

THE FORENSIC

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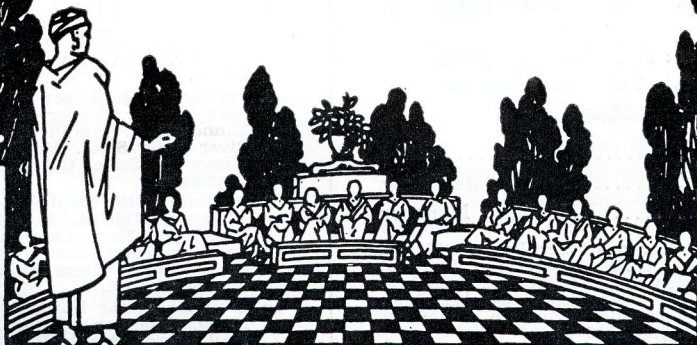
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FORENSIC

OF PI KAPPA DELTA

**Editorial Office: Speech Department,
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Mr. Dalton and Dr. Pross have introduced some interested data on the successful intercollegiate debater. Although, as they state, there may be some questions regarding the reliability of the items and their ranking, the investigation gives support to a number of characteristics of our debaters we have tended to accept as true. Mr. Dalton is a graduate assistant in Debate at Texas Christian University. Dr. Pross is chairman of the Department of Speech at Texas Christian University and the newly elected Lt. Governor of the Province of the Lower Mississippi.

The "Successful" Intercollegiate Debater

WORTH DALTON and E. L. PROSS, *Texas Christian University*

SOME MONTHS AGO, immediately after a hotly contested debate tournament, a number of coaches were discussing the outcomes. Eventually, the discussion centered around the matter of precisely what were the major characteristics or attributes of the successful intercollegiate debater. It was generally agreed that high I.Q. was essential and some of the coaches cited the findings of Thompson on this matter.¹ Generally, however, it was apparent that there was considerable disagreement on the nature of these attributes.

As interested participants in this discussion, we decided to do an informal exploratory study to obtain somewhat more concrete answers as to the characteristics of the successful debater. We agreed that for purposes of our study "successful" meant those debaters who win decisions. Admittedly this is a narrow interpretation and we anticipated some critical reaction. One of our most respected colleagues did object and declared:

I disagree violently with your definition of "success" as applied to a debater. First, because I regard success as determined more by what happens to the debater . . . Secondly, I object, if you are to limit the term to success in tourneys. A debater may win in tourneys and yet not develop the qualities which I believe debating should foster.

This is a most interesting comment but we felt it to be somewhat beside the point. The "successful" college football man plays on

the team, makes his letter, and possibly All-Conference or All-American. He is a "successful" football player, even though after graduation his livelihood is secured by winding a time clock in a bank. He is also judged "successful" as based upon his play in intercollegiate competition, not upon his showing it at afternoon practice sessions! Similarly, we feel justified as defining the successful debater as one who makes the team and wins intercollegiate debates.

We examined various texts in debate to determine what those experts had to say regarding the attributes of the successful debater. Their comments tended to be general, rather than specific, "how" rather than "what." So, we decided to use the questionnaire technique to sample the opinions of our colleagues. A questionnaire, composed of fifty positive statements, was evolved. The items were taken from personal observations and opinions, from suggestions found in the debate texts, and from consultation with other coaches. The completed form permitted a choice of five possible answers to each statement: strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, strongly disagree. In addition to indicating opinions on each of the fifty statements, the coaches were also asked to list in approximate order of their merit, the five characteristics of successful debaters that they felt to be most important. The questionnaire was sent to fifty debate coaches in all sections of the country. Thirty-six completed forms were returned and these represented twenty-two

1. Richard N. Thompson, "The Intelligence of High School Debaters," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, XVII (June, 1931), pp. 403-405.

states. Tabulation of the answers to the fifty items was made and a numerical value thus assigned each.

The items as given below are arranged in order from most important to least important as based upon the ratings of the thirty-six coaches.

