

THE FORENSIC

OF PI KAPPA DELTA

WILBUR E. MOORE, Editor

ROY D. MURPHY, Associate Editor

Sylvester Toussaint, Business Manager

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A number of changes in the format of *The Forensic* beginning with this issue have been made necessary by directives received from the Post Office Department. The Postal Laws and Regulations require that the indicia be shown on one of the first five pages of each issue, preferably the first. They also prohibit the carrying of any commercial advertisement if our present second-class privileges are to be retained.

The delay in this issue of *The Forensic* is occasioned by a somewhat prolonged retention of the Editor in the hospital and at home following surgery.

The Forensic needs interesting news of lectures sponsored, activities promoted, honors won and achievements of members and alumni. This news should be reported before it is stale. Therefore chapters are urged to send the Editor clearly written accounts of their activities.

The National Questions Committee

GLENN R. CAPP, Baylor University, Waco, Texas

The revised plan of procedure for the committee on intercollegiate debate and discussion topics was perfected and went into effect at the convention of the Speech Association of America in Chicago in December, 1949. The principal changes from our former procedure follow:

- (1) The committee is now composed of one member from each of the four co-operating forensic societies — Tau Kappa Alpha, Delta Sigma Rho, Phi Rho Pi, and Pi Kappa Delta — and one member appointed by the president of the Speech Association of America.
- (2) The committee members will meet during the months of May or June to phrase the questions for discussion and propositions for debate. Formerly this work was done through correspondence.
- (3) Chapters in the future will vote on fully stated propositions for debate and questions for discussion rather than broad topics.

In brief, the procedure follows:

- (1) All suggestions for topics must be in the hands of the committee by May first.
- (2) The committee will meet to phrase these topics prior to July first.
- (3) The debate propositions and discussion questions will be submitted for a preferential vote not later than August first.

These changes should simplify the work of the committee and make for the selection of well considered topics. Copies of the revised plan of procedure are available through the national secretary of Pi Kappa Delta. We solicit your suggestions.

President Sherrod Collins asked me to serve on the committee for Pi Kappa Delta, serving as chairman for the coming year. Professor Ted Nelson has been asked to continue in an advisory capacity. Other members of the new committee follow: T. Earle Johnson, University of Alabama, for Tau Kappa Alpha; William Howell, University of Minnesota, for Delta Sigma Rho; Glenn L. Jones, Pueblo Junior College, for Phi Rho Pi; Glenn Mills, Northwestern University, representing Speech Association of America.

In a country and government like ours, eloquence is a powerful instrument, well worthy of the special pursuit of our youth.

THOMAS JEFFERSON: *Letter to G. W. Summers*, 1822

Condense some daily experience into a glowing symbol, and an audience is electrified.

R. W. EMERSON: *Eloquence*, 1877

On 3x5s And The Sublime

RUSSELL W. LEMBKE, Central Michigan College

For I make bold to say that nothing is so effective as feeling of a high order when it is called out by the occasion; it seems to issue from a sort of divine rapture and enthusiasm and fills the words with inspiration.

—Longinus.

I know a debater who believes there is a kind of white magic in his 3x5 cards, black when they're worn and crumpled from the grip and flourish test. Three is for the trinity reflected in creation; five for a true man, conscious of the right use of his five senses. Perhaps he has not heard that, with his arms and hands outstretched, man represents the five pointed star, conscious of all his creative powers, and, in his urge to use them, often burns his fingers. At any rate this debater whom I know places all his faith in a good hand of cards.

"I admit the efficacy of a 'fitting and dignified arrangement' of your case," I say to him, "is it that which moves you?" For he waves his 3x5s; shakes his finger at the audience (usually a somnambulant time-keeper and a bored looking "judge"); smiles benignly as he mouths "my colleague and I"; sneers malignantly over "our worthy opponents, the negative (the scum), the other team"; peers glassy-eyed at a piece of black magic and mumbles something from an "authority" whose name I never catch; ticks off a "point" with his finger and a throaty croak or a strident cackle: "we have conclusively proved"; shoots a furtive look toward those

other cards flapping out the time; flips through his own pack frantically, and with breathless excitement (or haste) catalogues every syllable with index finger hacking mercilessly to the last dying gasp. After seeing him in action I am always a little surprised that my debater friend looks so unruffled sitting at his table. A young lady, a shrill, strident replica of my friend, who often serves as his "colleague", is, if anything, even more carried away by her emotions.

