

THE FORENSIC

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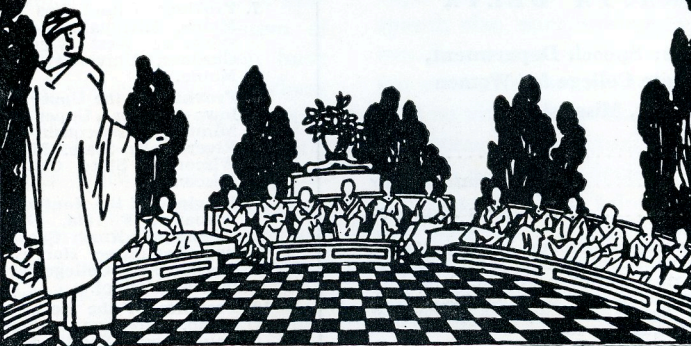
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IN THIS ISSUE

Burn the Ballots and Spin the Wheel	67
After Dinner Speaking	69
The Unconcerned	70
What I Look for in Judging Individual Speaking	73
A Debate Forum	74
The President's Page	76
From the Secretary's Desk	77
Chapter Notes	78
Ridin' the Provinces	88
Personalities in PKD	90
Meet the Governors	93
The Pi Kappa Delta Key	94



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FORENSIC

OF PI KAPPA DELTA

Editorial Office: Speech Department,
Mississippi State College for Women
Columbus, Mississippi

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In this issue, the *FORENSIC* brings to its readers three timely articles. John Ahart, in his oration, "Burn the Ballots and Spin the Wheel," presents an interesting problem and a somewhat startling solution. Miss Sara Caulkins writes on "After Dinner Speaking," and her suggestions of how to interest and captivate the audience should prove helpful. The Unconcerned is a thought provoking challenge to both the young and older people of today. While Miss Jurgensen discusses a topic that is far older than the history of America — freedom of speech and thought — her ideas reemphasize the watchword of free people, "freedoms won must oft be rewon."

Burn the Ballots and Spin the Wheel

JOHN AHART, *Marietta College*

RECENTLY *Time* magazine carried the story of a thirty-five thousand dollar going away party held by the divorcee of a tobacco magnate. The gathering was held in satin-draped tents pitched on the lady's lawn, and when the temperature dropped to forty-eight degrees, she said, "If I had known it was going to be so cold, I'd have had the tents draped with pink mink." Here is a extreme example of that which we today have labeled materialism. It is this emphasis upon material wealth that has resulted in a relaxing of ethics in our business world. Transactions that once would have been called shady deals are now smart business. Tasks that individuals scorn are performed daily because the pay is right. It is this emphasis that has resulted in the lowering of United States' prestige abroad. Our failure to evaluate those factors which are of real worth in life has caused nations to question the desirability of a capitalistic system. Nor has the educational system of America been unaffected. How often have you heard it said that you can't get anywhere today without a college degree? As a result, how many people would be willing to attend school if no degrees were given? Why do many students decide to go to particular institutions? What high school boy has never heard of Notre Dame or if he's a basketball fan, the University of Kentucky?

But what I would like to have us consider specifically is a program with which we here

are more directly concerned. The place of speech in higher education is gradually becoming accepted. Present indications are that before long most schools will have speech departments and some are now making speech a required course. Well, if it is true that American education is accepting the necessity for training in oral communication, what contribution are we making concerning this problem of materialism? We might give some thought to whether we aren't falling into the same pattern that has turned collegiate athletics into a dog eat dog war. The number of intercollegiate contests and tournaments in speech events is growing. The participants in these contests represent, supposedly, the best our speech departments have to offer. But if it is true that all too often we have exhibited at these events an obsession for winning, that these contests have become battles for brass cups and silver plated medals, then is not speech also, succumbing to today's materialism. Some may scoff at my claim that we are too concerned with winning. But if winning isn't so vitally important, is there any reason to become angry, actually angry, when we fail to get a particular decision? Yet, is there any one of us that hasn't done just that on at least one occasion when he failed to win, or when someone he thought didn't deserve to win got the trophy?

