

THE FORENSIC

OF PI KAPPA DELTA

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At the Tiffin Convention in 1928 Professor George McCarty, Professor of Public Speaking at South Dakota State College, was nominated for the presidency of Pi Kappa Delta. Although he was not elected, he had made such a favorable impression on the convention that President Veatch, the man who defeated him, appointed him Editor of the FORENSIC. He served in that capacity four years, producing an interesting and very readable magazine during that time.

Again in 1932 at Tulsa he was nominated for the national president of our society, although he was not a member of the National Council. Again he was defeated by the tradition that the president of the society should have served an apprenticeship on the council. He was, however, elected first vice-president. In 1934, this time with the tradition supporting him, he was unanimously elected National President.

Under his able administration the society has gone forward. There has been harmony and efficiency. His Council has supported him and his committees have worked with him. A number of forward steps have been taken. The national conventions and tournaments have grown in complexity. More careful provisions have been made to provide for them than ever before. The society has had greater recognition on the air, in national forensics, at the meetings of the National Association of Teachers of Speech. Finances have improved. The society is larger than it has ever been before. We have had a good administration under an able leader.

Every member of the society owes President George McCarty a debt of gratitude. In a few weeks he will pass on his gavel to a new National President. With it will go the united spirit of a going concern, all its parts functioning in harmony, dedicated to the advancement of student speaking and the development of American citizens.

"Earth would never touch her worst, were one in fifty such as he."

No one listening to the orations in the national tournament could help but be impressed by the trend toward informality and personal experience. Many students are turning from abstractions and the problems of the universe, to their own adjustment to life. Four of the speakers in the final contest spoke on college life. One contrasted his own life and opportunities with those of a criminal by the same name. A number used personal illustrations.

The result was a gain in conviction and vividness. As long as the orator spoke on life as he had experienced it, he was upon ground he was sure of. When he limited himself to the small part of the world he knew and confined his observations to the tiny fragment of life he had experienced, he was necessarily more concrete and more vivid. Most of the great speeches that I have listened to have had a great deal in them from the life of the speaker. He interprets life most convincingly and most vividly when he takes it up as he has known it.



Two of the judges of the oratorical finals compared their rankings as they walked back to the hotel after the contest. The orator whom one had ranked first, the other had placed last. The oration which the other ranked highest, the first judge gave next to last. Yet these two judges had been selected to serve in the final contest because they were experienced and were considered well qualified.

The natural inference is that one of them was wrong. This is supported by the fact that none of the other five judges ranked either of these orators first. In fact five of the eight final speakers received both a first and a last place. The more logical conclusion, however, is that oratory is such a complex matter that both of them may have been right.

The two judges had no criticism to make of each other as they discussed their rankings. Each felt that he would have ranked the oration the same way if he had it to do over. The orators had been of opposite types. One was dramatic and conventional in delivery. The other was conversational and daringly original. The speakers had been judged not upon their performances, but upon the standards of oratory in the minds of the judges.

The student who has to be judged by such critics is apt to wonder if there is any justice in the awards made. No matter how well he performs, he will be rated by the whims and idiosyncrasies of the individuals selected to serve as judges. He may well demand better judges or more definite standards.

The question is where will he get them? The two judges in question may well have been typical examples of what he must expect to face. When he graduates from college oratory and contest speaking to professional life and practical situations, he will meet the same diversity of tastes. An illustration which appeals to one listener, may carry no meaning to another. A religious appeal may strike a response with some and leave others untouched. A minister who preached a sermon as a candidate for a church was criticized by some members of the congregation because he mentioned Darwin and by others because he put one hand in his pocket. Nine-tenths of the congregation voted to call him to the pulpit, but the other tenth opposed, although they were not agreed in their criticism.

Until all men respond alike to the appeal of the orator there will be differences of opinion among men and judges.



Is it timely to suggest to the tournament committees that it might be wise to restrict students to one line of forensic competition? The convention and tournament program is crowded. There isn't much leeway when one thousand contests have to be crowded into four and a half days. The competition is severe and requires all that a speaker can give. The honor of winning his way into the finals in any one field should be enough to satisfy even the most ambitious student. It is rare that a student wins honors in more than one field, although a few have. Even at this convention one of the winning debaters spoke in the oratorical finals.