What is it that moves them? Is it the excitement of a game—thirty seconds left to play? I have seen their more placid counterparts exhibit some of the same manifestations while thumbing their 3x5s, literally or in their minds, but with them the smooth tricks and dodges of a clever quarterback predominate. The goal is to overwhelm the foe, is it not? Why am I not more impressed or at least more excited by the game? Is it because these boys and girls and I have been told something about an art which is not the art of deception and it makes us all a little uncomfortable?

Why can't we buy albums of notable debates across the record counter as we buy a symphony or an Orson Welles production—or a Henry James? I know that if I get bored with Broadway drama I can go over to Town Hall and get a good feeling of satisfaction listening to a discussion which usually turns out to

be a debate. Certainly I see some of the same finger waving at Town Hall, many of the same dodges and a good deal more pomposity. But more often, it seems to me, there is an earnest, deeply felt attempt to present a solution of a problem.

II.

All those who strive after what is great, somehow fall into bombast when they are attempting to avoid censure for something feeble and dry, thinking that "greatly to fail is a noble error"

—Longinus.

The art of a democracy should grow from and support free discussion—one of democracy's primal concerns. In the Greek democratic state the orator was a distinguished artist who personified this concern. Our preoccupation with facts, cross-word-puzzle information, and high pressure selling has made the artist speaker a rarity in our time. The briefs of our debaters are not often "fitting and dignified arrangements". They have been compiled to deceive or to overwhelm on a stock basis beginning with a mechanical "definition of terms" and "need for a change" and progressing to unharmonious items in a rebuttal. It might help if some venturesome "coach" would throw away all his school-book formulas and go contemplate a difficult work of art which he is able to admire.

Would not an artistic speaker be more likely to develop from the debater if he kept the idea of solution uppermost in his mind? In a democracy we depend upon our leaders to explain their solutions and we make the choice. The debater is presenting one solution and it is his duty to

present it as effectively as possible in order that we, the audience and the voters, can make a decision. And we do not like to be deceived. If the debater wants to argue let him sit across the table from his "honorable opponents" and ignore us completely (in effect he does so anyway). But if he is really talking to us, let him concentrate on the clarity, yeah, even beauty, of his expression and less on direct or indirect jibes at someone else, more on the relationship of his facts and less on the quantity of them so that we will be able to understand.

Accenting the beat in poetry is not interpreting it; we must fight against the mechanical swing of it to make dominant the ideas and feelings and thus truly interpret the total rhythm. I would be more interested in debate if in it, too, a richness of feeling and idea dominated the mechanics.

Exhilaration in conflict is a desirable esthetic ingredient which need not be lost from debating. But contests will not be remembered for any artistic reasons if they are slugging matches and little else. When debates really have esthetic qualities we may want to record them and listen to them again and again. In the academies at least we should think less about winning by whatever demagogic means and more about that which the ancients called sublime and which we have interpreted as excellence.

III.

For it often happens that speakers as though they were drunk give way to bursts of emotion that have nothing to do with the matter in hand and are simply the results of their own efforts.

—Longinus.

The debater so often seems obsessed with the importance of forcing tactics. Who can blame him when frantic radio commercials are ringing in his ears? His emotions are those which we have come to associate with the modern persuader, the supersalesman. They have little to do with his feeling about the product—the question being debated, and often do not arise from any real interest in contacting the buyer—the audience. His reactions are to the mechanics of the situation and to his opponents.

