

# ROSTRUM

November 2008

Volume 83

Issue 3



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## *Projected UTNIF 2009 program dates:*

<b>Session</b>	<b>Arrival</b>	<b>Departure</b>
Individual Events	June 24, 2009	July 8, 2009
Individual Events + Extension	June 24, 2009	July 12, 2009
CX Debate Session 1 (Marathon & Experienced)	June 22, 2009	July 12, 2009
CX Debate Session 2 (Marathon & Experienced)	July 14, 2009	August 3, 2009
CX Debate Supersession/Survivors	June 22, 2009	August 3, 2009
UTNIF CX Novice	July 18, 2009	July 28, 2009
Lincoln-Douglas Debate	July 14, 2009	July 28, 2009
Lincoln-Douglas Debate + Extension	July 14, 2009	August 2, 2009

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## From the Editor

J. Scott Wunn



Dear NFL,

Well, the election is finally upon us. In a few days, the citizens of this country will go to the polls to decide who shall be given the responsibility to lead this great nation. One of the most exciting things for the National Forensic League is the impact that our members have certainly had on this election. From sitting and prospective U.S. Senators and Congresspersons, to political advisors and lobbyists, to campaign contributors, to organizers of grassroots efforts, NFL members have actively participated in selecting our future leadership.

The NFL Code of Honor calls upon members to dedicate their lifetime to both service and leadership. Participation in the political process is one of the best ways to exercise these tenets in a democracy. The skills that are taught and learned through forensics participation promote and foster high levels of active citizenship. The final step is, of course, exercising the right to vote and/or encouraging those eligible to exercise their right.

Regardless of the outcome of the election, it is important for members to understand that we can, did, and will continue to play a crucial role in the democratic process, and the activity of forensics has played no small role in providing the framework for that participation.

J. Scott Wunn



NFL Executive Director

## Rostrum

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The Rostrum provides a forum for the forensic community. The opinions expressed by contributors are their own and not necessarily the opinions of the National Forensic League, its officers or members. The NFL does not guarantee advertised products and services unless sold directly by the NFL.

# Topics

## 2008-09 Policy Debate Resolution:

**Resolved:** The United States federal government should substantially increase alternative energy incentives in the United States.

## November 2008 Public Forum Debate Resolution:

**Resolved:** That the United States government should implement universal health care modeled after the French system.

## November/December 2008 Lincoln Financial Group/NFL L/D Debate Resolution:

**Resolved:** In a democratic society, felons ought to retain the right to vote.

## THE PEOPLE SPEAK

2008 Fall Global Debates Resolution:

**Resolved:** The world should adopt our plan to significantly combat climate change.

Go to [www.thepeoplespeak.org/globaldebates](http://www.thepeoplespeak.org/globaldebates) for details on how to enter and earn scholarships, school monetary awards to Service Learning Projects (SLPs).

## Watch for the 2008-2009 NFL Policy Debate Resolution Final Vote Ballot

Ballot must be postmarked no later than Friday January 2, 2009.

Available:  
\*Online at [www.nflonline.org](http://www.nflonline.org)  
\*December 2008 Rostrum

**YOUR VOTE IS IMPORTANT!**

## Submit Articles for Publication

The NFL Office is always looking for well-written articles by both NFL coaches and students. Please limit articles to 3000 typed words. Feature articles, editorials, pictorials, and special interest stories are welcome. All articles should be sent to:

Sandy Krueger, NFL Publications Director  
Email: [nflrostrum@nflonline.org](mailto:nflrostrum@nflonline.org)

## Topic Release Information

*L/D Debate topics available by calling the NFL Topic Hotline: (920) 748-LD4U  
OR*

*Check the NFL Website under "Resources" tab, Current Topics at [www.nflonline.org](http://www.nflonline.org)*

### *L/D Topic Release Dates:*

<i>August 15</i>	--	<i>September-October Topic</i>
<i>October 1</i>	--	<i>November-December Topic</i>
<i>December 1</i>	--	<i>January-February Topic</i>
<i>February 1</i>	--	<i>March-April Topic</i>
<i>May 1</i>	--	<i>National Tournament Topic</i>

### *Public Forum Topic Release Dates:*

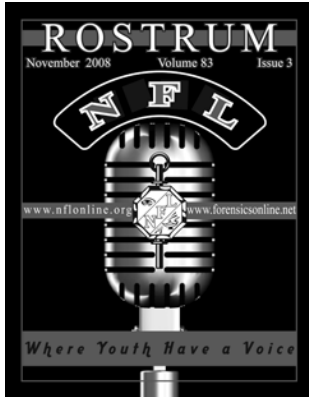
<i>August 15</i>	--	<i>September Topic</i>
<i>September 1</i>	--	<i>October Topic</i>
<i>October 1</i>	--	<i>November Topic</i>
<i>November 1</i>	--	<i>December Topic</i>
<i>December 1</i>	--	<i>January Topic</i>
<i>December 15</i>	--	<i>February Topic</i>
<i>February 1</i>	--	<i>March Topic</i>
<i>March 1</i>	--	<i>April Topic</i>
<i>May 1</i>	--	<i>National Tournament Topic</i>

### *Policy Debate Topic for New Year*

- Topic ballot & synopses printed in October Rostrum
- Final ballot for Policy debate topic in December Rostrum
- Topic for following year released in February Rostrum

# ROSTRUM

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# Presidential Politics - Every Word Counts

By Mike Wilhelm  
Corporate Branding & Advertising  
Lincoln Financial Group



We've all been there. We've gotten frustrated with a friend or family member over something minor, lost our cool, and said something we shouldn't have. We've walked into class one day having to take a test or give a report, and we're not ready and we know it. We've told what seemed at the time like a harmless little white lie, only to be humiliated when we are found out.