Several students were entered in more than one of the tournaments. Many of the debaters tried to double in extempore. One young lady debated, orated, and "extempored." With so many out for a limited number of honors, wouldn't it be better to see that they are passed around among as many individuals as possible? Even if one person could and should win in more than one field, would it be wise to allow him to do it? I suggest that it would be better for all if no student were allowed to compete in more than one tournament.

We raise the question along the same line of allowing winners to compete again. Three previous winners were back at Houston, two of them competing in different events. To this there can be no objection. While it is only remotely possible, how should we feel if the winner of one national tournament came back to win the same event a second time?

Convention Reflections

To our student representatives on the National Council, Bert Nichols and Grace Proffitt, Redlands and Maryville, goes the appreciation of the whole convention for the Amateur Hour program Tuesday night. It was one of the high lights of the convention. Many spoke of it as the most enjoyable event of the week in Houston.

The Convention religious service Sunday night was a splendid idea. It was well attended. Dr. John Elwood Brown gave a fine address. The First Methodist Church, where the service was held and in whose educational building the tournament contests were held, extended many courtesies to Pi Kappa Delta. We have never had a better set-up for the tournaments. Thank you. We appreciated it.

Some folks from "up North" attended services in the Negro churches Sunday night. The services were fine.

J. D. Coon took a delegation through the city jail Wednesday night. It was very educational, especially to the sociology majors who had never seen the specimens of humanity the police department of a large city gathers in during the evening.

The Rice Hotel extended the society every possible courtesy. It was a beautiful hotel in which to meet. To Manager Bruce Carter and the management, we say "Thank you. We should like to spend another week with you."

The City of Houston and the Chamber of Commerce, through its representative Mr. Ashburn, took a great deal of interest in the convention. Mr. Ashburn especially was around headquarters a good deal of the time. I was never sure whether it was because of the ladies or from a desire to be helpful. He was that.

It was a thoughtful courtesy the wives of the faculty members of the Sam Houston State Teachers College and the Houston alumni of the institution extended to Mrs. McCarty and the visiting ladies in the tea given Friday afternoon.

We nominate for future notice the freshman twins from the College of the Ozarks, Mavine and Nadine Lewis. They debate, play the piano, and sing. Provincial Governor McAnear, the man who has a good speech to give on Arkansas if he ever gets a chance, and those twins are going to be hard to handle by 1938.

The convention has expressed its gratitude to Prof. Earl Huffor, the Texan who handled local arrangements, by electing him vice-president. He was certainly on the job and upheld the good name of his state for hospitality.

The trip to Galveston was an interesting convention feature. Palms, the causeway, the sea wall, the Gulf itself, the foreign ships, the flat country, and the historic points, made the whole trip interesting and educational. Those who braved the cold wind found the water pleasant on the beach.

Tournament figures:

Men's debate	105 teams
Women's debate	70 teams
Men's extemp	80
Women's extemp	49
Men's oratory	73
Women's oratory	41

Number of contests: Close to a thousand.

We were all interested in the proof sheets of the new book on "Modern Debating" by Nichols and Baccus of Redlands. These men should be able to write a good book on debating.

By staying home and keeping at it Karl E. Mundt, South Dakota Theta, won the Republican nomination for Congress unopposed. His orator at Houston did very well without him.

Hard luck. The delegation from South Dakota State was robbed of a trunk containing \$250 worth of clothing. Thieves took it from their car while they were eating lunch in Muskogee, Oklahoma. The Redlands' car was rammed by a truck during a dust storm. The Washburn, Kansas Beta, delegation had a smash-up coming south. Their car was seriously damaged. Prof. J. E. Carmichael, Bowling Green, Ohio Eta, fell breaking two ribs. Prof. Leroy Laase, Hastings, Nebraska Delta, was arrested for leaving his car on the streets after midnight.

The Province of the Lower Mississippi gave a fine reception, program and dance Thursday evening. It was a cosmopolitan social gathering. One young lady refused to dance with more than one boy from any one state. The last time I saw her she claimed to have been waltzed round and round by gentlemen from fourteen states, a debate coach from Michigan, and an extempore speaker from Iowa.

For distinguished members we recognize Kansas State Teachers of Emporia, Kansas, Kansas Zeta. It lists the following: Governor Alfred M. Landon, aspirant for the Republican nomination for president; Harry H. Woodring, Assistant Secretary of War; William Allen White, author and editor; Thomas W. Butcher, President of the College; George R. R. Pflaum, Past President of Pi Kappa Delta; and Second Vice-President W. V. O'Connell.

