-23.
9. Kenneth B. Seeley, "Who is Best Qualified to Judge Debates?," *Gavel*, XII (January, 1930), 20.
10. Charles H. Woolbert, "On Critic Debate Decisions," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, XI (June, 1925), 286-88.
11. Roy T. Baker, "Shall Provide Qualified Judges," *Forensic*, Series 44, 4 (March, 1959), 67-8.
12. Donald Graham, "Private Debate vs. Public Speaking," *Forensic*, Series 45, 1 (October, 1959), 8-12.
13. Joseph Wigley, "The Art of Persuading Whom?," *Gavel*, XLIII, 4 (May, 1961), 67.
14. Mrs. Anita Taylor, "Is It Persuasion or Argumentation?," *Gavel*, XLIV, 1 (November, 1961), 6.
15. Lew R. Sarett, "The Expert Judge of Debate," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, III, 2 (April, 1917), 135.
16. T. Earl Johnson, "How Debates Should be Judged," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, XXI (June, 1935), 396.
17. Grace Walsh, "Tournaments: For Better or Worse?," *Speech Teacher*, VI (January, 1959), 65-66.
18. William Schrier, "Shifting the Emphasis: An Argument for No-Decision Debating," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, XV, 2 (June, 1929), 364.
19. Teresino Marino, "Concensus in Debate," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, XV, 2 (June, 1929), 421-22.
20. William Lamers, "Non-Decision Debates in the High School," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, XVIII, 4 (November, 1932), 653-57.
21. Joseph Baccus, "Debaters Judge Each Other," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, XXIII, 1 (February, 1937), 74-80.
22. Donald Klopff, "Practices in Intercollegiate Speech Tournaments," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, I, 2 (May, 1964), 51.
23. Diana R. Evans, "An Experimental Study of Student and Trained Judges of Oratory," (unpublished Master's thesis, Department of Speech, University of Hawaii, 1963), 38.
24. Sister Mary Linus De Lozier, "An Experimental Study of the Competency of Debate Judges," (unpublished Master's thesis, Department of Speech, University of Hawaii, 1965), 43-45.
25. *Ibid.*



THREE GENERATIONS OF DEBATE COACHES—L. to R. Larry Erhlich, Rockhurst; Tom Kelly, Hutchinson, S.C.; H. Francis Short, Kansas State College. Short was a high school debater for Kelly. Erhlich was a high school debater for Short. Picture taken at the 24th Annual Gorilla Tournament.