I am told that radio blasts sell merchandise; orotund bombast and sly demagoguery have won elections and debates. But why need we encourage such methods? Those listening to and participating in speech activities are presumably intelligent people. They should prefer to decide a question on its merits. It then should follow that the speaker's aim must be to make his proposition just as clear to the listener as he possibly can. Clear, forceful, attractive exposition should be the best possible persuasion. If he fails to win support after an excellent presentation, there should then be no censure of his efforts.

If that is the principle to be followed, how can a debating team ever win when the proposition is unpopular? Well, I do not have to turn out winning debaters so I can sit on the sidelines and give a meddler's advice. Those debaters should win who have most vividly and clearly presented the case to the audience. The preponderance, the sheer quantity of authority for or against need not matter. Of course no question

should be debated in the first place if most men of good will have already decided it. (It might be very interesting, however, to construct a debate as though it were taking place in the past and in the light of the information and beliefs of that period, much as we sometimes revive a Shakespearean play on an Elizabethan stage).

When solution is uppermost in the debaters' minds, together with a commensurate vividness and attractiveness of presentation, the affirmative speakers need not claim that theirs is the only solution. They have been chosen to stand up and speak for a plan of action; they must cooperate with the negative speakers in seeing that all aspects of that plan are clearly revealed to the audience. Here in debate should be nobly represented the principle of democracy that all sides of a question should be freely discussed. But any one debate is presenting only two sides of a proposition and giving equal opportunity for both to be heard.

It follows that the negative speakers must of necessity directly oppose the plan being put forward. They are not just opposing another team of speakers; they are opposing a plan of action. They have a limited time in which to do this and should not waste it talking about "status quo" and "counterplans". There is only one plan presented in a debate proposition and that should be the subject of the debate. And whatever feelings are revealed should issue from the self-involved efforts of the speaker to make his position vividly clear.

Dates And Locations Of Pi Kappa Delta Province Conventions

1. **Province of the Plains** — Bethel College, Newton, Kansas April 6, 7, 8
2. **Province of Missouri** — Joint meeting with Illinois
3. **Province of Illinois** — Illinois State Normal University, Normal, Illinois
March 30 - April 1
4. **Province of the Pacific** — College of the Pacific, Stockton, California - prob-
ably April 3, 4, 5
5. **Province of the Sioux** — (no information as yet)
6. **Province of the Lower Mississippi** — Texas Christian University, Fort Worth,
Texas, April 14-15
7. **Province of the Lakes** — Grove City College, Grove City, Pa., April 3-5
8. **Province of the Upper Mississippi** — Upper Iowa University, Fayette, Iowa,
December 2-3, 1949
9. **Province of the Southeast** — University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia, March
20-21

Your Province Governor will inform you regarding any changes in host colleges or convention dates and will send full information about the convention program.

True eloquence does not consist in speech. Words and phrases may be marshalled in every way, but they cannot compass it. It must consist in the man, in the subject, and in the occasion. It comes, if it comes at all, like the outbreking of a fountain from the earth, or the bursting forth of volcanic fires, with spontaneous, original, native force.

DANIEL WEBSTER: Speech in Boston Aug. 2, 1826

It would be as idle in an orator to waste deep meditation and long research on his speeches as it would be in the manager of a theatre to adorn all the crowd of courtiers and ladies who cross over the stage in a procession with real pearls and diamonds. It is not by accuracy or profundity that men become the masters of great assemblies.

T. B. MACAULAY: *Gladstone on Church and State*, 1839
(Edinburgh Review, April)

The President's Page

By the time you read this several tournaments will have come and gone and most of you will have had some experience with one or more of them. There is no doubt in my mind that you have probably heard people remark that the present debate question is a bit difficult. We may be expecting too much or too little of our people but it is probably a question that will challenge the student's thinking. We may be more nearly face to face with the problem involved in this question than we think we are.

If it were possible, at this moment, an announcement would be made as to the exact location of the next convention. This is not possible at the moment, but members of your council have been making some very definite investigations. The council is now waiting for some rather specific information to be put on paper after which we can make a definite statement.

