

The FORENSIC Of Pi Kappa Delta

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The Wandering Bull's-Eye

01

Reflections on Judging Speech Events

by

UPTON S. PALMER

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Several years ago a friend of mine was studying-the influence of the late nineteenth century English critics on the playwrights of the time. To his surprise, he discovered that they had changed the course of English drama. The common thought is that the dramatic critic simply guides play-goers to the theatre, but if he is worthy he guides the playwright to a deeper understanding of his art. The critic is the person Shakespeare had in mind when he said, "The censure of which one o'erweighs a whole theatre of others."

Likewise, the judge in well managed public speaking contests sets the goals toward which conscientious student speakers aspire. As judge, he should be well grounded in rhetorical theory; it is not enough that he be acquainted with the rules of "formula" speaking, and that he give the stamp of approval to the speaker who might have the greatest mob appeal. His nod must go to the talker who thinks well, who chooses material with discrimination, who has good judgement and who would be effective before a group of well educated, listeners. The judge as critic speaks for them.

Most thoughtful students of speech will agree with this point of view. Why then, do we continually face judging problems?

Why are students continually aiming at a wandering bull's-eye, rated as first by one judge and seventh by another? The reasons are several, and it is my purpose to discuss them, although I have no hope of "solving" the judging proglem. It may be that we shall arrive at understanding (which is important), but do not hope for a new era!

We have thus far assumed that certain standards of superior public address have been enunciated and that conscientious judges can discover them. Doubtless this is true. The ingredients of eloquence have long been known and labeled. Speakers have probably always used logical, emotional, and personal proof. They have organized it in some systematic fashion, and they have presented it according to accepted prinicples of good delivery. But, no matter how learned the judge his conception of the prototype of perfection is his alone and what is even more confusing, this ideal of perfection changes with the given judge from year to year, and in some degree even from hour to hour. Even in the minds of the best judges, the bull's eye wanders to some extent constantly and in an unpredictable pattern. In the classroom, the teacher of speech is conscious of this phenomenon. Objectivity in grading speeches or readings is an illusion, and the pedagogue, realizing this, will guard himself closely in order to minimize gross errors of rating.

There is another factor, too, in the judging situation that must be considered. Even students who have studied rhetorical principles in the same courses and under the direction of the same instructor will apply the "rules" differently, giving varying weights to the same factors. can safely be assumed that they will generally tend to agree, even they may differ radically. The fundamental nature of the judge as well as his conditioning toward certain components of the speech or speech situation may lead him to grade down a speaker drastically.

Such observations lead us all at times to shake our heads sadly. Is uniform speech evaluation impossible? Can we never arrive at agreement as to what has been well done? Probably not, and, ironical as it may seem, within limits it is just as well that we cannot. If speeches could be appraised on a set scale, according to a single standard, the ideal would remain the same from generation to generation. There would be little or no opportunity for expression of personality differences in any given speech situation. All would tend to speak on the same type of subject, using the same type of materials, organizing in the same way, using the same style, and employing a single approach toward delivery.

As long as we yearn for the fresh approach, look for the unexpected and the unusual in speaking, standards will change. Innovators there will always be, and judges who will value their innovations. Examples make this clear. In the area of delivery, the conversational mode evolved during the first part of the last century. During the last few decades, radio and public address microphones tended to restrict the movement of speakers. In the last few years better microphones and television have encouraged greater freedom. The flowery eulogy of only a few generations ago died out with the people it honored.

Thus, while the principles of good speaking are not likely to change much within the lifetime of any one man, taste in the use of language, in methods of delivery, and perhaps other elements will vary. As long as men are acquainted with a "sound" rhetoric, however, and as long as they are free, it is likely that emphasis will continue to be placed upon communication rather than display, but there will be variety within a range of what we shall call uniformity, and the speech that one critic labels superior will be called average by his friend.

Faced with these facts regarding the nature of rhetoric, and of critics and judges, what can be done to minimize the wandering of the bull's-eye, to gain greater agreement among judges as to the objectives at which student speakers should aim?