1. They tend to have considerable interest in public affairs and events.
2. They tend to have a facility or ability to organize in writing and speaking.
3. They tend to be superior in ability to extemporize.
4. They generally have superior academic standing.
5. They have I.Q.'s generally above 120.
6. They have a strong competitive drive.
7. There seems to be a close relationship between their personality characteristics and their success.
8. There seems to be a close relationship between their speech delivery and success.
9. They tend to have "good" personalities.
10. They tend to have superior vocabularies.
11. They tend to have a sociable type of personality.
12. They tend to be campus leaders.
13. They tend to be self-sufficient.
14. They have had formal training in public speaking.
15. They tend to be aggressive in their dealings with others.
16. They tend to be dominant in personality.
17. They are avid readers.
18. They tend to be extroverts.
19. They tend to be thorough in their work.
20. They tend to be keen students of human nature.
21. They have superior articulation.
22. They tend to be emotionally stable.
23. They have superior bodily action.
24. They tend to have a reflective type of personality.
25. They tend to be "liberal" in their political and economic philosophy.
26. They have had high school debate experience.
27. They tend to participate actively in several phases of college speech activities as drama, radio, etc.
28. They tend to be neatly dressed.
29. They tend to have a keen sense of humor.
30. They tend to be physically attractive.
31. They take criticism well.
32. They have superior voice quality.
33. They tend to be strongly opinionated and argumentative.
34. There seems to be a close relationship between family or environment and success.
35. Their parents tend to be of the white collar or professional group.
36. There seems to be a close relationship between high school speech experience (or lack of it) and success.
37. They tend to be egocentric.
38. They are generally social science majors.

39. Their parents were college graduates or had college training.
40. They are generally pre-law majors.
41. They tend to be dogmatic.
42. They tend to be natives of the region of their college.
43. Their parents had speech training, platform experience, or both.
44. They have had high school experience in dramatics.
45. They have had high school declamation experiences.
46. There seems to be a close relationship between major and success.
47. They tend to be impulsive.
48. They are generally speech majors.
49. They are generally physical science majors.
50. They are generally religion majors.

Tabulation of the results of the coaches' answers to the request to indicate separately the five most important characteristics in rough order of their importance found the five items below as most popular.

1. They have high I.Q.'s, generally above 120.
2. They tend to have considerable interest in public affairs and events.
3. They tend to have a facility or ability to organize in writing and speaking.
4. They tend to be superior in ability to extemporize.
5. They tend to have "good" personalities.

One of the coaches remarked on his questionnaire, "I doubt if this will settle anything." We are certainly in agreement with that sentiment but we do believe that the polled thinking of a considerable number of experts does at least draw in rough profile the major characteristics of what we have termed the "successful" debater. Some of the ratings given certain items surprised us considerably. For example, within the framework of our experience we would certainly strongly agree with the statement "They tend to be strongly opinionated and argumentative." Yet this item rated a fairly low 33rd place. The classic remark appended to a completed questionnaire was made by a distinguished colleague from the Sunflower state. In answer to "They tend to be physically attractive," he commented: "Good looking boys and homely girls!"

It would be most interesting to test the validity of these items and their rankings by an analysis of a considerable number of "successful" debaters, immediately following a debate season. Perhaps one of our colleagues would find interest in such a follow-up study.

Persuasion is the art of implanting motives which lead to consequent free action. *Aristotle*

All life comes back to the question of our speech — the medium through which we communicated.

Henry James

Complete Handbooks vs. Complete Understanding

DONALD K. SPRINGEN, *Alabama College*

TOO OFTEN, in recent years, "complete handbooks" have taken the place of "complete understanding." This tendency, to depend on cases already worked out, can lead to conformity, failure to adapt constructive arguments to the cases presented by opposing teams, over-reliance on "quotation from authority," and dull debates.

The man who has no ideas of his own is a fool. Anyone can browse on the ideas of others, but few men learn how to think for themselves. One of the supreme advantages of debate, for a great many years, has been that of training students in the methods of investigation and organization. But when that investigation and organization is performed by someone else, the student loses one of the finest benefits of debate training. The world is not waiting for a lamb, it's waiting for a shepherd.