The *Convention Bulletin* produced daily by Vice-President W. Prewitt Ewing and several able student assistants contributed greatly to the efficient operation of the convention. They usually started to work on the *Bulletin* about the time the rest of us called it a day and went to bed.

State honors go to South Dakota, with six of the sixteen honor places in the tournaments. They include first in men's oratory and women's extempore, second in women's oratory (tie) and extempore, third in men and women's extempore (tie). In women's extempore South Dakota won first and second and tied for third.

Texas and Minnesota were right behind South Dakota with three places each.

Baylor University was the high ranking institution. It carried off first in women's debate, second in men's debate, and second in men's extempore.

The winners of the women's tournament in 1928, Misses Doris Fetherston and Janette McCleary of Monmouth, Illinois Zeta, remain the only team which has ever gone through a national tournament undefeated. Incidentally they were coached by our National President elect.



BALLOT

Results of the straw-vote taken at the Monday evening Pi Kappa Delta dinner:

1. Do you believe "that Congress should be given the power to over-ride, by a two-thirds vote, decisions of the Supreme Court declaring acts of Congress unconstitutional?"

YES— 74

NO —159

2. Do you think that the Constitution should be amended to pro-

vide some method whereby the Constitution might be amended with greater facility?

YES—127

NO —103

3. Which majority of affirmative votes by the individual states should be required to amend the Federal Constitution?

The present three-fourths majority—99

A two-thirds majority—87

A simple majority—38

4. Do you think: (Check the statement that more nearly states your judgment):

That the Roosevelt administration has deliberately attempted to "place the Supreme Court in a bad light?"
—39

That the unconstitutionality of New Deal acts merely illustrates the necessity for amending the Constitution to facilitate the solution of problems which confront the nation?
—176

5. Are you in sympathy with the philosophy of government underlying the activities of the Roosevelt administration?

YES—159

NO — 62

6. Do you favor the Townsend plan?

YES— 11

NO —217

7. Do you favor some kind of Federal provision for the economic security of the aged—over 60 years of age, for example?

YES—196

NO —28

8. Which of the aspirants for the Republican nomination for the Presidency do you think would make the best President for the next four years?

Borah, 105; Hoover, 24; Knox, 7; Landon, 77; Vandenberg, 11; Wadsworth, 1.

9. Assuming that one of the above should be the Republican nominee, would you vote:

REPUBLICAN—85

DEMOCRATIC—125

SOCIALIST—1

BALLOT

Results of the straw vote taken at the Tuesday Evening Pi Kappa Delta dinner.

1. Do you believe that an army "second to none" will insure the peace of the United States?

YES— 34

NO —244

2. Is the present armaments program of the United States justifiable?

YES—132

NO — 15

3. Are you willing to bear arms on foreign soil?

YES— 38

NO —228

4. Do you think that the use of a brain trust is advisable in solving the problems of the United States?

YES—199

NO — 6

5. Is Germany justified in her Rhineland policy?

YES—159

NO — 83

6. If you are working your way through school, to what extent?

ALL—79

Two-thirds—34

One-half—37

One-fourth—38

7. If you paid part of the expenses to the national convention, will you indicate to what extent.

ALL—4

Two-thirds—10

One-half—10

One-fourth—47

8. Do you favor "dutch dating?"

YES—151

NO —122

9. Is the interest in intercollegiate athletics on the decline as judged by your campus?

YES— 68

NO —184

10. In your judgment is there more or less drinking among college students since the repeal of the 18th amendment?

MORE—140

Less—18

No change—112

11. Are you in favor of capital punishment?

YES—124

NO —144

12. Do you favor a policy of sterilization of the mentally and physically unfit?

YES—253

NO —12

13. What is your attitude toward government produced hydro-electric power?

Should be produced and distributed by the government
—199

Should only be produced and sold to distributive agencies
—36

Government should not enter the field in any way—33

The Fifth Annual Northwest Debate Tournament was held at College of St. Thomas, Minnesota Epsilon, March 2-4, with 115 teams representing 41 colleges in seven states, 75 in the men's division, and 40 in the women's. There were 345 debates. The winners in the women's tournament were Hastings, Nebraska Delta, and Sioux Falls, South Dakota Epsilon. In the men's contest St. Thomas, for the fourth time, won first, with Macalester, Minnesota Alpha, second.—*Owen P. McElmeel.*