It's an awful feeling. Your heart starts racing, your stomach drops, and you wish you could just go back in time and stop yourself. Most of the time, of course, those mistakes are forgotten.

Now imagine doing that in front of the entire world. Any mistake may cost you your hopes, goals, and dreams. People will be dissecting every word you say and revealing all your mistakes. One mangled sentence can live on forever in infamy. You may even become the laughingstock of the whole country.

Welcome to presidential politics. History is littered with candidates from both parties whose momentary lapses in judgment and sudden loss of control over the English language have torpedoed promising campaigns. As we look back at the 2008 campaign, it has been no exception, as much of the news has come from the campaigns attacking the opposing candidate over a single statement.

The scrutiny of presidential candidates and their public appearances has always been intense, but increased dramatically with the advent of television in the 1950s. TV allowed candidates to speak to voters in an intimate and personal manner, but it also left them more vulnerable to mistakes. If a picture is worth a thousand words, a video is worth a million. A negative article in a newspaper is hurtful for a candidate, but a clip of them misspeaking about the issues or saying something controversial can be deadly.

There are some legendary examples. In 1967, Governor George Romney of Michigan commented in a local television interview that he had been "brainwashed" by the horrors he saw while visiting Vietnam into opposing the Vietnam War. The national media picked up on the comment, and Romney dropped out of the 1968 presidential campaign because of the alarming connotations of that single word.

In 1976, sitting President Gerald Ford stated in a debate with challenger Jimmy Carter that "there is no Soviet domination of Eastern Europe," a completely incorrect statement since a major front of the Cold War revolved around the Soviet Union-influenced "satellite nations," such as Poland, East Germany, and Czechoslovakia. The comment made Ford seem oblivious to American

foreign policy, and Carter narrowly won the election.

In 1987, Senator Joe Biden of Delaware, in a Democratic primary debate, quoted a British politician's speech without explaining that the words were not his. Biden had previously quoted the speech numerous times with the correct citation but this time forgot to do so. The error was discovered by the media, Biden's integrity was called into question, and he abandoned his campaign for president.

The stakes are even higher for the candidates today. The Internet makes the flow of information exponentially faster than anyone could have dreamed of in 1987. We have access to any news story reported around the world, and blogs allow anyone to state their opinions. YouTube did not even exist during the 2004 presidential election, but now any video of a politician's mistake can be viewed at any time from any computer in the world.

What does this mean for the politicians themselves? This means that presidential politics will continue to grow more and more scrutinized, and every word will need to be analyzed and carefully considered, because if the candidate makes a mistake or tries to tell a lie, they will be caught red-handed with the whole world as their audience.

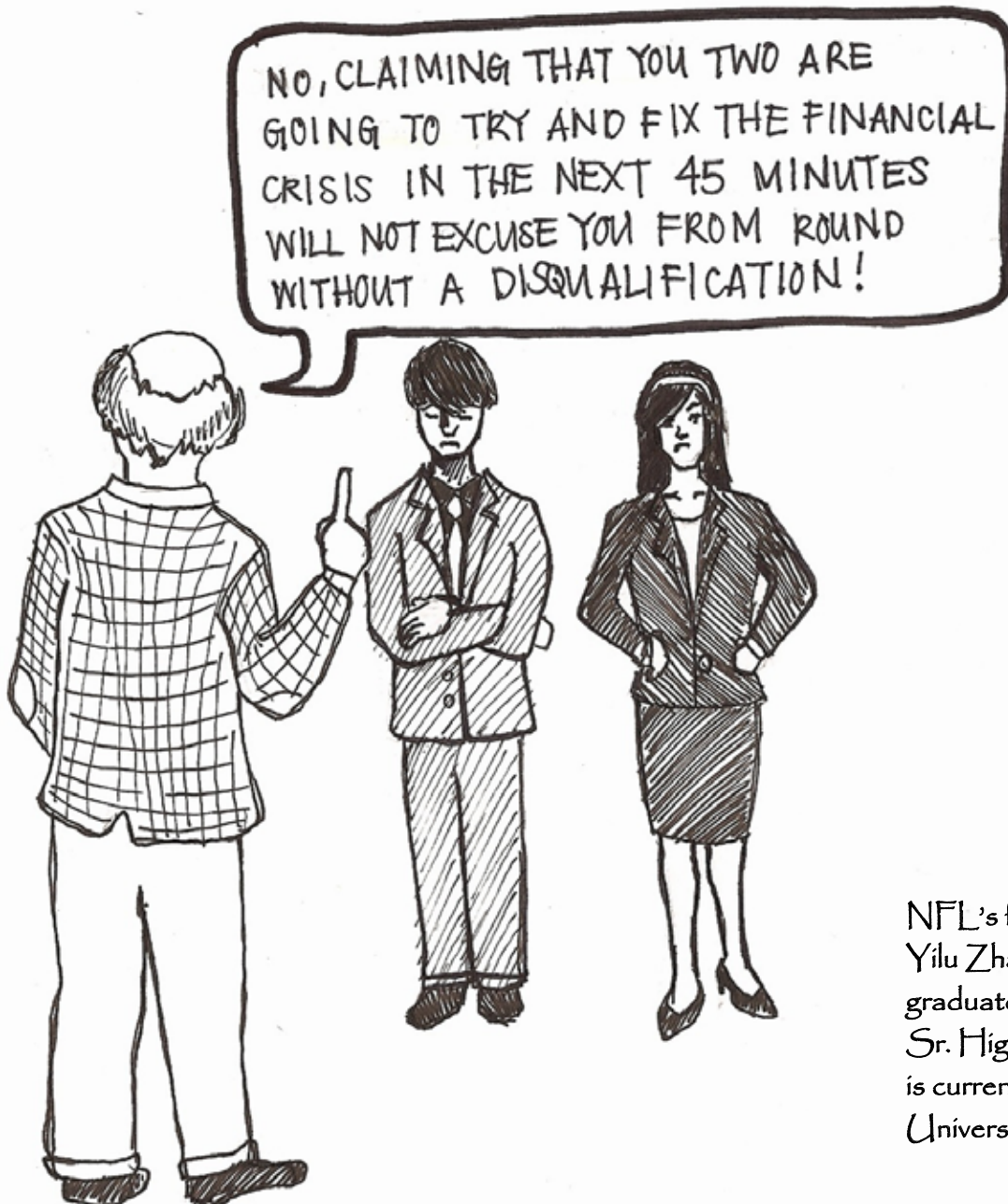
What does it mean for us? It provides us with a lesson. Let us communicate as if the whole world is watching. If we do so, we will make fewer mistakes, tell fewer lies, and hurt fewer people. When we are writing a paper or even an e-mail, when we are debating, when we are speaking, when we are simply

