

sis of continuing fragmentation in the forensic community by referring to a similar observation from 1984 that was, at that time, "13 years in the past." In this way, Jensen argues that a problem of the past remained a problem of the present, using its history to underscore its importance. Clearly, history can be used to promote progress, and this can be contrasted with occurrences where history is used to impede development instead. Collective memory can involve both benchmarks and criteria.

End-of-Year Functions as Spaces for Collective Memory: What is Remembered, What is Commemorated

Commemoration events offer prime opportunities to observe concrete examples of collective memory (e.g., Bodnar, 1992, Edy, 2001). Commemoration events at the end of forensic seasons have become long-standing, important traditions for many forensic programs. These are opportunities to remember, to celebrate, and to look forward. These activities serve as concrete examples of NCA's 2004 convention theme, "Moving Forward, Looking Back." What are common characteristics of these events? How does collective memory influence the current year's program and/or the development of the banquet/event? Is the strength of these events the role of preserver of history, symbolic constructor of the year's achievements, motivator for the next year, or a combination of these purposes? Or, as Derryberry (1997) offers, do banquets function most effectively as a unifying function, bringing together a larger collective for the act of remembering? In describing the end-of-the-year banquet of the Southwest Baptist University program, Derryberry (1997) observes

The annual forensic banquet...has its roots in the program's beginning...From its roots as an event for the team of less than ten persons, the banquet-program now hosts approximately 150 persons each spring...The banquet serves as an important unifying force of the program as it preserves past traditions and solicits support for future educational goals.
(p. 14)

As commemorative events, banquets and other special programs celebrate past accomplishments and look forward to new challenges. Forensic collective memory scholarship should take a closer look at these commemorative events.

National and regional forensic organizations often hold commemorative events as well. PKD, for example, hosts biennial national conventions, with the final event a banquet dinner for all competitors and coaches. In recent years, a photo-documentary of the tournament is presented here, commemorating the tournament experiences. What are the impacts of this banquet and of the photo-documentary?

Even the convention itself can be viewed through a collective memory lens as a space for collective memory. In an essay advocating attending professional meetings, Loren Reid recounts:

When our discipline speaks at conventions, it says something like this: ...I am an inventive principle. I live among ideas; I work with instances, examples, reasons. I practice the art of thinking. I judge the future in part by what has already happened; I review the past, I contemplate the future... (1986, pp. 311-312)

Reid's rationale for attending professional meetings serves as a precursor to the 2004 NCA Convention Theme, "Moving Forward, Looking Back," and also parallels the idea of collective memory.

Documenting the Past: Films and other Records

While many modes of communicating collective memory lack permanence and, instead, are passed on via word of mouth, other means of collective memory are concrete. For example, at the 2003 national tournament, the PKD forensic community witnessed the debut of a documentary of the history of Pi Kappa Delta. This video traced the history of the honorary, and featured voices of both previous coaches and competitors.

As historian Rabinowitz (1993) explains, "documentary is usually a reconstruction—a reenactment of another time or place for a different audience" (p. 120). As a reconstruction, documentary writers and producers engage in the creative process. Consequently, "documentary film, in more obvious ways than does history, straddles the categories of fact and fiction, art and document, entertainment and knowledge" (Godmilow & Shapiro, 1997, p. 80). These interpreted versions of the past often heavily influence viewers—creating a visual picture of the past, replete with details and imagery.

Another concrete form of documenting the past is a squad newsletter. In describing the newsletter of Southwest Baptist University's forensic program, Derryberry (1997) observes:

As a type of newsletter, bulletin board, and source of information about alumni and the changing world of forensics, the publication allows student team members to reach out to a wide range of supportive readers. While the journal depends upon faculty advice, it remains the student forensic voice seeking to preserve the program's traditions while also communicating with alumni, faculty, administration and community and goals and challenges of the program. (p. 13)

This record also documents current practices, team achievements, and current issues of forensics, serving as a concrete doc-

umentation of the present, and consequently, a program's past.

Clearly, such concrete means of documenting the past play pivotal roles in preserving collective memory. How do these methods compare to the more informal method of word of mouth narratives? Is one method superior to the other in terms of preserving specific detail? Are there different emotional responses to concrete documentations of the past when compared to narratives communicated orally? How do documentary writers and producers balance the need to preserve detail and objective information with the inescapable subjective nature of creative film? What are criteria for newsletter content, and how do newsletters frame forensic programs?

"Why Do They Call this Forensics?": Unexamined History of Speech and Debate

Forensics has a long history, but how much of this history do most competitors know? Are details important enough to include in an understanding of how forensics has developed, or do abstract themes have more impact? How do students learn of the activity's history? How do coaches?