Many of us have had the chance to shake hands and exchange ideas at the Speech Association of America meeting in Chicago. It is good to find such a large number of you people interested in furthering the speech program. It is true we may not agree on just exactly what is right in a speech program and what is not the best procedure, but the fact that we are thinking is tremendously valuable. It seems that a good sign is that there is difference of opinion. When people arrive at the place where there is general agreement, thinking is apt to cease. We may then find ourselves in the category of some other people in the world who seem content to let a few do all the thinking for the masses.

Some province tournaments have already been held but some more are yet coming. Probably one of the best things about these province tournaments is the opportunity for a larger number of people to participate. In some instances provinces are having a joint meeting. This, it seems, is valuable for provinces where there is not too great a problem in travel. There are great possibilities in this joint province meeting in that there is opportunity not only for a wide variation in program in these conventions, but also there is an opportunity for provinces to measure themselves against the standard set up by other provinces. There are instances where the travel is almost prohibitive. The distance necessary for some chapters corresponds favorably to the distance these chapters may have to travel to attend a national convention. It seems to be worthwhile to at least attempt.

International Debating

The Committee on International Debating of the Speech Association of America calls to the attention of the member colleges and universities of Pi Kappa Delta the present setup in international debating. The Institute of International Education, 2 West 45th Street, New York, is sponsoring the activity. Teams from abroad are invited to this country each year and their itineraries are arranged for various sections of the country in rotation, or according to demand. The fee of \$100 for each debate is used to pay the travel expenses of the visitors, and any future surplus will be used to assist teams going abroad. Institutions interested in securing engagements with foreign teams should have their names put on the mailing list of the Institute.

Teams going abroad may be either from a single institution, or representative teams of individuals from different institutions. In either case, until the Committee can secure more financial aid, teams going abroad will have to pay most of their expenses. Since a limited number of teams can be entertained abroad, colleges contemplating such a tour should receive the approval of the Committee. Eventually the Committee plans to put into effect a complete system of selection of individuals for representative teams. At present, any institutions wishing to nominate a candidate for such a team should submit his name, record, and agreement to pay his expenses, to any member of the Com-

mittee well in advance of a contemplated trip.

The present Committee members are Brooks Quimby, Bates College, Chairman; John Neale, Dartmouth College; Glen Mills, Northwestern University; and Richard Murphy, University of Illinois.

He is an eloquent man who can treat subjects of an humble nature with delicacy, lofty things impressively, and moderate things temperately.

CICERO: *De oratore*, c. 80 B.C.

Can there be a more horrible object in existence than an eloquent man not speaking the truth?

THOMAS CARLYLE: *Speech at Edinburgh*, 1866



William Berry, former publisher of "The Forensic" and Honorary member of Colorado Alpha Chapter.

A Philosophy For Forensics

WILBUR E. MOORE, Central Michigan College

In the past, the philosophy underlying forensics in American Colleges has been largely a reflection of certain traditional assumptions of our Western Democratic society. First, the belief in the validity of group judgment and the dignity of what we call "the common man" has dominated our purposes; second, the way to get ahead, to be successful, is to rise above the "common man"; and third, persuasive ability, whether in a salesman, a lawyer, a minister, or an educator, is an important avenue to professional and social success and by and large, the test of one's persuasiveness is how successful according to our culture is he? Therefore, as our universities in their development have tended more and more toward "the practical", so our rhetorical training has, it seems, emphasized the ideal of personal power over others.

That the balance between personal desires and social good is a delicate one has been emphasized in *The Quarterly Journal of Speech* by Earl Wiley of Ohio State University. That our forensic program and training in argumentation often swings the balance toward selfish ends and personal power has been argued by Pellegrini in the same volume of the Journal.

Certainly, as our understanding of human motivation has increased, and as we become more alert to the psychological mechanisms of projection, rationalization, and displacement, the "rhetorically successful"

utterances of some of our political, economic, and religious spokesmen are heard as but poorly camouflaged expressions of personal desires. Certainly too, the work of Harold Lasswell, *Psychopathology and Politics*, should reveal to us the danger of giving powerful rhetorical tools to the narcissistic agitator who strives by oratorical techniques to impose upon society his own displaced infantile desires.