conversing with friends, we should always be careful. What we say can be offensive and hurtful; a lie can ruin our reputation; plagiarism or taking the credit for others' hard work can, and usually will, catch up with us.

As we prepare to inaugurate a new President, and as we reflect

on the history of our country and our politics, we get the chance to learn from the mistakes of others. If we are meticulous in our research, and honest and genuine in our communications with others, we can avoid similar disasters in our daily lives. It also happens to be the right thing to do.

## Featured Cartoon of the Month

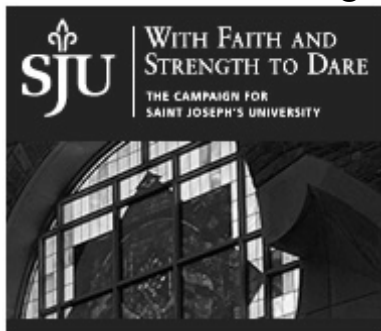


NFL's featured cartoonist, Yilu Zhang, is a 2008 graduate of North Allegheny Sr. High School, PA. She is currently attending the University of Pennsylvania.



# THE VILLIGER TOURNAMENT

The Saint Joseph's University Villiger Speech and Debate Team invites you to its 29<sup>th</sup> Annual High School Speech and Debate Tournament in Philadelphia. We offer all NCFL events including: Declamation, Dramatic Performance, Duo Interpretation, Extemporaneous Speaking, Oral Interpretation, Original Oratory, Cross Examination Debate, Lincoln-Douglas Debate, and Public Forum Debate, and Student Congress.



When: November 22 & 23

Where: Saint Joseph's  
University, Philadelphia



Competitors at the 2007 Villiger Tournament reached deep outrounds all over including finals at Harvard, the NCFL Grand National Tournament, and the NFL National Tournament!

Villiger offers TOC bids in Extemporaneous Speaking, Semifinals of Public Forum, and Finals of Student Congress!

If you have any questions please contact 2008 Tournament Director:  
James McGraw

Cell: (443)-846-5775, Email: [villigertournament@yahoo.com](mailto:villigertournament@yahoo.com)

Also, if you are interested in College Forensics, Saint Joseph's University offers a variety of **scholarship packages** for forensics including **FULL RIDES!** Please do not hesitate to contact James McGraw or Moderator Robb DelCasale at [RDelCasaleSJU4n6@aol.com](mailto:RDelCasaleSJU4n6@aol.com).



**WE CANNOT WAIT TO SEE YOU IN NOVEMBER!**

# NFL Board of Directors' Minutes

## Fall Meeting

### October 3-5, 2008

### Birmingham, AL

The NFL Board of Directors held its fall meeting in Birmingham, AL on October 3-5, 2008. Present were President Billy Tate, Vice President Don Crabtree, Brother Rene Sterner, Harold Keller, Glenda Ferguson, Kandi King, Pam Cady Wycoff, Tommie Lindsey, Jr., and Pam McComas. Alternate, Timothy Sheaff, was also present.

President Billy Tate called the meeting to order at 8:30am.

#### **2009 National Speech Tournament**

Tournament host, Jay Rye, and several members of the local host committee presented a tournament overview. Mr. Rye and the committee members were commended for their excellent work thus far in preparing for the tournament.

#### **Board Information**

##### **Moved by Keller, Seconded by Wycoff**

“Re-elect President Billy Tate and Vice President Don Crabtree by acclamation to their respective positions as President and Vice President.”

**Passed: 9-0**

Brother Rene Sterner cast the vote required to affirm the acclamation.

##### **Moved by Ferguson, seconded by Lindsey**

“Adopt the term Board of Directors for referencing the Executive Council.

**Passed: 9-0**

The Executive Council will now be referred to as the NFL Board of Directors which will align the League with the most common term of art for 501 C3 not-for-profit organizations.

**The Board of Directors will be working as a committee of the whole at its spring meeting to create an official board manual which will outline the responsibilities and expectations of being an individual member of the Board of Directors and for the Board as a whole.**

##### **Moved by Keller, seconded by McComas**

“Modify the current Board of Directors’ age 70 rule to state that people elected to the Board be allowed to fulfill the term to office to which they were elected before their 70<sup>th</sup> birthday.”

**Failed: 4-4-1**

Ayes: Keller, Sterner, McComas, King

Nays: Lindsey, Tate, Crabtree, Wycoff

Abstain: Ferguson

##### **Moved by Keller, seconded by King**

“Modify the current Board of Directors’ age 70 rule to state that individuals cannot run for a term on the Board of Directors if they will turn age 70 during the course of the term.”

**Passed: 5-4**

Ayes: Keller, Lindsey, Sterner, McComas, King

Nays: Crabtree, Tate, Ferguson, Wycoff

**The Executive Director was charged to explore various models of term limits for not-for-profit boards. These models will be examined by the Board at its next meeting.**

#### **National Office Updates**

NFL Executive Director, J. Scott Wunn, provided updated information on several NFL programs including the Give Them a Voice Grants program, ForensicsOnline.net, and sponsorship development.