What is original research? It is not a search for some of the facts on some of the issues. It's goal should be the highest possible synthesis of the highest number of points of view. Debate is not good training for the lazy student because the lazy student never engages in original research.

Brien McMahon knew the secret of complete preparation and understanding. At a time when men in Congress were completely unformed on atomic energy, he prepared himself, by hard work and his own investigation, for leadership in this very technical field, where complete understanding was extremely difficult, and leadership was so badly needed. He prepared so well that he became a recognized authority on atomic energy, and was appointed chairman of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy. Brien McMahon studied until he understood. Winans, once remarked, that only the man who knows and knows that he knows, has self-confidence, and the ability to put across to others his ideas.

Another man who realized the importance of complete understanding was Arthur Vandenberg. He had the guts to admit he had not fully understood the threat to America itself, until Pearl Harbor. When he "came about" he turned 180 degrees from being "Michigan minded" to being "world minded." He will be remembered, not as a senator from Michigan before Pearl Harbor, but as a statesman of the world after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Seldom has anyone seen such a complete change in attitude in any man.

Clear convincing reasoning power comes also from complete understanding. Oh, that it were used more often than quote, quote, quote. Debates do not have to be dull, and it is a misconception of the debate process, and public speaking in general, to believe they do. After all, debate does involve public speaking. And it should not fail to incorporate the basic principles of good speech, not the least of which is to capture the attention and hold the interest of those who may be listening. No wonder we have so many apathetic judges; we have so many debators who have nothing original to say and persist in saying it. Much of the dullness could be eliminated by using more humor, comparisons, and concrete examples, and arranging ideas into a more simple, obvious, meaningful pattern. But you cannot begin to simplify until you begin to understand.

No one has the monopoly on wisdom. It lies in our libraries only to be picked up, read and understood. Sometimes it is hard work to find it. And after finding it, the thinking necessary to organize it into coherent form is even harder. But the reward of finding it yourself is one of the finest rewards scholarship has to offer.

Walk into your next debate, not with a handbook under your arm, but something in your head. Fill up all the space you can. There are no known cases of cortical saturation.

In the past issues, the *FORENSIC* has contained a number of orations written by men. Your editor was not being partial; instead, it so happened there were no manuscripts written by women available. The shortage, as a result of some letters, has been corrected and future issues will recognize our women orators. The two orations, "Each on His Own Merits" and "If I were the Voice of America" have received Superior ratings in intercollegiate oratorical contests. The former at the National Convention at Kalamazoo; the latter in contests in the South.

Each On His Own Merits

GLORIA NATALIE LEWIS, *Illinois State Normal University*

From the standpoint of both Negro and white, one of the most fascinating aspects of the whole race problem here in America is that which we refer to as passing, in other words, the practice of a white skinned Negro crossing the line and leading the life of a white person. And this passing from one race to another occurs on a tremendous scale. A recent article in *Ebony* indicates that over five million people who, under our present system of racial identification, would be classified as Negroes have done this.

Now this is not a purely hypothetical matter to me. It is not a situation out of a novel by Frank Yerby or Sinclair Lewis. I can cite instances, in fact, later in these remarks I intend to do so.

The question that you are probably asking yourself—one that I have puzzled over a great deal—is why do Negroes pass. What motives compel them? Well let's begin where many of these men began. It was a plain question of money. If you found yourself in the position where the possibilities of bettering yourself financially were severely limited, and the only apparent reason for this limitation was identity with the Negro race, and then if you knew by simply assuming identity with the white race, this whole employment situation could be completely changed, well, what would you do? It is not just the desire for money in terms of something to have in the bank; rather it's a matter of what anyone who finds himself on a low standard of living can do if he has money. And this brings us to another reason for passing.

Of course, other factors enter into the low estate of most Negroes as to housing, sani-

tary conditions, medical services, and other things that all people think of as adding up to the "good life."