The first impulse is to observe that judges should be instructed as to what forensics directors themselves regard as the objectives to any particular type of contest, and what they have trained their students to regard as important in this specific contest. This implies that the first responsibility rests not with judges but with instructors. It is their responsibility to agree among themselves as to the specific nature of any event into which they expect enter competitors. In recent years Southern California directors have taken some steps in this direction. For example, in what has generally been called a contest in oratory (memorized speaking), students have on occasion been limited to "speeches of an expository nature." Such a regulation has made it unnecessary for judges to compare orations of the problemsolution type with those of a biographical, or highly persuasive nature.

Once directors have agreed as to the objectives of a contest and made available to contestants as well as judges a written statement of the items on which they are in agreement, some progress will be made.

Instructions to judges, however, must be

oral as well as written. The directors themselves, who also serve as judges, need to be reminded as to what they have agreed on. This is especially true of directorjudges who are unable to attend the discussions at which differences of opinion are threshed out. A short period of oral instructions, never longer than five minutes, might well precede each round of activity. Always new judges are taking up their duties, and at the risk of boring those who arrive early, it is helpful to orient newcomers. During the last two California State High School Championship Tournaments this procedure has been followed. and I believe that it has been the consensus of coaches that the calibre of judging has been improved thereby. Without doubt this practice has led to selection of material of high literary merit in the declamation divisions.

One further observation may clarify the problem still more. In asking judges to rank students first, second, third, etc., they are in many instances, particularly in semi-final and final rounds, being requested to do the impossible. Such ranking, if mandatory, might often be purely arbitrary, even if Aristotle, Cicero and Quintillian were the critics. If the judges follow such a procedure, they are forced into dishonesty, a misleading type of fraud, for while they know what they do, it is altogether unlikely that the student speakers understand that they are the victims of deception. The third ranking student may very well feel that he has in some way been at fault in his speaking, whereas in their heart the judges know this is not so. It follows that the use of a rating system in which two or more students may receive the same rating - superior, excellent, good, average, or fair — may steady the wandering bull's-eye quite considerably.

Steps can be taken which will lead to more uniform judging, although the variables are such that perfect consistency will always remain a mirage. Forensics directors should realize this, and see to it that their students are not kept ignorant of the fact. If the reality is faced, no one will take winning — or losing — too seriously. Certainly the judge will realize that it is he who sets the standards, that it is he who distinguishes genuine from shoddy public speaking; that it is the judge more than anyone else who by giving or withholding approval, encourages public speaking which gives effectivness to ideas rather than effectiveness to the speaker — an objective regarded as socially desirable.

If some of the criticisms leveled at contest speaking are justified, this is in considerable part so because of the inability, and in some instances the unwillingness, of judges fully to assume their responsibilities. Some complain, for example, that it takes a sizeable audience to bring out a speaker. Let them be reminded that Aristotle pointed out that forensic speaking (speaking before a law court) is most difficult when addressed to a single judge, and that he did not complain about the artificiality of such a situation. It is the character of the audience, not its number, that tests the capabilities of a speaker.

The judge then is teacher as well as arbiter. His classroom, though, is somewhat different from the usual college meeting place, for his students have been taught by several teachers and in a sense it is he who rates the final examination. Let him, therefore, realize the seriousness of his work, and be instructed in his task. The bull'seye must not wander too much. Both judge and speaker must have at least the same target in view.

Upland College



John Raser, first President of the Upland College chapter, receives the charter from President Randolph at the Redlands Convention.

The initiation of the California Kappa chapter at Upland College in Upland, California was held on Tuesday March 22, 1955. The initiation was conducted by Dr. Eugene Moulton, Governor of the Province of the Pacific and four of his Pi Kappa Delta members of the University of Redlands; Professor James Jackson of Pasadena College; and Professor Ernest Boyer of Upland College, a member of the Illinois Chi chapter at Greenville College.

Following the induction ceremonies, the charter members Shirley Book, Paul Boyer, Joan Byer, Robert Carlson, Paul Haas, Roger Hedlund, Harold Musser, Marie Raser, George Schipper, Gladys Weaver and president John Raser joined a number

of invited guests in a banquet in the college dining hall. Professor Boyer traced the history of forensics at Upland College. He paid special credit to Professor Long and Dr. Moulton for assisting Upland in securing her charter. Joan Byer, who was initiated as a graduate member of the fraternity, spoke on "What the Forensic Experience has Meant to Me." Professor James Jackson completed the evening with a talk entitled, "The Significance of the Forensic Program on a Christian Campus."