NFL Director of Development, Bethany Rusch, presented the National Office’s Strategic Development Plan for 2008-2009. Mrs. Rusch outlined specific goals and action steps in alumni programming, grant acquisition, foundation support, specific planned fund drives, and the annual gift giving program.

NFL Public Relations and Marketing Coordinator, Jennifer Billman, presented an update of the National Office’s strategic plan for PR and Marketing. Mrs. Billman outlined the NFL Office’s new online marketing strategies as well as new school and new coach recruitment

and retention materials. In addition, Mrs. Billman provided information on the NFL Professional Development Program.

The Board commended the staff on their excellent preparation and presentation of the materials.

### **NFL Budget Meeting**

The NFL Executive Director presented the Board with proposed 2008-2009 National Tournament and Honor Society budgets.

#### **Moved by Crabtree, seconded by King**

“Keep the National Tournament judge bond set at \$200.

**Passed: 9-0**

#### **Moved by McComas, seconded by Sterner**

“Accept the National Tournament Budget as presented.”

**Passed: 9-0**

The Board went into Executive Session to discuss and approve the NFL Office Staff personnel portion of the budget.

#### **Moved by McComas, seconded by King**

“Accept the 2008-2009 Honor Society Budget as presented.”

**Passed: 9-0**

### **National Committees**

The members of the Board were asked to provide President Tate with a list of items they would like the 2009 summer Student Congress and Public Forum committees to discuss. This list will be finalized and presented to the committee chairs prior to their meetings at the 2009 National Tournament.

Mrs. Pam Wycoff presented an update of the work done by the National Lincoln Douglas Debate Committee. Progress included the development of novice lesson plans, coach guidelines for program growth, creation of topic overviews, the taping of sample LD rounds for view online, and progress on the development of an LD debate educational video targeted for availability through the NFL in 2009.

The Board commended the LD committee for its outstanding work over the past two years.

### **District and National Tournaments**

#### **Moved by King, seconded by McComas**

“Permanently allow the use of computers in policy debate according to the rules previously adopted during the trial period.”

**Passed: 9-0**

#### **Moved by Keller, seconded by Sterner**

“Allow the use of electronic retrieval devices in other events at 2009 National tournament.

**Failed: 9-0**

The Board of Directors discussed the concerns expressed by members concerning computer use in forensics. Several issues were raised including the ability of computers to reduce travel costs for teams, the effect of computers on the structure and nature of various events, the availability of ample power supply, and monitoring ethical practices and rules adherence. The Board agreed to allocate time at the 2009 National Leadership Conference for a discussion on the issue of computer use in forensics activities.

#### **Moved by Wycoff, seconded by Lindsey**

“Adopt the proposed plan as a 2-judge option embedded within the District Speech Tournament California Plan to be implemented during the 2009-2010 school year.”

**Passed: 6-3**

Ayes: Sterner, Crabtree, Lindsey, Keller, Tate, Wycoff

Nays: McComas, Ferguson, King

Beginning with the 2009-2010 school year, NFL Districts will have the option of using two judges in the preliminary rounds of District speech events when using the California Plan system. The new option will be introduced at the 2009 Summer Leadership Conference.

#### **Moved by Lindsey, seconded by McComas**

“Accept the auto-qualification proposal as amended to go into effect for the 2010 National Tournament.

**Passed: 5-3-1**

Ayes: Wycoff, Ferguson, McComas, Crabtree, Lindsey

Nays: Sterner, Tate, Keller

Abstain: King

Beginning with the 2010 NFL National Speech Tournament, underclassmen students who either individually or as a team place in the top six in a main event (IX, USX, OO, HI, DI, DUO, LD, Policy, PFD, Senate, and House) at the previous year's NFL National Speech Tournament will be given the option to automatically qualify in that same event. In Duo, PFD, and Policy, both team members from the previous year must make up the team to be eligible for auto qualification. In order to auto qualify the student and/or the same team must commit to the auto qualification prior to the beginning of the District Tournament series. The auto qualifying entry will be an additional entry to Nationals for the District in the event. A complete description of the new system will appear in the 2009-2010 District and National Tournament Manuals and will be introduced at the Summer Leadership Conference.

**Moved by Crabtree, seconded by Ferguson**

"Accept the bid by Salt Lake City to host the 2012 NFL National Speech Tournament."

**Failed: 9-0**

The Board cited concerns with hotel room rates and current knowledge of venue availability.

**Motion by Wycoff, seconded by King**

"Form a committee of Board members appointed by President Tate to examine the results of the 2007 and 2008 final round rules adherence analyses conducted by the NFL National Office and generate recommendations based on those findings."

**Passed: 9-0**

**Moved by McComas, second by Wycoff**

"Accept the proposed District Sweepstakes award to be implemented in the 09-10 school year."

**Passed: 9-0**

A new scoring method for the NFL District sweepstakes award has been approved by the Board of Directors. The new system will be based on a point system rather than the current system of counting rounds. Studies found that a point based system would provide more equality among the competitive events toward earning the award. The new system will be introduced to District leaders at the 2009 Summer Leadership Conference for implementation in 2009-2010.

**NFL Service Points**

The Board discussed the concept of separating NFL service points into its own point category. The Board asked the Executive Director to explore new ways to allocate and define NFL points that would allow for more emphasis on service through speaking and debating. Findings will be studied and considered at the 2009 Spring Board of Directors' Meeting.

**Summer Leadership Conference**

The Board discussed curriculum ideas for the 2009 Summer Leadership Conference. The final conference schedule will be set at the Spring Board meeting. The conference itself has been set for August 3-6, 2009. All members of each individual District committee will be invited to attend.