Although our rhetorical studies have revealed much about the personal benefits of forensic training to such men as John Quincy Adams, James Wilson, James Madison, Daniel Webster, Henry Clay, John C. Calhoun, Robert LaFollette, and others, it seems to me an important aspect of the results of traditional rhetorical practice has been ignored. That aspect is concerned with the possibility, if not the probability that traditional, Aristotelian modes of persuasion, intended to unify and win loyalties may have at the same time aroused and influenced opposition and hostility.

The lines of argument chosen by a Henry or a Madison, a Webster or a Calhoun, a Lincoln or a Douglas, to win and strengthen the loyalties of one economic, political, or geographical group were often the very *topia* to repel another group. The frequent failure of conciliatory efforts with the ensuing accusations of apostasy suggests at least that in traditional rhetoric there may not

exist the techniques of social synthesis and unity in the broadest sense.

One lack in the traditional rhetoric is the neglect of the modern postulate that "facts" of necessity are subjective. Jerome Frank states in *Fate and Freedom* — "Every fact in subjective, in the sense that it is a selection made by human beings so limited in their perceptions that they cannot know all that goes on about them." Furthermore, a fact is altered by the purpose and interest of the user of the fact. "Different human purposes confronting the same experience, results in different facts."

Debaters trained in an awareness of the subjective nature of facts will continue to present the data they have gathered; but alert to their own limitations for observations and accumulation of facts and somewhat aware of the extremely distorting effects of their desires to win, and of their unconscious motives to defend personal judgment, they should acquire an openness of mind and a greater flexibility of judgment which would open up the way for a more rigorously critical performance.

In fact, it would seem that such training would be primary if those taking a leading part in the discussion of human affairs are to avoid what Northrop, in *The Logic of the Sciences and the Humanities*, calls the culturalistic fallacy. Northrop states:

Every cultural ideology, when made made articulate, involves a basic philosophy in terms of which the economic doctrine, the political doctrine, the legal theory, the religious theory and the artistic forms of that culture are defined. The validity of any such philosophy cannot be determined by appealing to the data of the human-

ities or social science. For the data reflect this or some other ideology. They are not objective like the processes of natural science. Thus to base one's normative social theories on the empirical cultural data is to beg the normative question.

In demonstrating how both observation and the interpretation of facts are controlled by a basic philosophy, Northrop further writes:

It is impossible even to record and classify the facts of history or of the diverse practices and institutions of different peoples without bringing these facts under concepts and theories. The only way to get pure facts, independent of all concepts and theory, is merely to look at them and forthwith to remain perpetually dumb, never uttering a word or describing what one sees, after the manner of a calf looking at the moon. . . . What one gets are not facts, but facts brought under some often unexamined, unconscious, theoretical assumptions of a sociologist or historian.

A second weakness of traditional rhetoric is too great a reliance upon historical knowledge which in our complex culture has lost much in predictive value. The use of knowledge of the past in order to predict the future is far less feasible today than it was in earlier times, when civilization was more stable. History then served as a better guide because the social stability meant that the basic routines of the past resembled those of the present and were likely to continue into the future. "Laws of history," and "social" and "economic laws," were easier to formulate because they stressed this fact of continuity. But in an unstable period, such as that in which we now live, the use of knowledge of the past as the basis of prediction becomes increasingly less possible. The time-span of continuity is

shorter. Therefore long-range forecasts are highly unreliable. Many of the "economic laws" and other "social laws," once moderately accurate, grow less and less valid. What W. B. Donham has said with respect to business forecasts is true generally: Foresight today must confine itself to a limited "time zone," because, in trying to foresee an extensive future period, the numerous factors get hopelessly out of hand. Change, not permanence, is now normal. There is danger in trying to project the impermanent present into an imaginary permanent future; doing so, we become the victims of an "illusion of the permanence of the transitory."