Augustana, Illinois Xi, has organized a Speech-Arts Club composed of students who have been doing extension speaking before off-campus audiences. Members of the club have furnished programs for service clubs, church groups, and other audiences. At the first meeting of the club the speakers discussed their experiences and the audience receptions they had received.—*Augustana Observer.*

Convention Echoes



FROM A MILKMAID

I am only a milkmaid raised on a South Dakota farm, but I am intensely interested in forensics. Hence, I would like to voice my appreciation for the opportunity of being a small part of the great National Pi Kappa Delta Convention at Houston.

The grind of the contests is now all over, but the thrill of the whole meeting will last forever. I didn't return any cups for my college, but I brought home a bigger forensic vision and ambition which is more valuable than silverware.

As a sophomore at Sioux Falls College, I am already packing my suit case in the hope that I can go to Topeka in 1938.

BERNICE STIER, *South Dakota Epsilon*.



BANQUET WAS HIGH LIGHT

The Aberdeen squad enjoyed the tournament very much. Personally, I believe this has been the best conducted convention that it has been my pleasure to attend in the ten years that I have been connected with speech work at Northern. The highlight of the convention, I believe, was the banquet gatherings and the fraternal intermingling of students from every part of the United States.

The Aberdeen people are very happy that they have been able to keep up a tradition of the school in forensics—a Pi Kappa Delta sweater is awarded to each member of the squad if someone succeeds in placing in the finals of one event. Since this award was instituted here eight years ago every National team has been awarded this honor. It is considered the highest award given on our campus and is an incentive for speech people to work for the National trip.

P. J. HARKNESS, *South Dakota Zeta*.



A CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM

Now that the Houston convention is over, perhaps it would be well to look forward critically and constructively toward our meeting two years hence. In most respects the convention was a tremendous success. I assure you that we enjoyed every minute of our stay in the

South. The smoothness with which the tournament progressed was truly amazing. As the high-light of the tournament, I would pick the Amateur Program, new innovation that it was; for I felt that it gave an informal air to the whole week.

There was one feature of the tournament, however, which I frankly did not like. I refer to the tampering with the debate schedule which pitted undefeated teams against each other. I advance this criticism, not with any spirit of alibi, in spite of the fact that I believe that the records will show that we were adversely affected by this arrangement, but merely as an item which I think should be carefully considered in drawing up the debate schedules for the next tournament.

Again may I express my genuine approval of the manner in which the contests were conducted.

RALPH GLENN, *St. Olaf, Minnesota Beta.*



FROM THE NATIONAL COUNSEL

I like to attend the National Pi Kappa Delta Convention to observe Democracy in the making. Six hundred forensic sharp-shooters—the pick of one hundred forty of the best colleges in the country—came together at Houston to practice and perfect the Art of Persuasion.

Here we had the future statesmen and stateswomen of the country. Ideas rule the world. These Pi Kappa Delta members are learning how to take ideas and put them into human action. This is truly a power plant of public opinion.

When a dynamic, straight-shooting, hard-hitting, high-heeled, strawberry-lipped, Clara-Bowed, young blonde combines voice, action, language and brains in a vocal bombardment scintillating with wit and wisdom, surely that is a form of education worthy of any man's observation and commendation.

These Pi Kappa Delta young men and women were discussing the great United States Supreme Court. Certainly the Court will take judicial notice of this Convention and thank Pi Kappa Delta for clearing up some of the misrepresentations—both pro and con—that are emitted (but should be omitted) by the stupid political propagandists.

Who knows, maybe this Pi Kappa Delta Convention will direct the course of history.

J. D. COON, *National Counsel.*

MORE TIME FOR BUSINESS

I like the fact that the contests were seemingly spaced somewhat better than they had been previously. I liked the fact that six rounds of debate were given before any eliminations were made. I rather question the limitation of two losses, even though this does have the effect of limiting rather rigidly the number of schools entering the seventh and eighth rounds. We enjoyed the play day and the banquets.

It seems to me that one fact ought to be obvious and could be taken care of. That is the business meetings ought to be placed after the close of the day's contests rather than try to sandwich them in between contests. If the business meetings needed to run over an allotted time, they could continue on as far into the night as necessary. The set-up at Houston which demanded breaking up meetings in order to get judges for contests I think should be improved.