**Hall of Fame**

Moved by Ferguson, seconded by Wycoff  
"Appoint a committee to create various ideas for recognizing Hall of Fame members at the National Tournament."

**Passed: 9-0**

**2009 Spring Board of Directors' Meeting**

Moved by McComas, seconded by Keller  
"The Spring Board of Directors' Meeting will be held in Minneapolis, MN on May 8-10, 2009."

**Passed: 9-0**

The Fall Board of Directors' Meeting was adjourned by President Tate at 11am on Sunday, October 5, 2008.



# FAIRMONT EAST NFL ALUMNI HOLD “FAMILY REUNION” IN DAYTON

“What could be better than a room full of NFLers?”

That's how 1974 alum Steve Weiser summed up a reunion of National Forensic League alumni from Fairmont East High School in Kettering, Ohio. The group, representing more than a decade of NFL involvement from the 1970s and 80s, gathered Saturday, July 26th at Jay's Seafood restaurant in Dayton, Ohio.

Forty eight people from across the country attended to remember achievements in speech and debate, the impact the NFL had on their lives, and especially to honor their mentor - Mrs. Arlene Akerman, Fairmont East teacher and NFL coach. Mrs. Akerman had a career 58 national qualifiers, including a nation champion from Fairmont East. Mrs. Akerman and her husband Jack attended the celebration with daughter Sandie and her family. Sandie joined the group as an NFL alum who had successfully competed



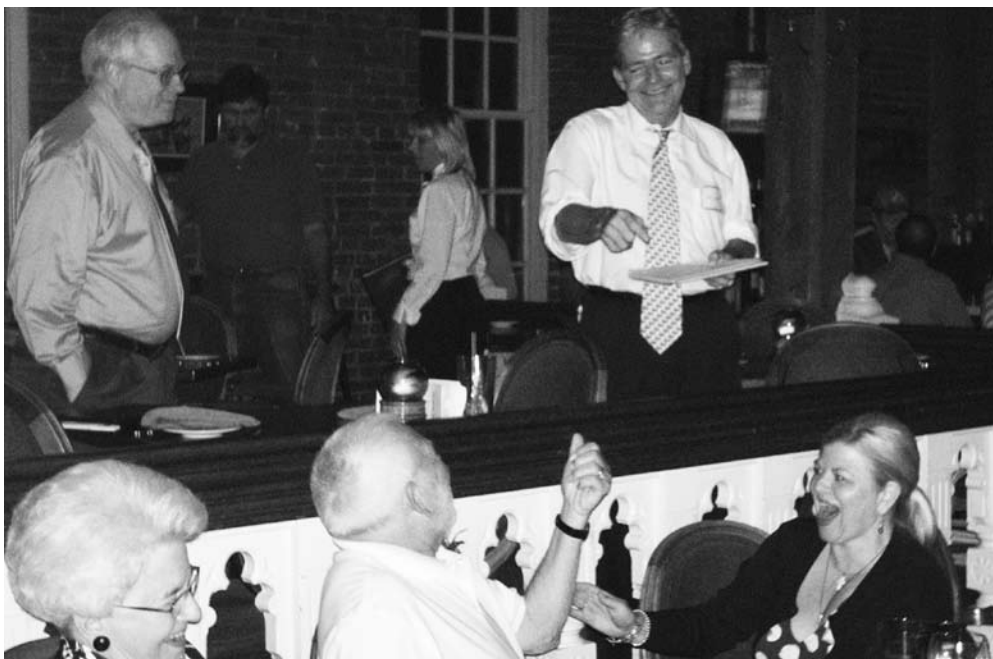
*Mrs. Akerman's moment*

for four years under the tutelage of her mother. Mrs. Akerman had no shortage of “children” in attendance, as many of the group fondly remembered her as “Mother A.”

Smiling faces were everywhere as teammates reunited, many for the first time in 30 years. Shortly

after being seated for dinner a waiter crashed a tray to the floor in front of Mrs. Akerman, and the owner of the restaurant proceeded to lecture him on the very topic she drilled into all her students, finesse. When the waiter popped up from the floor it was none other than her own 1978 graduate, Steve Sandstrom. He had regretfully replied that he couldn't attend, successfully pulling a trick on everyone in the room. Like many NFLers, Steve has always had a flair for the dramatic.

Ric Roe, a 1977 graduate who followed in Mrs. Akerman's footsteps as a collegiate speech coach (Northwestern University), made opening remarks and from that point on, laughter and tears intermingled. The evening included musical entertainment when 1976 alum Chris Katros, filled the room with laughter as he serenaded Mrs. A with an original composition on guitar. The festivities continued with remarks



*Ric Roe's opening comments*





from Steve Swope, a '75 alum, who opened the floor for comments. Poignant and touching observations were made by former NFLers Ralph Phillips, Barb Horner Coniff, and Julie Atkinson. Sandie Akerman then shared stories about growing up with an NFL powerhouse for a mom.

As was to be expected from a room full of competitive speakers, the final order of the evening was a call for a "speech" by Mrs. Akerman. Her passion for both the NFL and the students she had guided over the years was obvious. Her eloquent words reminded all in attendance how lucky they were to have been guided by this amazing woman.

Mimi McGrath, a 1978 Fairmount East graduate, said it best in her e-mail to the group following the event: "It was such an emotional night. My sides still hurt from laughing that hard. But when Mrs. A began to speak, the lump in my throat was so big it hurt."