Now there are undeniable benefits accruing from participation in speech events. Anyone

who has worked on this year's debate topic realizes how much we can learn about world events, about what is going on in business, politics and government. Probably we learn more about a given topic as a result of our preparation for forensics than we will ever again get in one capsule. Sources of information are discovered, evaluated; we learn where to turn for reliable reporting, find out how editorials are slanted. Here is one of our greatest assets, long after formal schooling is completed. The acquisition of poise, confidence, ability to express one's ideas and skill in the age old art of persuasion are other recognized rewards. Finally, a very vital and important prize that can result is sheer enjoyment. We often forget this last, that speech events should be and can be fun.

WELL, what happens to those obvious benefits when we put primary emphasis upon winning? It seems to me that our sense of reality and even our awareness of the true picture of today's events become distorted when we are unwilling to admit that others are right or able. Something has gone wrong if we feel that judges who fail to see our view are always incorrect. Something is the matter if we can never believe that other debaters or speakers' facts are just as valid as ours. In an effort to prove our case, our ideas, we raise our voices, slur our opponents, bang the table, gesticulate wildly, and I wonder if we don't forget that we are practicing the art of persuasion. I wonder if we don't forget that whether our audience is made up of one man or five hundred, we still don't get them to accept our ideas and thoughts, our beliefs and facts by pounding those ideas through their skulls, or cramming them down their throats. And then, it is questionable whether we have really won if we enjoy competing only when we get the cup or the trophy. There are prizes we could all win with a great deal less effort than through speech participation.

But let's examine one more aspect of the problem. How practical is it to place so much emphasis upon winning when we look at the rules of the game? You see, there are no hoops to throw balls through, no goal lines to cross, there aren't even any checkers to jump. We are playing in a game where there are no positively right answers nor perfect ways of doing things. A team or participant is given an award on the basis of opinion, an opinion which we can scientifically label as incon-

sistent from individual to individual. This opinion can be influenced by the smallest things imaginable. For example, suppose a judge's elbow gets the urge to itch just at the time when you are making the statement that is the crux of your entire argument, and he scratches it, and just for an instant loses what you say. Yes, this is an extreme example, but how many times do you suppose he, who has to give the opinion, says, "How can I ever choose between left and right, or number one and number five?" And finally he seizes upon one justification for a decision and marks it down quickly before he changes his mind. Well, these are the rules of the game.

I wouldn't say that the solution to our emphasis upon winning necessarily lies in the elimination of competition and prizes. We all like to play games and it is a good feeling to be on the receiving end of awards. But the real problem is to give medals and certificates proper weight. If we realize how much there is to be gained from participation in speech events whether or not we get decisions, then we can all win even if someone else takes home the trophy. On the other hand, if winning is our primary target, there is question whether we actually win, even if we are judged best. The answer seems to lie in our becoming or remaining aware of the necessity for keeping speech events from falling into the pattern of materialism. We must try to avoid their becoming dog eat dog wars. We must work toward realism in our situations, using audiences whenever possible, utilizing festivals and conferences where participants are rated as fair or superior rather than first or last, emphasizing the need for periods at our meets where teams may fraternize, and on occasion, putting our orators or debaters in the position of judges.

"Fine," you say, "but will that get us any place?"

Well, maybe not, so I would like to give an alternate and more concrete solution. Let's hold our contests and after all the rounds are over, assemble the participants and bring in the unopened ballots. We might put these unopened ballots in a wire basket, take a match and set fire to them. Then we could turn to a wheel on which are numbers, and giving the wheel a spin we would acclaim as the grand winner the participant whose number is selected by our wheel of chance. Here, it seems to me, is one practical solution that can be immediately applied. It is a very good one, in that it allows us to learn about a prob-

lem, practice persuasion, have a good time, and simultaneously eliminates all cause for complaint due to judging. It is a method which would demonstrate, as, perhaps, no other method would, the relative importance of our scraps of paper and hunks of metal. Besides I haven't been doing so well under the old system and I, personally, would just as soon take my chances upon the spin of a wheel.

Yes, ours is a world in which we have hydrogen bombs, cold wars, problems in international trade, and congressional investigations, but none of these has avoided the influence of materialism. Speech can if participants learn to recognize that knowledge, skill in expressing one's self, and sheer enjoyment are the contests real trophies.

After Dinner Speaking

SARA CAULKINS, *Kirkland, Arizona*

LORD JOWETT of Britain has remarked, "An after dinner speech is like a love letter. Ideally you should begin by not knowing what you are going to say and end by not knowing what you've said." Whether he meant this to apply to writing about after dinner speaking I am not sure. Nevertheless Lord Jowett's comment expresses all too well the attitude of many persons toward an interesting and socially desirable form of public speaking.