But when a man looks at the statistics and sees that right here in the United States of America he is in real danger of receiving about half as much money for the same job as he would get if he were officially recognized as a white man, or when he can pick up job lists and see that the openings for employment are, at least, doubled if he is not a Negro, well, it's easy to see why he might take this step.

Now certainly you'll agree with me that an individual's ability to do jobs has nothing to do with his color. Everybody knows that. You know it; I know it, and anyone pondering this step knows it just as well as we. But that doesn't prevent him from knocking his head repeatedly against an artificial ceiling built over him by what we might as well go ahead and call prejudice. In fact, the greater his ability, the more evident his superiority, the more ridiculous these silly restraints appear. But this man knows an easy way to solve his problem.

He may, therefore, go part way, in other words, he may be a white man on the job and a Negro in home and social life. Many people having achieved the economic status they wanted, stop here, and are content. But this brings us to another phase of the situation, and that presents another question. Why is it that some Negroes go the whole way and carry this practice into their social life as well as their business life? Now this is a little harder to answer, but it can be explained.

The Negro who has achieved employment equality and financial adequacy has, of

course, the special satisfaction that anyone gets out of living up to his capacities, but he may also discover in his new sphere, friends who feel the way he does about things and think the way he does. To use an old phrase, His Kind of People, men and women who are interested in the same cultural pursuits and whom he finds intellectually stimulating. Now this sort of selection goes on every day, in any society, and if it is done by a white person among white people or a Negro among Negroes, nobody thinks anything of it. The fact that a person gravitates toward those with whom he has most in common and with whom he feels at ease is not ordinarily interpreted as a sign of inexcusable conceit or snobbishness. But this man knows, of course, that it will be said that he was ashamed of being a Negro. If he is introspective at all, he may wonder if he wasn't. After all, he is bothered by the social conditions into which the Negro has been forced. He would be embarrassed to bring the friends he has met on the job to his present surroundings because deep down he knows he will be thought of as a part of this group, and he knows too that as a part of this group he will partake of its status, no matter what he personally may be or wish to be. So recognizing this, he is faced with the choice.

I realize that I am over-simplifying this problem. Consider the tremendous pull of family ties, the decision to turn his back upon childhood friends, but many Negroes after counting the costs have, nevertheless, made this move. This is a bitter experience, of course, and one may wonder at a society that could force such a cruel choice upon anyone. But the man who is passing is simply facing the facts as they exist.

But I am speaking to you, people who will view this decision from the outside, who will know what external pressures forced this decision, and what pulls from outside invited it. But what you do not, probably, cannot understand is what pressures from within forced this decision, the frustrated life before the decision, the effort to find his place in a group where he had no place, the slow realization that his ways are not their ways that his thoughts are not their thoughts, that his features are not their physical features, in short, that he is not a Negro.

I think of a close friend—white skinned, blond, blue eyed, keen featured—of his effort to find his place. If he dated a brown skinned girl, they both suffered the embarrassment of questioning looks. If he went to a party, he found that he simply didn't fit in. When he talked with family and friends, he found they had little in common. As he grew older, he discovered the differences he sensed were as real and as important to the others as they were to him. Eventually it became a fact that he did not belong. I could carry this story further and tell how he entered the armed services as a white man, married a white girl, and found a place he never would have found in the group he had once thought of as his own. Now it must be clearly understood here that this was not merely a process of a man's being drawn away by outside forces; it was rather more of a man's being pushed away by the internal forces of the group.

Perhaps not enough is made of the segregating tendencies, the turning inward upon themselves of Negroes, and yet these tendencies are pronounced. Negroes can be fiercely proud. They can prefer to go to Negro colleges. They can insist upon reading Negro literature. They can print magazines that celebrate their separateness. They can and do set up elaborate organizations. They frequently think in terms of Negroes and no one else.

It would be easy for me to stop right here and say, and why shouldn't they. I have not as yet progressed to the point where I can be entirely calm about the abuses that have been inflicted upon the Negro. I resent as strongly as anyone the senseless assumptions that are frequently made about minorities, and certainly I am as anxious as the next person to eliminate this whole foolish folklore of prejudice.