The planning and follow-up to the highly successful event were primarily carried out through the Internet, using a listserv which provided a common ground for memories both old and new. Several of the e-mail postings following the reunion spoke volumes about the

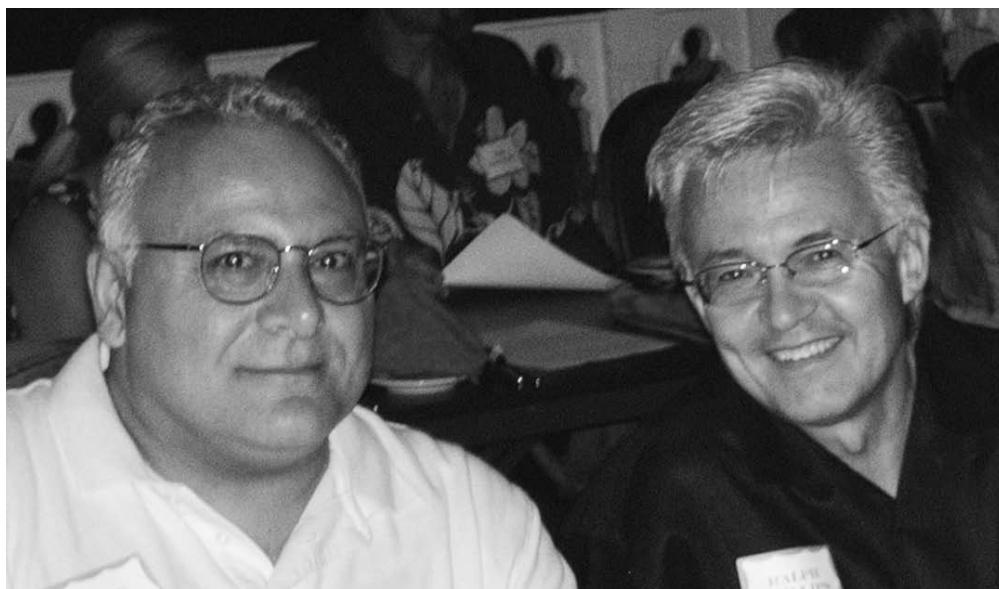
impact of the event. Susan Pimentel wrote, "Speaking for 'the Pimentel sisters' - we had a blast. It was more fun than I had imagined possible..." Mary Beth Gaudion Thomas followed with, "I just want to ditto all the sentiments about the evening. What a great time! I had more fun Saturday than I have at some of my class reunions. What an impressive gathering of people! We walked out with the Akermans and I'm surprised that Mrs. A could get her feet on the ground....she was still on cloud 9."

Maryann Whitaker shared, "I suspect there will be precious memories of last night for many of us for years to come. There was

so much laughter and fun in that room, and the connections to people long parted can last for the rest of our lives, thanks to the wonder of the Internet." And Keith Hilgeman summed it up beautifully, "It was a real joy to see all of my old friends again and to meet the people that were there before and after I graduated. I really hope that we can have more "family" reunions like this one."

*"It was interesting to note that several attendees were teachers and several have coached speech and debate teams. Others have served as volunteer judges at speech tournaments. And even though the event is over, it is still impacting people. Several NFL alums have posted on the web site that the evening inspired them to get back into coaching and/or judging. The group has also discussed having future reunions, this time to raise money for a speech related scholarship program or other charitable cause."*

Special thanks to contributing writers, Susan Thorton and Mimi McGrath.



*Chris Katros and Ralph Phillips*

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# MONDAY MORNINGS WITH PETER

by  
Rev. B. A. Gregg

## Part Two: Developing the Marketing Strategy

As a young pastor, meeting with my mentor, Peter, in the church basement every Monday morning, I learned so much more than I ever taught as a pastor. Peter had been a businessman for over fifty years of his life, and every morning he would attempt to impart his hard-won life lessons on a young and foolish pastor.

I remember the morning after an ice storm that only brought out seven people in a sanctuary that seated 1,400. Peter (who had braved the storm the previous morning) asked me in our meeting, why would anyone go to our church? When I sputtered with about fifteen different answers, he cut me off with the simple answer: Unless you tell people what you're selling, no one will be buying.

There has long been a divide between teaching and business. Teachers, being the eternal idealists, often chafe when people talk about profit and loss and marketing. Debate coaches tend to be extreme idealists. After all, it takes a real idealist to believe in a student, to pour hours and hours into a ten-minute piece or to tweak an argument that will only have to be discarded next month when the resolution changes. And to get up on a Saturday and board a bus to go to a local competition that happens to be where? A high school. Just like the one in which you spent the last five days working. If that's not raw

idealism, I would like to see what is.

And this raw idealism often makes us resistant to applying marketing to growing the NFL on the local level. Selling the NFL locally takes us out of our comfort zone of coaching. Selling the NFL

“By using the tools of business in marketing the NFL on the local level, we can see real growth in each of our Districts, gain more qualifiers for Nationals, and actually—and this is the real idealistic kicker—help students and coaches beyond the confines of our own programs.”

requires time and energy in an already packed day. Selling the NFL makes us interact with adults and use our powers of persuasion in a real way.

By using the tools of business in marketing the NFL on the local level, we can see real growth in each of our Districts, gain more qualifiers for Nationals, and actually help students and coaches beyond the confines of our own programs.

In the previous article, we discussed the product that is NFL and identified three key target groups of coaches: Local Dominator X, the Middle of the Road Coach, and the Deer Caught in the Headlights

Newbie Coach. In this article, we will analyze how we can reach each of these coaches with the message of NFL.

In the last four years, NFL Virginia has seen rapid and sustained growth in its member schools and charters. We have grown from around 24 schools to nearly four times that amount. Our growth plan has been determined by looking at the needs of the local level and working hard to meet those needs.

### Strategy One: Communication

As General Henry M. Hobgood, USAF Retired, pointed out, “Communication is one of the hardest things.” When it comes to marketing the NFL locally, this is completely true. We are all full-time teachers. We are all coaches with demanding teams. How can we work the time into our schedule in order to reach out to other coaches and grow the NFL? This is where time management and working smarter pays off.