After dinner speaking at its best is really a fine art requiring great sensitivity and ability to adapt to human emotions and emotional reactions. Those who devote time and care to the preparation of this form of speech will enjoy the reward which comes to any true artist. The after dinner speech can be not only a pleasure to prepare and give, because of the opportunity for the use of humor, but also an opportunity to be of great service to the audience,

Consider the usual after dinner speaking situation. Most banquets and dinners are strained affairs in crowded rooms that are either too hot and stuffy or too cold and drafty. The food is seldom well prepared or served at the correct temperature. Digestion is usually poor because of the tensions from which most of the guests are suffering due to the necessity of displaying their best manners and dress and most sparkling conversation for the benefit of their dinner partners.

Many dinners are business or social obligations which those at the dinner did not wish to attend. Repressed resentment at having to

"waste" an evening at the dinner does not aid either digestion or disposition. And even though the dinner may be willingly or gladly attended, the food, physical environment, and digestion are still likely to be poor.

The after dinner speaker is in the enviable position of being able to remedy this situation. By providing an opportunity for laughter he can aid in the release of tensions and thus aid the digestion of the members of the audience. He can help the diners forget unpleasant environmental conditions by being so interesting and entertaining that the whole attention of each listener is centered on the speaker's words and ideas. If he finds himself at an excellent dinner where everyone is enjoying himself, the speaker still has the opportunity of making his speech a highlight of the evening for both his listeners and himself.

For the amateur after dinner speaker to do this effectively, careful preparation is required. He must also keep a few things in mind during the process of preparing.

First of all, the after dinner speaker often has to get his audience into a spirit of play. This is usually not a difficult task, but persons must be prepared for humor, for things are funny only when one is in a spirit of fun or play. Show the audience that you enjoy what you are doing. Be genial and good natured. Such an attitude is contagious and goes far in creating the desired atmosphere.

To a group in an extreme spirit of fun, prepared to laugh, almost anything is funny. Notice the way an audience often laughs when a T.V. or radio comedian merely opens his mouth or says something completely without humor. Most T.V. or radio audiences are "warmed-up" or put in a spirit of play before the program goes on the air.

Different speakers accomplish this "warm-up" in different ways, of course. All an audience has to do is look at some speakers and they are ready to laugh. Other speakers must work a little to get their audiences into laughing moods.

The after dinner speaker is usually limited in time and wishes to accomplish the task of moving his audience from one emotional mood to another as quickly as possible. Whereas movement is essential to any good speech it is a primary requisite of the entertaining speech.

The very fact that the audience knows the speaker is there to make everyone laugh is often all that is required. Then if the speaker can "catch" his audience by surprise (sur-

prise is one of the most important elements of humor) with a really good joke—and follow it very quickly with another, he “has” his audience. Use your good jokes to start the audience laughing. If some are weak, save them for the time when the audience is laughing at anything.

A very important point to remember is that humor to be really funny and enjoyable should be fresh and timely. A joke once heard and laughed at is seldom appreciated as much the next time. Therefore the necessity of using humor that is fresh and new—or old enough to have passed from the conscious memories of most of the persons present.

Humor usually needs to be timely to be fully appreciated, for with the passing of the years, it loses its fields of associations. Notice how the popular comedians snatch on current events as the focal point of their humor and then consider: how many persons today would find a joke about W.P.A. shovels funny?

A speaker should never crack jokes about or treat with levity anything which the listeners reverence highly, take very seriously, or about which they feel too intensely. In other words, don't tell jokes about “drunks” at a brewers convention or at the meeting of a temperance league.

While it is permissible to “poke” a little fun at the boss, company, or organization, the speaker should be careful not to go too far. His audience may begin to feel uneasy about so much laughter at the expense of the source of their bread and butter, or the organization to which they give their loyalty and service.

Popular humorous speakers seem to have an extra sense that tells them just how far they can go on any line of joking or “poking fun.” This sensitivity to the emotional reactions of persons is undoubtedly aided in its growth by experience in many speaking situations.

A little humor may go a long way, so it is best for the after dinner speaker to be brief in most situations. Hard laughter is exhausting (but refreshing) and the keen edge of a sense of humor is quickly dulled. Thus it is usually best to make a brief but brilliant appearance. Quit while the audience is still laughing heartily and can regret quite sincerely that the speech is over.