Students at Upland College, a thirty-five year old, four year, liberal arts institution located in the heart of the southern California citrus area, had been participating in forensics activities for a number of years under the direction of Dr. Henry

Brubaker, past President of the college, before 1951 when Mr Boyer arrived to head the forensics program. Boyer as an active graduate member of the fraternity, began at an early date to make arrangements with the Province of the Pacific for a chapter on the Upland campus.

In December of 1951 the Upland College forensics fraternity, Alpha Beta Delta, had Professor Emmett Long, then Province Governor, as a guest at the Christmas banquet. In the following years, as Upland established itself in forensic circles on the west coast, further negotiations were carried out and Upland College received its charter at the Redlands Convention.

This year Professor Boyer is on leave of absence doing graduate study at the University of Southern California and Mr. Bob Carlson, one of the charter members of California Kappa is serving as Director of Forensics and adviser to Pi Kappa Delta. Miss Shirley Book succeeds John Raser as president of the chapter. The Upland squad is having a good year this year and

will initiate a number of new members later in the year, including Pat Nissly, Harold Engle, Ruth Green and Verna Goeddel.

Upland College was founded in 1920 as an institution sponsored by the Brethren in Christ Church. While originally founded as an institution providing preparation for Christian workers, the school expanded in the liberal arts area in the forties and now offers divisional majors in physical science, social science, education, religion, and the humanities. is a speech emphasis provided in the humanities structure so that a number of students can utilize curricular speech. Upland College is one of the smaller liberal arts colleges holding University of California recognition. Its size plus its philosophy calling for a special emphasis on the individual makes it able to provide a more personalized education. It was this personalized concern, that all students have for one another at Upland College, that has led the entire student body to feel a part of the forensic activity and join in welcoming Pi Kappa Delta to the campus.

In Memoriam

W. Prewitt Ewing, former member of Pi Kappa Delta's national council, died of a heart attack June 9 at San Bernadino, California.

Mr. Ewing, a graduate of William Jewell College and of George Washington University, from which he received a law degree, coached forensics at William Jewell (Missouri Delta Chapter) from 1929 to 1935. During this time he served on the National Council of Pi Kappa Delta.

He was a navy officer during World War II, and taught law at the University of Kansas City following his return from service. At the time of his death he was a purchasing agent for the navy.

One of William Jewell's most loyal alumni, his interest will be missed.



Meet The Governor

Dr. Wofford G. Gardner, Head of the Department of Speech and Director of Forensics at the University of Maine, is Governor of the Province of the Lakes. Receiving his undergraduate training at Southwestern College in Kansas, Professor Gardner earned M. A. and Ph. D. degrees at Northwestern University. He holds the degree of Special Distinction in three orders in Pi Kappa Delta. At present he is also serving as the President of the Eastern Forensic Association and he is Past-President of the New England Forensic Conference.

During the period 1935-45, Dr. Gardner was teaching speech and coaching debate in Kansas High Schools --Garfield, Wellington, and Hutchinson. He came to his present position in the University of Maine in 1946 and installed a chapter of Pi Kappa Delta at this school in 1949. He has had an active interest in speech and debate work since his high school days.

P K D Alumni

Franklin R. Shirley

Arthur L. Crookham, an alumnus of the Beta chapter of PKD and member of the class of 1916 of Southwestern College, Winfield, Kansas has now retired from the newspaper field after forty-two years. He and his wife have just returned from a five-month trip in the Mediterranean, Central Europe, and England. having visited thirty countries while on tour. He is now teaching journalism at Lewis and Clark College where he installed a PKD chapter and is also teaching American history in the State Board of Higher Education Extension Center.

Past and present members of the Delta chapter of Wisconsin State College at River Falls met for the traditional PKD luncheon on Homecoming Day, October Among the PKD alumni attending were Dr. Walker Wyman, sponsor of the first PKD chapter; Mr. Lawrence Gherty, lawyer from Hudson; Mrs. Russel Sharp, teacher in St. Paul and president of the Hudson Alumni Association; Jean Bailey, former faculty member and saleswoman from Chicago; Lewis Daniel, under writer for Equity Insurance in Luck; Mrs. M. Lansing, former student; Marion Hawkins, debate coach and past governor of the Province of the Upper Mississippi; Dr. Gilkey, former faculty member; and Nancy Murray, lawyer in Ellsworth. Dick Vilstrup, public relations man for Saint Paul Co-op, spoke to the group on his debate experiences with his colleague, Jack Hansen of Chicago City, Minnesota.