First, a strong District Website is called for. In the previous article, “Spinning the District Website,” (The Rostrum, Oct., 2005) we talked about what makes a good District website. The reality is that we are in a world of rapid communication and the greater our web presence, the more people we will reach. We want to ensure that people have as much information

as possible on the website and that the site tells our story clearly and succinctly.

And what is the story of the NFL? Remember the three target groups – make sure that there is at least a paragraph crafted toward them and their needs. Local Dominators need to know about quality competition; Middle of the Roaders need to know about the program validation NFL offers; Newbies need to know about resources and mentoring. Most internet service providers allow for free or very cheap web hosting. Finding a local web hosting company in your area that would like a tax deduction for providing the service for free to your NFL District really provides the best solution – local, free, and quick response to questions. Whenever possible, offer to host non-NFL organizations or events on your website. In Virginia ([www.vanfl.org](http://www.vanfl.org)), we have links on the main page to the Virginia Association of Speech, Debate, and Drama Coaches Conference. We also have links to the Virginia High School League Regional and State Congress tournaments. In the past, we have hosted a number of local tournaments off the NFL Virginia page. The end result is that such hosting promotes interconnection, collegiality, and traffic to the local NFL website.

Second, promotional material is not only called for, it's necessary. Business cards with the names and emails of the District Committee come in very handy to follow-up on contacts. Cheap-to-free business cards are easily found on the internet. Order only about 100-500, however, as contact information changes every year. And make sure that every member of the Committee and every NFL coach you run into has multiple copies. Getting the NFL out there

means having a good information distribution method. But, more than business cards, plan on a quick brochure, explaining the NFL locally and what makes your District unique. Perhaps it's a Midweek League, perhaps it's a large invitational; but, whatever it is that makes your District unique needs to be showcased. NFL does have a free brochure on the benefits of the League. But one that is tailored to your District can really narrow the focus to the target groups. The brochure should have the same pitch as the website, as communication needs reiteration. In the last three years, we have gone through three iterations of the Virginia NFL brochure, printing out 1,000 copies each time. By distributing at local tournaments, Virginia High School League Rules' Clinics, Virginia Association of Speech Debate and Drama Coach Conferences, we get the brochure into the hands of people again and again. Eventually, the "no" becomes "yes."

Finally, never neglect the face-to-face. This is where the District Committee comes in very handy. We always make sure to push geographic diversity on the Committee, as our District embraces all of Virginia. Each of these District Committee members works as a local ambassador, or sale representative, for the NFL in their region of Virginia. Additionally, we have an Advisory Committee that is made up of spark-plug NFL coaches in Virginia. Like the District Committee, they are very involved in forensics locally, and are great recruiters. The District Chair need not visit every coach in his or her District. But the Chair needs to identify the spark plug coaches, bring them into the Advisory Committee, meet with them and empower them to go out there and, to quote Cab Calloway, "Put the words on the

streets." Coaches may not respond to an email from a Chair they have never met; but coaches are very responsive to other coaches they know and see regularly.

Finally, on communication, John Parker, District Chair in the Iroquois District, has a really great method. Going and selling NFL, not to coaches, but school administrators, he has done more than recruit programs: he has built them in his District from the ground-up. I had the chance to hear John speak at the Summer District Leadership Conference a few years ago and was not only impressed, but inspired. Our approach in Virginia has been more geared toward the recruiting of existing coaches; but his method has real results. In fact, just at the Desert Lights Nationals, I met a coach from John's District whose program John had built and guided. The new NFL program, Give Them a Voice, seeks to empower retired coaches who can go out into the hedgerows and talk to administrators and other coaches. I would encourage each District coming up with a grant proposal to NFL in order to make use of this growing army of Grey Panthers.

### **Strategy Two: Follow the Buffalo**

As NFL points apply to any league, any competition, we need to be taking our show on the road. NFL must sell itself as an aid to coaches and students, rather than another league and another time commitment. There should never been a competition between NFL and any other national or state or local league. When planning the date of the NFL Qualifier, always have the schedule for the rest of the District on hand. A student or a coach should never have to decide between going to a State or NFL Qualifier. This is one of the reasons why our National Qualifier is

at the end of January. From February until April, there are over 98 public school speech and debate qualifiers in Virginia. Additionally, there are two CFL and seven local leagues. A careful placement of the NFL Qualifier sends a message that NFL is not here to upset anyone's schedule and does not force a school – and, most important, the students – to make choices.

But, beyond schedule, we need to positively work to follow the buffalo. Go where there are coaches. For the last number of years, NFL Virginia has made sure that we had presenters at the Virginia Association of Speech Debate and Drama Coaches. Not only would we offer presentations on NFL, and stuff bags full of brochures, but we would make sure that we would have a good number of NFL coaches presenting on the various disciplines. By working with a number of companies offering debate briefs, we were able to offer sample briefs on our website for coaches at the Conference. Additionally, through the incredibly work of Martha Lee (formerly Carr), we have been able to host a coaches' reception in the evening with wine and cheesecake. Nearly every state has a conference for speech and debate coaches. By working with these conferences, we can put out the message of NFL locally and increase collegiality.

In addition to the conference, we have worked to make NFL public throughout the state through hosting the state public school league's regional and state Student Congress on our website. Through volunteering to run Tab for the Virginia High School League, we have increased our contacts with coaches throughout the state and have brought-home

the message that, "We're NFL, and we're here to help." With this message in mind, whenever there is a local tournament in Virginia, a representative from NFL needs to be there with the brochure and with a heart to seek out the non-NFL coaches. With the growth of the Urban Debate League, we can start targeting this group for growth and NFL membership. Found in over 18 major cities and over 300 high schools, the UDL offers a great market for the NFL locally. Think of it – a pool of over 300 high schools that do nothing but Policy or Public

"To market the NFL outside the box is all about flow of information and traffic. If we have good connections with local civic groups, not only do we have untapped opportunities for funding to get out our message, but we have the opportunity to show what NFL can do best – network coaches in our area."