Due to the physical, emotional, and mental conditions of the after dinner audience and

the environmental surroundings, the author questions the wisdom of an after dinner speech the purpose of which is to inspire or inform. It is, however, often used for either or both of these two purposes—and will continue to be so used. Regardless of the primary purpose, a central idea which serves as a thread running through the entire speech is an organizational requirement. In the inspirational and informative speech, the central idea is nearer the surface because direct awareness of it by the audience is more essential to accomplish the speaker's purpose.

If it is necessary to give an inspirational or informational talk in the after dinner situation, the speaker can make at least a part of his ideas linger in the minds of at least some of his audience by being as brief and as humorous as the subject will allow him to be.

It requires a little preparatory work and some practice, but give after dinner speaking a try the next time an opportunity presents itself. You will find it not only fun for the audience, but also fun for you. It is a relaxed and enjoyable speaking situation. Fun to prepare for and fun to present is the after dinner talk.

The Unconcerned

MARTHA JURGENSON,
Dakota Wesleyan University

FOR ME, the hardest part of writing an oration is the problem of finding a topic. I don't want to imply that there is a shortage of controversial issues; rather that no one of them seems to stir me to the point where I am able to express myself in a truly creative manner. Last year, for example, I gave an oration on one of the problems raised by the expansion of world communism—at the suggestion of my coach. But that theme wasn't really mine. I'm afraid that my interest in communism went little further than its use as an oratorical device. Everytime I gave that oration I felt guilty trying to generate a sincerity I didn't feel. So this year I was determined to develop a theme that was mine alone—a theme which like Walt Whitman's pulsating verse would be a “song of myself.” I had a staggering number of problems from which to choose. For is this not the age of the atom? Of total war? And world revolution? Why then, is it so difficult to find a subject that moves me to speak with an honest concern.

I recognize the existence of the critical problems of the age; yet, the futile quest for a personally satisfying oration from my own heart and mind continues from high school through college. I know that I should be alarmed by the crucial tensions of a sick plant, but in all honesty, I'm not. I realize that I should be a crusader for a better world, but I'm not that either. I know that I should be playing an active role in domestic reform, but, again I'm not. When the great Emerson inquires, "What is man born for but to be a reformer?" I greet him with a dumb silence.

Perhaps the saving grace in my predicament this year is that I have finally become concerned about my lack of concern. I am beginning to see myself as a reflection of much that is wrong with the world of today. As one of the unconcerned, it is beginning to dawn upon me that I am simply one minute part of a great sea of indifferent youth who no longer find inspiring themes and stirring causes that move them to speak and to act with genuine fervor. William Faulkner accuses us of being a generation that has forgotten the deeper problems of the heart, a generation that speaks not from the soul but from the glands. My apathetic attitude is indicative of the attitude of countless numbers of young people all over America; young people who have become sullen spectators at a global drama in which they should be active critics. *Time* magazine has called us the "Silent Generation," a generation without goals or ambition, with little concern for the future and scant respect for either past or present. We are a generation grim and silent, waiting passively for the hand of fate to fall.

But why this fatalistic outlook? Why, instead of moulding history do we become its puppets? Why this unnatural silence? As a member of the so-called "silent generation," perhaps I can suggest at least one of the many possible explanations. I undertake this personal venture supported by the assurance of Alexander Smith that "The only thing a man knows is himself."

I think the very fact our civilization faces so many grave problems that apparently have no solution has given us a defeatist attitude right from the start. To attempt to right all these wrongs would be like Saint Augustine trying to count the grains of sand on a wind swept beach. It's a hopeless task. The historian Schlesinger even goes so far as to say (perhaps with some exaggeration) that all

problems are insoluble. Consider for example the baffling issues of war and peace. We have never known a time of real peace. No sooner do we finish the most terrifying war in the history of mankind than we find our country on the verge of yet another war, a war that promises to be infinitely more devastating. Only this time our former ally will be our enemy and our former enemies our allies. Little wonder then that we are bewildered and confused. We hesitate to dream dreams and see visions lest war blast our dreams and blind our vision.