HERBERT L. CURRY, *South Dakota Gamma.*



SHOULD KEEP RANKINGS SECRET

I was greatly pleased with the Houston convention. The cooperation of coaches in the matter of judging was improved over former years. Recommendations from the Judge Committee should make the task even better performed next time.

I think that rankings in all of the oratory and extemp contests should be kept absolutely secret until after the finals. The passing around of preliminary and semi-final rankings influences both judges and contestants.

UPTON PALMER, *South Dakota Epsilon.*



WANTS CONSPICUOUS BULLETIN

Our people were very much pleased with the tournament, and are looking forward to the next one. It seems to me that the tournament was interfered with because of a difficulty in securing judges. This was a result of laxness on the part of the judges to perform a duty assigned. A deposit to guarantee prompt service on the part of judges might solve the difficult problem, the deposit of course to be returned unless the judge was negligent. I would suggest also bulletin boards with decision records in large print and elevated above the crowd, so that they might be read from a distance. The diffi-

culty and confusion caused by crowds close to the bulletin board seemed to me to be the most unsatisfactory thing in connection with the tournament, and the thing that could be easily remedied.

T. A. HOUSTON, *Oklahoma Theta*.

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FAVORS SMALL TOWN FOR CONVENTION

The convention was just about perfect. I do feel, however, that it was a little more thrilling at Lexington because of the smaller town. It seemed that it was of greater importance to the city itself. This of course naturally appeals to one's ego. It goes without saying that my biggest thrill was in receiving a cup.

I am through participating in Pi Kappa Delta contests, but I can honestly say that forensics has given me more than any other activity of my college career.

GLADYS SIMMONS, *Minnesota Alpha*.

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"The best oratory," according to Prof. John Welker, debate coach at Culver-Stockton, Missouri Zeta, "was given by the women. The trend in oratory is towards a more persuasive type. The end was to produce action and not to show off. Oratory, which has been on the wane for several years, is staging a comeback."—*The Megaphone*.

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A THRILL TO A NOVICE

Although our group returned from Houston, Texas with no cups or medals to signify forensic victory, I think I can safely say that not one of us who went to the national convention felt that our driving over twenty-four hundred miles and our year of work had been in vain.

I personally feel that one returns from a convention of that type with a much higher outlook upon life. There was not only the splendid practice we had all year in searching out material on the Congress and the Supreme Court—which is of invaluable aid—but also the privilege of meeting the cosmopolitan group represented at the convention.

A provincial tournament for a novice at debating was a "thrill" last year, but to meet girls from Louisiana and Iowa, boys from Texas and California, and leaders from East, West, South and North was

truly an education in itself. To hear such men as Dr. Adler and Cameron Beck, to be able to speak to them, and to be able to meet all of the national officers of Pi Kappa Delta really should spell victory to those of us who came home cupless.

MARTHA TRIMBLE, *Colorado Alpha*.



NICHOLS' EXHIBITION

One of the chief points of interest at the convention was the exhibition room arranged by Prof. E. R. Nichols, founder and first president of the society.

The exhibition traced by pictures and publications the history of the society. There were pictures of all the national presidents and many of the other officers. The growth of the society was shown in the pictures of every convention from 1916 to date. Copies of the *FORENSIC* from the first thin and courageous issue to the present magazine were there. There were a few chapter exhibits. This can be made a significant feature of the next one if the chapters will respond.

The whole table full of books on debate, oratory, argumentation, dramatics, interpretive reading, public speaking, and modern developments in speech education, training, and research attracted coaches and students. It was a rare educational opportunity to find all these volumes in one place.

The feature of the convention helps to explain, if explanation is required, why Prof. Egbert Ray Nichols is listed in "Who's Who in America" as one of the nation's leading speech teachers.



HIGHER STANDARDS

I enjoyed very much the privilege of attending the 1936 Pi Kappa Delta convention at Houston. Houston seemed to me an exceptionally happy choice for a convention city. The best part of the whole conclave as far as I was concerned was the efficiency with which it was run off. I also feel that the judging was of a very high standard. The straw votes were also interesting, and I hope they may be continued at future conventions.

I was, however, disappointed on several occasions. In the first place, I felt that the type of humor indulged in on one or two oc-