Paul Little, who represented Oregon Alpha chapter of Linfield College, Mc-Minnville, Oregon, at the Stillwater and Kalamazoo conventions, has just completed a year of study in Scotland on a Rotary Club fellowship.

Carwile Leroy, who won a superior award in debate at the Redlands convention, has received a \$6,000 Morehead Scholarship to the University of North Carolina, where he is a student in the medical school. His colleague, Joe Hough, is now attending the University of Edinburgh on a Rotary Club Scholarship.

William Phelps Thompson, an attorney

in Wichita, Kansas, has been chosen to deliver the commencement address of his alma mater, McPherson College, on May 27, 1956. On that occasion he will receive an honorary degree. He is a Special Distinction member of Pi Kappa Delta, having participated in oratory, extempore, and debate. After graduating from McPherson College in 1939, he attended the Law School of the University of Chicago.

Professor Guy Hayes, a charter member of Kansas Omicron, is the new debate coach at McPherson College. Members of his squad have attended tournaments at Lindsborg, Manhattan and Winfield, and will participate in at least three more tournaments.

Robley Rhine, a member of PKD and the class of 1953 of Southwestern College is now chairman of the Kansas Speech Association. He worked on his master's degree in speech at the University of Colorado and had a part in the annual Shakespearean play As You Like It. At the present he is teaching at Wamego, Texas.

Frances Anderson Gulick, an alumnus of of Linfield College, who was one of the top extemp speakers and orators at the Knoxville PKD convention, has been commuting between Washington, D. C. and Geneva for the State Department. Dr. John F. Adams, who also represented Linfield College at the Knoxville convention is head of the Business Research Bureau of Temple University of Philadelphia.

Maurice A. Hess, sponsor of Kansas Omicron, was honored with a citation at the Educational Dinner of the Church of the Brethren in the annual meeting at Grand Rapids, Michigan, on June 17, 1955, because of his 36 years of service as a teacher in McPherson College.

The following PKD members from Southwestern College of Winfield, Kansas are engaged in work and study: Ken Short, '54, is attending Perkins School of Theology in Dallas, Texas; Bill Brooks is the director of forensics at Garden City Junior College; Dorothea Drennan, '55, is attending Vanderbilt University, where

she is getting her master's degree in speech correction. She has just returned from a trip to Europe. Bob Jones, '51, regional director of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, is at the present time business manager of the First Methodist Church of Wichita, Kansas. Phyllis Bunker Bosley, '53, received her master's degree at the University of Nebraska in May, 1955, with a major in speech. She worked this summer on her Ph. D. degree at Harvard, and is now teaching at the University of Maryland. Gene Lowry, '55, is pastor of a church in East New York, New Jersey, and is attending Drew University, Madison, New Jersey. He worked last summer on an advanced degree in speech at Columbia University. Jo Ann Lowery is teaching English and speech in New Jersey. Jim Matthews, '55, was married in August, and is now attending Perkins School of Theology in Dallas, Texas.

Mary Jane Wilson Gano, a former member of the Alpha chapter at Linfield College is now studying with her husband in Tokyo, preparing for work on the mission field.

Joe Mauney, who debated for Wake Forest College at the Kalamazoo convention, is now a trust lawyer for the Planters National Bank and Trust Company of Rocky Mount, North Carolina. His colleague, Virgil Moorefield, who represented the United States on the International Debating Team to England in the spring of 1954, is a third year student in the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary at Wake Forest, North Carolina, and pastor of the Baptist Church at Bonlee, North Carolina.

Two of Linfield College's representatives at the Redlands convention last year, Miss Teddy McPhee and Marcia Reeder, are now teaching school in Oregon. PKD graduates from Linfield College keep in the traditon of their Linfield debate experiences. At Linfield's high school tournament Roy Dancer, who attended the convention at Bowling Green, brought his high school squad and captured both the junior and senior sweepstakes awards. In the college tournament Paul Winters, another alumnus of Linfield, took the junior sweepstakes with his Stockton, California group, and to complete the sweepstakes, Papa Mahaffey's Linfield squad took the

senior sweepstakes.