FURTHERMORE, we have been bombarded with sensational reports and developments for as long as we can remember. Nothing any longer excites us to action or shocks us out of our indifference. We have become calloused to events that would have horrified our grandfathers. The twentieth century's recurring cycle of economic crisis, political upheaval, and total war has begun to seem like "old stuff." Even stirring old symbols of flag and country have lost their integrating power. Uncle Sam is no longer the infallible hero that former generations imagined him to be. Actions inconsistent with our democratic ideals in both foreign and domestic affairs have knocked him off his pedestal. No, we're not waving the flag any more. The disconcerting element in all of this is that the vacuum left by the decay of old forces such as nationalism has not yet been filled. The "one world" of Wendell Wilkie remains an illusive vision.

The nervous silence of my generation is further explained by the confused, and changing values of our civilization. On one hand we see a swiftly advancing technology, while on the other we see a crumbling moral code and a quaking social structure. Scientific development with all its blessings has brought a host of difficulties for modern man. Indeed, our cumbersome social institutions watch the uninterrupted advance of science in helpless amazement. And because existing institutions and mores have been unable to meet current needs, we are without the comfortable old moorings that stabilized our forefathers. It's not very reassuring to be cut adrift in a sea of social contradictions.

There is yet another reason for the silence of my generation. We are becoming afraid to speak. Why should Americans fear to express themselves freely? Do we not have freedom of speech in the United States? Yes,

freedom to speak is a time-tested American principle, but that principle is under attack at this moment. Forces now in operation, if allowed to grow, will undermine freedom of both mind and tongue. And those forces, the drive for conformity, are partly responsible for the indifference and the silence of my contemporaries. The current fear of communism is doubtless justified, but that fear has skyrocketed to the point where many Americans have come to identify communism with everything unorthodox. Fear of communism has created an unhealthy, hysterical suspicion of change. As a result, some of our elders would have us confine freedom of speech to singing praises of the status quo. As long as we express conventional, orthodox opinions we are safe. But once we begin to question existing social and political institutions we find ourselves outside the safety zone. The present trend in American thought reminds me of the paper dolls I used to make. You fold a piece of paper several times and cut out a design on the top sheet. And when the paper is unfolded you have a chorus line of paper dolls, each one identical to the others. And that's the way it is with many American today. Thinking, speaking, acting alike, row upon row of paper dolls.

Freedom to speak—yes—but is it becoming freedom to speak as paper dolls? If so, the condemnation, may remain silent.

What then is the key that will unlock the lips and stir the soul of the silent generation? I suppose that as a college orator I should now

offer you a brief but convincing solution for this baffling problem so that we could go away feeling that all will soon be right with the world, or at least with my generation. Unfortunately, I have no such magic key to offer. Even the brilliant editors of *Time* magazine, after a nation-wide survey of American young people, left us with the discomforting feeling of unanswered questions. For the truth is—there is no magic key.

But this much I do know; we shall never find a solution to the lethargy and silence of my generation in an atmosphere that rewards the standpatter and penalizes young men and women who have deep convictions that they long to express. For my generation, as every generation, must find its salvation in the younger generation, rather than risk social arena of free thought, criticism and dissent. Perhaps the further advice of William Faulkner is appropriate when he said in his celebrated Nobel Prize acceptance address that each one "must teach himself that the basest of all things is to be afraid; and teaching himself that, forget it forever, leaving no room in his workshop for anything but the old verities and truths of the heart . . . love and honor and pity and pride and compassion and sacrifice." These are the privileges and the pangs of mind and conscience with inspired older generations to speak eloquently and to act heroically. Perhaps they may once again warm the hearts and loosen the tongues of the silent generation.

NOTICE

Each year the directors of forensic activities in all colleges and universities are invited to submit suggested subjects for the national Debate and Discussion questions. Although each school is represented by one of the members of the Speech Association of America Committee on Intercollegiate Debate and Discussion, it is not always possible to contact every director during the annual call for topics in the month of May. If you do not receive a personal request for possible subjects early in May, you are encouraged to submit your suggestions to one of the following committee members before June 1, 1955:

Robert Gunderson (S.S.A.) 329 Edgemoor Place, Oberlin, Ohio,
Austin J. Freeley (A.F.A.) 1725 Orrington Ave., Evanston, Ill., T. Earle
Johnson (Tau Kappa Alpha) Univ. of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, Ala. Win-
ston Brembeck (Delta Sigma Rho) Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis.
Glenn L. Jones (Phi Rho Pi) 1171 Garrison, Denver 15, Colorado.
Larry Norton (Pi Kappa Delta) Bradley University, Peoria, Illinois.