Scholars have looked at forensics' past to draw parallels to forensics' present and future. Harte (1993) examined contemporary forensic practices for impact on the rhetorical canon of style, and Derryberry (1993) argued that one should not forget the lessons of the canon of invention, or developing ideas. Similarly, Tallmon (1996) offers a discussion on the topic and invites people to return to the ancient and modern roots of collegiate debate, heeding lessons offered by Aristotle, Richard Weaver and George Campbell, while Ryan (1996) suggests using lessons of epideictic discourse to teach persuasion. Foust (1999) begins her analysis of contemporary persuasive speech topics by comparing current practices to ancient Greece, and at one point argues, "It is time for the forensics community to return to its ancient roots..." (p. 14).

Others have focused on more recent intellectual roots, including Hamm's (1993) analysis of competitiveness in relation to "the educational goals that were originally set forth by the forefathers of speech and debate competition" (p. 2), and Freeley's (1989) essay traces the origination of the American Forensic Association (AFA). Bodenhamer (1991) begins her overview of forensics as a community-builder by referencing the origins and original objectives of the Speech Association of America and the North Central Contest Committee. Friedley (1991) offers an overview of persuasive speaking, tracing changes from the 1970s to the late 1980s and positing predictions about its future, while Willis (1956) took a similar approach looking back to the first Interstate Oratorical Association in 1874. He observes:

A comparison of the orations delivered during the last twenty-five years with those presented before the turn of the century reveals, as we might expect, that equally profound changes have

taken place in oratorical fashions. (p. 18).

Forensic educators have often looked to both the ancient and recent past of the activity for the sake of comparison.

These scholarly pursuits offer historical detail, drawing parallels between forensics' past and present. Grounding future research in collective memory with the activity's theoretical history will further unify such scholarly work and provide a theoretical thread linking the scholarship of the past to the present.

Learning the Past: Impacts of Collective Memory on New Team Members

While teams often have recruitment materials, scrapbooks of years' pasts, and plaques on the walls of Communication Departments, there are generally no guidebooks for learning a team's history. Records and documents only go so far, so how do new team members learn of a team's tradition? How is the past communicated? What are the coaches' and competitors' roles in helping new members understand a team's past? How does a team negotiate present, practical needs (e.g., getting new members to begin working on events and attending meetings) with more abstract understandings of tradition?

Fuller and Huebner (1993) make the case that team members can serve as effective recruiters, and Compton (2000) argues that current team members "teach" new members about a program by telling stories. Whether through the larger picture of team members recruiting or the more specific acts of telling stories to new team members, team members' collective memories have substantial impacts on the initiation of new team members into a program.

Macro Effects: Effects of Forensics on Larger Issues of Collective Memory

To this point, this essay has proposed examinations of collective memory effects on the act of viewing and doing forensics, but forensics also impacts collective memory on a broader scale, beyond the bounds of forensic communities. For example, consider how students' and coaches' decisions regarding speech topics, literature for interpretation, and debate cases influence what is remembered about the past. Platform speeches often influence how audiences view specific moments of the past, examining precursors to societal problems, for example. Common themes are found in interpretation events, such as the Holocaust. Prieb (2003) recently argued that seemingly trivial decisions involved in cutting literature for performance often have important effects on how the topics and themes are understood. Debate cases frequently hinge on framing the past in specific ways, with many rounds won or lost based on who successfully argues for their version of collective memory. Competitive forensics provides a

concrete example of the adage, "The winners write the history."

How members of the forensic community recollect and use the past—in speeches, interpretation events, and debates—has implications beyond the forensic community. From speech topics to literature selections, debate cases to offered evidence, those who do forensics influences not only how the world of forensics is seen, but also how the world, in general, is seen.

Conclusion

The past, present and future are not foreign to forensic scholars. Some have looked back at the activity's ancient roots (e.g., Derryberry, 1993; Harte, 1993), others assess present trends, and still others ask those interested to peer into forensics' future (e.g., Garner, 1991; Hamm, 1993; Sellnow, 1991). By grounding these research topics in an overarching theoretical framework of collective memory, forensic scholarship shares a common thread and bolsters its legitimacy in the scholarly community. Forensics offers a fascinating, intricate laboratory for seeing communication theories in action. Research that explores this context not only benefits the forensic community, but also makes valuable contributions to the discipline of communication. Building on theoretical foundations like collective memory helps ensure that forensic scholarship will receive recognition beyond the activity—informing those interested about not only what is done in forensics, but also how the activity is understood as complex with many nuances, just as are all acts of communication.

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