It is simply that in talking with you here today about this problem I have recognized that segregation works both ways, that in the problem shared by Negro and white neither is entirely free of responsibility. But above all, I should like to urge upon you my conviction that the race problem cannot be solved in terms of groups, majority or minority. A working society must be set up on the recognition of its members as individuals, who shall be judged each on his own merits.

If I Were the Voice of America

BARBARA KUYKENDALL,
Mississippi State College for Women

The other day I opened a magazine and saw in big bold type the words, "If I could speak for America." Beneath the caption there was pictured in all her beautiful symbolism the Statue of Liberty. As I gazed at the picture and the heading I thought, "What an opportunity, and, yet, what a responsibility" for I realized that it is becoming more and more necessary that some one should speak for America. It is becoming necessary because freedom of speech and of press as we know it in this country is rapidly disappearing from one nation after another. Instead of knowledge, a cloak of ignorance is being used to keep many of the world's people under the heel of a tyrant. The rights of the majority are being drowned in the hate and greed of a few. Because the American way of life offers liberty to those who are enslaved, oppressors are smearing us with names such as capitalists, war-mongers, and imperialists, in the hope that they may lay the blame for the suffering of the world on our shoulders. Even relatively free nations look toward us with suspicion and fear. They see in us one of the most powerful nations in the world, and they are afraid because throughout the course of history power has always been used for conquest.

If I were the voice of America, how could I dispel this war-breeding fear? What could I say that would scrape away the superficial gaudiness and rude strength of which we are accused and show the world the heart of this great nation of ours? I think perhaps if I were the voice of America I would say something like this:

People of the world, this is America. I say it proudly with my head held high, yet, humbly with my heart bent low, for I realize that little better than two hundred years ago there was no such nation as this, but today we are recognized as a world power. Why? The answer goes back to the year 1620 when a group of people called Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock on the coast of New England. They had

fled from the Old World in order to be free from tyranny . . . tyranny of the mind as well as of the body. Life in the New World was hard for them. Less than half of their group survived that first bitter cold winter. Yet, they were determined to stay, for here they had their first taste of freedom. Here they could govern themselves. As the years passed, others came. People of the Old World began to realize the vast possibilities of this new country. They saw the rich forests and fertile earth. It is true that to some this meant a chance to exploit; but, to others, it meant a chance to build . . . a chance to live.

France, England, and Spain were particularly interested in gaining control over this New World. Finally, in 1763, after bitter struggles and much bargaining, England was the proud mistress of a territory that stretched from the Atlantic Ocean to the Mississippi River, from the Gulf of Mexico to Hudson Bay. But England was ruled by a king. This was the tyranny from which the Pilgrims had fled. Were all the past struggles for liberty to be in vain? NO! The spirit of freedom which had swept across the New World and lodged itself securely in the hearts of men was crystallized when Patrick Henry uttered the cry that still rings in our ears, "Give me liberty, or give me death." Brave men fought for what they believed; old empires died and a new nation was born . . . a nation based on the equality of mankind. The people of this nation bound themselves together under a form of government called democratic . . . a government in which the people alone have the right to choose their leaders. That is the government under which we, the people of America, have grown from a handful of settlers to one of the most powerful nations in the world.

There are many reasons for America's strength. You, people of the world, know of the smoking steel mills, the sprawling cities, the vast plains, and the thick rolls of American dollars. Many of you think of us as being like our sky-scrappers—tall and strong, but