What I Look for in Judging Individual Speaking

CUNERA VAN EMMERIK, *Iowa Central College*

MUCH AS FORENSIC directors break down the task of judging a speech into "thought and composition," "interpretation of thought and of emotion," "bodily control," "pronunciation and articulation," etc., it is the general effectiveness—the sum total of what the speaker does which influences judges and certainly audiences. The speaker on the platform or pulpit, on radio or TV, in legislative halls or conference rooms, in faculty meetings and student councils enhances his influence and his power by the general impression he makes. Therefore, I feel general effectiveness is of prime importance in judging a contest speech.

But since general effectiveness is a composite of many qualities and the student in developing his effectiveness as a speaker can best do it by attention to the individual qualities that make up the general impression, in judging I too break down the task into its component parts.

Original oratory, in spite of all the very logical objections to it as a speech form, still requires preparation of such a varied type that it makes a good example to use in dealing with the qualities I look for in judging a speaker. Much, if not all, of what I say on original oratory can be applied to extemporaneous speaking, radio speaking, and even after dinner speaking.

Choice of Subject

The subject should be chosen because of its closeness to student's experience, interests, and conviction. The secret of the effectiveness of the oration by a refugee, an employee in a hospital, a G.I. on a subject he has lived indicates the value of choosing a subject from the experience of the student. The subject that touches the lives or interests of the students and therefore of many people is almost as good. But always there must be the conviction of the writer. If a student has definite convictions on world or national, social or political problems, he may choose from those fields. But if he can deal naturally and objectively with questions which touch his own

life, he will probably do a more effective job. Unless the subject grips the speaker, he cannot put into his speech the earnestness that brings conviction to the audience.

Material

Into the making of the speech must go material of intrinsic worth, sometimes drawn from experience, more often from research. That which is drawn from research must be supplemented by and integrated with the student's own thinking. His ideas must take hold of him and of his thinking until he is alive to what he is saying. A subject chosen because it is apropos to the speaker makes it easier to handle material well, but careful study and serious thought must also be added. The judge looks for evidence of just such work.

Organization

The organization of any speech must move forward to a definite goal. There must, of course, be orderly development of thought, unity, coherence, and climax. The speaker should reach a definite conclusion and leave a definite impression. I expect the speaker to have a clearly defined purpose, and I want him to let me know how he expects his audience to react.

Diction and Rhetorical Devices

In a contest in which the student is using his own composition, I look for precise, colorful diction. The more effectively the student can use rhetorical devices—figures of speech and words rich in connotation, examples and illustrations, the more skillfully he can pack sound thinking with words that have the appeal both to the intellect and the emotion—the deeper impression he can make on me. Note, it is the "more effectively" he uses these devices—not merely the fact that he does throw them in.

Communication

In presenting his thoughts a speaker must really communicate ideas—not merely rehearse sentences. There must be that spontaneity which comes from speaking directly

to another person. We may call it elevated conversation, but it should never be stilted or artificial. Here I suppose is one of the most cogent objections to oratory as a contest form—it is very difficult to make it conversational and direct after it has been memorized.

Certainly there is no place for bombast in modern oratory, nor for artificiality, nor for profuse dramatization. The speaker should be forceful—with enough variety to make the force count for the most in points of controversy. The style may be elevated, but everything an orator says should emanate from personal sincerity and strong convictions.

Regardless of the type of speech or the method of preparing, the speaker must communicate so well that he gets his subject “into his hearers,” so to speak. Even the rhythm pattern in delivery must correspond to the thought. The student cannot be so involved in trying to remember exact words that he forgets to communicate.

Each type of presentation of a speech has its own problems, be it memorized, read or extemporized, but always the speaker must “talk through to his audience” in order to get his subject “into his hearers.”

Physical poise, freedom and responsiveness of bodily control are part of effective communication. The presence or absence of gestures is not as important as the fact that when they are used they must seem a part of the communication of the thought. Gestures are only a part of the bodily control which help the speaker project himself as he projects his thought to the audience. Facial responsiveness and intelligent use of voice are also important in projection of thought.

Good pronunciation and articulation should be taken for granted. It should be clear and distinct but not overdone and artificial.

Use of Criteria

I like to use the criteria I have set up for good contest speaking in two ways. First I use them as items to check or comment upon to help the student in further development, saying in effect, “Here you have done a good job.” “In this you must improve.” “In this respect you need considerable work.” Secondly, I use them as a process of elimination in weighing the work of one speaker against another.