From what has already been written, my third point should be apparent. It is that in this day when social unity is desperately needed, when divisions and schisms in homes, in churches, in schools, in our economic and social life, and in international affairs, threaten us, we need to provide as much opportunity for co-operative speaking as we have for competitive speaking. We need to combine with the best parts of our traditional rhetoric the best contributions of the studies of group dynamics and modern logic.

Northrop states the problem even more emphatically:

What must be said with all the emphasis at one's disposal is that our very existence as human beings depends upon whether during the next ten or fifteen years we can learn to understand each other and resolve the ideological conflicts which divide us internationally. For this undertaking we must first thoroughly understand the differing cultures and their respective differing and often conflicting economic, political and re-

ligious normative ideological theories. It is these theories which define what a specific culture regards as good and which prescribe the type of social organization to which it will agree in a conference of the United Nations.

If education is to be effective, an entirely new type of training of both scholars and students is necessary. To understand a given culture is to know its premises and to put oneself, at least tentatively, both imaginatively and sympathetically into the standpoint of its premises.

If conferences are ever to succeed, men in different parts of the world with different religious, ethical, and political backgrounds must receive an education which enables them to understand the other person's culture and ideology as well as their own. They must have an education which gives a clear conception of the basic problems to which the conflicting ideologies are differing answers. Only if these basic problems as thus clearly defined, are faced and then resolved, can a really constructive program for peace, grounded in understanding and knowledge rather than in bickering, threats, and futile compromises, be achieved.

Oratory may be symbolized by a warrior's eye, flashing from under a philosopher's brow. But why a warrior's eye rather than a poet's? Because in oratory the will must predominate.

J. C. and A. W. HARE: *Guesses at Truth*, 1827

Eloquence is logic on fire.

Author unidentified

On 3x5s & The Sublime

(Continued from page 33)

IV.

...one cause of excellence is the power to choose the most suitable of the constitutive elements and to arrange them so that they form a single living body—Longinus

...the inspired effect and quick play of question and answer and his reply to himself as to someone else not only give the speech higher oratorical quality but also make it more convincing.

—Longinus.

Delight hath a joy in it, either permanent or present. Laughter hath only a scornful tickling.

—Sir Philip Sidney.

There are those, I know, who won't agree that a debate can be a living art object as a drama may be, those who will not even agree that debate is a most effective means of teaching excellent speaking—and reading. These people devote their entire time to the development of strategy, to working out a series of cases with which to meet every contingency. Were debate conducted as a real test of one issue only, much of this wasted energy would be diverted, after a thorough study of all aspects of the proposition, toward the most effective manner of presentation. For example:

What exactly are the relations of the basic elements involved in the question? What type of development is best suited to the material? In what ways can the whole be given a solid, unified effect? How can all possible rebuttal materials be organized to accentuate that essential unity? The rebuttals I have heard have usually been most ineffectual things. Many a time I have carried paper and pencil with me prepared to outline the cases as they were pre-

sented, determined to be a good judge come what may. Often I have given up after the first or second speaker.

What variety of developmental devices may be used for the separate parts—such as balance, contrast, embracing and skeletal patterns, thematic or story movement, description, repetition; changes in case, number, and tense; austere economy and richness of quality; pitch, intensity, and tempo changes; variety in nature and length of units. Those questions which debaters dearly love to have ready-typed on a 3x5 for slapping on the "opponents" table should be multiplied, kept within the debater's speech, and answered there. I doubt if 3x5 questions have ever impressed anyone.

What figurative language might be appropriate? How may such figures truly be indigenous to the material? Who are the authorities to be quoted? What is the worth of what they wrote and how did they say it? Can their style, as well as their ideas, be used to vivify presentation? How should these quotations be read?—here is one time when the 3x5 could make an impressive contribution; usually it might as well be thrown out the nearest window.

What about the choice of words? Where is it necessary to have good synonyms ready to avoid tiresome repetitions? Most especially I would decide on allowable ways of referring to other speakers and their case. For courtesy reasons only their names might be mentioned. Their case itself is presumed to be an honest effort which might have been

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