with many rugged corners. You are right; this is America, but this is not all. These things alone do not make a great nation. What then does? Dwight Eisenhower tapped the source of our strength when in a recent address he said, "The things that make us proud to be Americans are of the soul and of the spirit." These are the things that make the heart beat of a nation. They are the strength of the heart that beats in us, the American people. We have been called the melting pot of the world because we have come from every nation on the face of the earth. We first came to this country to be free; but, even more important than this is the fact that we have been willing to fight to protect that freedom, not only for ourselves, but also for others. As Lincoln said in his Gettysburg Address we are "dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." Since our fight for independence in 1776, we have gone to war on four different occasions in order to preserve the freedom and equality of man. In 1812, we battled for and won American freedom of the seas. In 1898, we became entangled in a struggle to liberate nearby countries from what we saw as tyranny. As the victor, we would have been following the expected course of action had we annexed Cuba; we did not. We gained no territories because we believe in independence not only for us, but for everybody. In 1917, as Woodrow Wilson said, we fought "to make the world safe for democracy." It was to be a "war to end wars," but just as no individual is perfect, neither are we as a nation perfect. Somewhere we failed, for again in 1941 we went to the battlefields for the sake of freedom. And now, that war is ended only to be followed by the threat of a third world war. We may fail again; but, we will not stop for we know that only "Free men progress, all others eventually go backward. That is the destiny we pursue for ourselves and in behalf of all."

Yes, people of the world, this is America. We are young, husky, often foolish, but in our heart is a cherished dream, a dream of freedom. We invite you to join us in our struggle to realize that dream, but never will we force your support.

Thus, I think I would speak were I the voice of America.

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Lambda—Sterling College, Sterling
Mu—Bethany College, Lindsborg
Nu—Fort Hays State College, Hays

The Minnesota State Oratorical Association

DAVID W. SHEPARD, *Indiana Ball State Teachers*

The Minnesota State Oratorical Association consists of the following schools: Gustavus Adolphus, Hamline, Macalester, Mankato State Teachers College, St. Catherine, St. Mary, St. Olaf, and St. Thomas. Mankato is a member of the Tau Kappa Alpha, while the other seven schools all have active Pi Kappa Delta chapters. Carleton College, one of the founding schools of the old association, is no longer a member. There is no accurate survey of the extent to which Minnesota colleges sponsor active oratory programs, but these eight schools do belong to an organization devoted to the perpetuation of oratory.

The state association was reorganized in 1952 and a new constitution was adopted. The old organization which dated back to 1927 was thus replaced. There are no available records, but there was a state oratorical association long before 1927, for Minnesota schools were entering the Interstate Oratorical Contest as early as 1881 when Owen Morris, of Carleton College, won second place. The only other school appearing in the records before 1900 is Hamline University when Guy E. Maxwell won second place in 1891. The first Minnesota

school to win first place was St. Olaf College. This was in 1909, and S. T. Sorenson was the Minnesota entry that year.

Minnesota is not the only state with an oratorical association, but Minnesota is fortunate in that the eight schools are close together. No school is over two to three hours' distance from another. It has only been with this year's addition of Mankato and St. Mary that the distance has been increased to over an hour and a half. This means that travel expense is negligible and that leisurely contests are the rule rather than the exception.

The annual contests are held in March, and the winners are sent to the Interstate Contest at Northwestern University. Each winning school is allotted a small sum to allay expenses. It has not yet been considered necessary to award large amounts of money because the school administrations have been very cooperative in underwriting these additional expenses because of the distinction and the publicity involved. Our constitution provides for no fixed sum, so the association votes on the amount of the annual awards at the meeting held in conjunction with the tournament.

The constitution also has a flexible provision for judging procedures. For the past few years the coaches have been doing their own judging, each coach judges all entries except his own. Now the pressure of this system is not pleasant. It means that each judge must judge in both men and women's divisions, and with the newly instituted men and women's extemporaneous speaking divisions the coaches will be unduly burdened. For this reason it has been decided to bring in judges from outside the association for next year's contest. We are not anchored to a fixed system; we can do pretty much as we please depending upon the pleasure of the members and upon the strength of the budget.

The expenses of belonging to the association are not excessive. There is a fifteen dollar fee for each division. These fees cover the prize money, the trophy engraving, the programs, and the medals. We have rotating trophies, so there is no annual trophy expense other than engraving. The best feature of all is that there is no expense to the host school.