In judging as well as in coaching, I believe I have a responsibility in helping students to become more effective speakers and more effective as individuals in society.

A Debate Forum

PAULI KRIEGER, *Macalester College*

IT WAS A FEW moments before the scheduled time of the debate. The room was half filled with “an audience.” One of the debate teams had already found their corner. The door opened—and a girl entering turned utterly grey. She slowly walked in, set her file down, and glanced nervously around. She then bolted back to where I, as judge, was sitting, and asked, “When are all these people leaving?”

I quietly informed her that they were here for the debate.

“I won’t debate if they are going to be in here,” she replied. “This is my first tournament and I can’t debate for an audience. We’ll forfeit.”

As I tried to reassure her, she broke down in tears. And so—a novice debater faced a tragic experience.

Undoubtedly an experienced debater would have accepted, and would even have been enthralled, at the challenge of an audience. Nonetheless, we are all aware that such a setting is the exception, not the rule. And so, I could not help but think of the question of a professor during a faculty bull session, “Just what are the values of a strong emphasis on tournament debating?”

To those of us participating in forensics, the values are self-evident. Debaters know how to gather materials on a problem, organize them into valid arguments, and accept a judgment of them. In a very real sense, the tournament system has fulfilled the purpose of debate as a tool for the learning of critical thinking. But debate is also a speech activity. Oftentimes, I fear, the evaluation of debate does not include the skill which should be an integral part of it. If debate is to fulfill all of its objectives, it should contribute to the total speech experience of the students involved.

By necessity, an audience debate includes skills and the use of techniques which are non-existent in the critical judge-timekeeper situation. One might go so far as to say that many of the techniques would even be deplored for factors involving actual persuasive responses may very well be elements which do not aid the emphasis on valid and true argument. Conversely, however, debate training should contribute to better “persuasive”

speeches. Thus, it is my contention that all debaters should be subjected to audience situations—not apart from—but in addition to the tournament situation.

Perhaps few debaters suffer from inadequate exposure to an audience. Most of them are active leaders in campus life and activity and as such, receive part of their training in leadership from debate. Also, I am sure that most schools do program public debates and thus do contribute to the total speech experience insofar as debaters are taught to adapt to the occasion. I believe that this should be a goal of any debate program.

We at Macalester College have launched on an even more ambitious program. In re-examining the role of debate with Dr. Theodore Mitau of the Political Science Department, we queried, "How can debate more completely enhance the objectives of a liberal arts college?"

"Can the rational, non-partisan examination of issues be extended to include a larger percentage of the student body? Can it provoke the fancy of all the intellectually curious students?"

Town Criers Tom Phillip and Henry Ruf summon the community to the Debate Forum on the campus of Macalester College.



"Is it not possible to enable students to be more keenly aware of problems in many areas of study?"

"Can we not have some success in alerting our public to better evaluate the persuasive stimuli to which we are all subjected in a free society?"

The solution we have adopted for these needs is a Public Debate Forum sponsored by the Departments of Speech and Political Science and instituted by the Pi Kappa Delta members on our campus. It is a dignified affair, not an informal get-together. The program for the forums include topics from the fields of science, politics, education, religion, and student affairs. The speakers are chosen from the debate squad *and* from outstanding students who are majors in the area of the particular problem for debate. Of course, one program is devoted to a formal debate on the national debate proposition.

For this year, our program is:

October 28 "Has the Republican Party reversed the trend toward socialism?"

December 2 "Must one-third of the people of the world starve?"

February 24 "How can the Supreme Court decision regarding segregation in the schools be effectively enforced?"

March 17 National Debate Topic

April 21 Student Government Debate

This solution, we believe, offers responsible leadership to the debaters, provides an opportunity for other alert students to gain some training and experience in the presentation of a problem analysis, and an opportunity for the student body to hear a thoughtful analysis, with controversy, of problems within and without their central interests. We hope that it is not a futile dream to say that it will be an aid in the process of sharpening the students' senses of discrimination and make them less susceptible to the demagogues of the moment. We dream that this program will become an important, respected part of each student's life.

Judges decision: Audience participation during the open forum period indicates that the discussions have provoked thoughtful responses and are serving to satisfy a felt need among a core of students. Benefits of the program have been particularly disseminated among those participating directly.