Samuel Behrends, Jr., an Assistant Attorney General of North Carolina, is a PKD alumnus of the North Carolina Beta chapter of Wake Forest College. Mr. Behrends, a native of Wilmington, North Carolina, entered Wake Forest in 1940, upon graduation from New Hanover High School in Wilmington. He entered the United States Army in May, 1945, where he was commissioned a 1st Lieutenant in the United States Army Air Force. While in the army he completed 32 missions as a navigator in heavy aerial bombardment in Italy. He was awarded the air medal with two oak-leaf clusters as well as the Distinguished Flying Cross. In 1946 he returned to Wake Forest College, where he received the B. A. degree magna cum laude in 1947. During his college days, he was an active member of the debating team; president of the student body; member of Phi Beta Kappa; president of Omicron Delta Kappa, leadership fraternity; president of Pi Kappa Alpha social fraternity; member of Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges and Phi Alpha Delta legal fraternity; president of PKD forensic fraternity; and was a member of a team receiving a superior rating at the Bowling Green convention.

After his graduation from Wake Forest College he entered the Wake Forest Law School, where he received the LL. B. degree cum laude and graduated first in his class. Since that time he served as Assistant Professor of Law, Wake Forest School of Law, 1950-'52 and a member of the staff of Attorney General of North Carolina, 1952-March, 1955, when he was promoted to Assistant Attorney General of North Carolina.

Mr. Behrends and his wife, the former Betsy Brammer of Wilmington, North Carolina, and their four-year-old son Sammy live in Raleigh.

If you like this section of *The Forensic*, please let us have news of the alumni from your PKD chapter. Only through your cooperation can we give recognition to your alumni. Send all alumni news to Franklin R. Shirley, Department of Speech, Wake Forest College, Wake Forest, North Carolina.

The President's Page

Here is good news for all of you! The site for our 1957 National Convention has been chosen. In April of that year caravans of Pi Kappa Delta cars will be converging on Brookings, South Dakota, where upwards of 600 of the nation's best speakers will create more vocal sound waves than the midwestern plains have heard since the pow-wows of the Wecota and Wenona Indians. South Dakota State Colloge will throw open its many doors to receive Pi. Kappa Delta delegates from the one hundred and eighty chapters of our fraternity, distributed between the Atlantic and the Pacific and from the Gulf to the Canadian border. Now is not too early for every one of these chapters to begin making plans for the '57 Convention.



In the meantime, all of you have other forensic projects to take up the slack in your collegiate routine. Even now you are in the swirl of an accelerating tournament schedule. While you work at keeping that grade-point average high, those term papers on schedule, and abreast of those never-ending examinations, you stretch the hours for time for debate research, polishing that oration, or doing reading for extemp and discussion. During rare moments of reflection, you perhaps recall your early-season forensic colleague who decided that this forensic business was just too much work. You may even envy him for the leisurely hours he spends hanging around the favorite college lounge or coffee bar. But about then you console yourself with the recognition that the speech activities bug has possession of you and you settle down to work.

Is there any comfort for you in the assurance of a forensic old-timer that you have taken the wiser course? His judgment is based on the parade of former debaters, orators, and extempers that marches across his memory. You see, these students too, in their day, made the decision to add to high scholastic achievement a thorough training in the practical art of oral communicaion. The roster of any well-seasoned forensic director will include a high percentage of former students now holding prominent positions of responsibility and influence in all areas of human affairs. Such a director knows, and these persons now shaping the events of the day will agree, that the extra hours in forensic pursuits played no small part in their success. This conviction concerning the long-range contribution of forensic training to a person's effectiveness in life's work explains why your own director is one of the hardest working members on the faculty. He, too, adds to his teaching duties the tasks involved in developing a strong forensic squad.

Notice a special phenomenon among forensic students in strong Pi Kappa Delta schools! Both the director, or faculty sponsor, and the chapter members are willing to assume still another responsibility. In addition to their regular academic work and their forensic activities, they also are busy with Pi Kappa Delta affairs. Right now, they are planning for the Provincial Conventions; they are working toward advanced degrees; they are finding room in their budgets to order the fraternity key; and, most important, they are encouraging other students to qualify for membership in Pi Kappa Delta. And why do they do these things? Because they know that through these efforts they not only are serving themselves, but are perpetuating a forensic organization dedicated to the recognition and promotion of effective speech training among students who will replace them as the years pass.