Forum Debate. Always looking for judges, recycled trophies, and help, the UDL offers the NFL locally a huge pool of opportunity. This year, NFL Virginia is working on adding the schools of the DC Urban Debate League into its membership, paying for its student memberships, and offering free registration for the NFL Qualifier in January. I believe other Districts can do the same.

But, in following the buffalo, we need to take ourselves out of the box of coaching. There are a number of civic and community organizations that can directly and indirectly benefit the NFL locally. The People Speak allows us to move beyond the walls of the classroom and bring debates into the community. In Virginia, we have

received a number of donations from local groups, such as the American Legion, following presentations at their meetings. More, by supporting the American Legion Oratory in the state, we have worked to connect coaches with local American Legion Posts through our website. With the support of the American Legion in Virginia, we have seen checks supporting the local speech and debate teams programs given out to coaches of winning orators at the post-level.

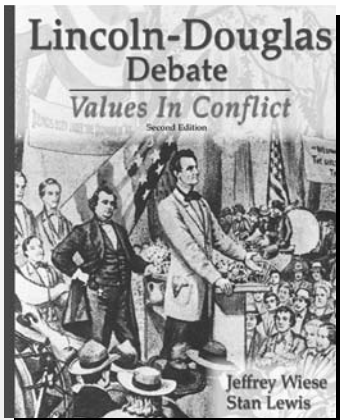
To market the NFL outside the box is all about flow of information and traffic. If we have good connections with local civic groups, not only do we have untapped opportunities for funding to get out our message, but we have the opportunity to show what NFL can do best – network coaches in our area.

In the next article, we will develop the Philosophy of the Widget – offering a home-grown product at the local level in order to expand the NFL.

**(Rev. B.A. Gregg** is the District Chair for Virginia -- the nation's largest NFL District -- and the Director of Forensics at Randolph-Macon Academy. He has received his 10<sup>th</sup> NFL Service Plaque and was the Best New Chair in 2006. In three years as District Chair, he has added over 60 new schools to the NFL and has sponsored 10 Affiliates moving to Chapter.)



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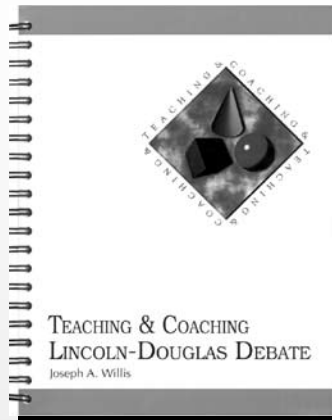
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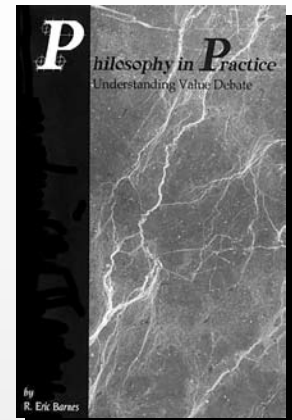
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# Creating a Verbal Two Way at Tournaments: A Call to Tournament Directors to Allow Oral Critiques after LD Debates

by

Steven Schappaugh

Over the years of traveling to competitions, I have come to realize that every tournament has a different policy about oral critiques after LD Debate rounds. Some allow it, some discourage it, some forbid it and others let judges make the decision themselves. I think it's time every tournament have the same policy— oral critiques are allowed and preferred.

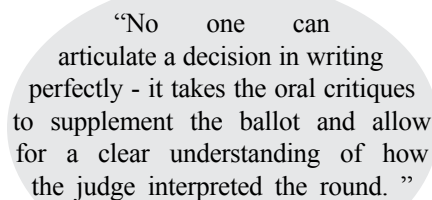
In a communication activity we should not just rely on written comments by judges, but rather, should have them interact with the students verbally to maximize post-round education.

Let me be clear – every tournament should require written ballots. I do not think that “Oral” is a sufficient reason for decision on any ballot and tournament hosts should demand full ballots. While this may annoy some judges who are quick to get back to their own team or just a Starbucks, filling out a ballot is an educational tool for coaches and students. The value of those ballots is not just so students can learn what went wrong or right at that tournament, but what they need to change or capitalize on for future competitions.

Despite their ability to be educational, ballots can also be incomplete or confusing. I know students who have looked at my own ballots have been confused about what I wrote – even when I dedicated time to think through what I wrote and how

I worded it. I know that as a coach it can be frustrating to read ballots that are barely legible or hardly coherent. No one can articulate a decision in writing perfectly- it takes the oral critiques to supplement the ballot and allow for a clear understanding of how the judge interpreted the round.

Providing an oral critique will better enable debaters to engage



“No one can articulate a decision in writing perfectly - it takes the oral critiques to supplement the ballot and allow for a clear understanding of how the judge interpreted the round. ”

and understand the judge's thought process. This open dialogue will ensure that debaters leave knowing exactly how the round played out in the judge's mind or how the round did not come together as the debater planned. Oral critiques thus provide a twofold benefit: first, it's educational if students can ask respectful questions to clarify the judge's opinions and gain better insight into their own strengths and weaknesses. Second, it opens up opportunities for more effective judge adaptation in future rounds.

If the debate community truly values judge adaptation, then all judges should be helping kids understand their point of view so that they can make changes. Every

judge – parents, teachers and former competitors – has something positive to offer students. We should not look at coaching in a narrow lens since students can be “coached” whether they realize it or not by gaining insights from all of their judges. It's important that all judges' voices are heard so that it's not a select group of individuals making an influence through oral critiques. If we prefer a certain style of debate we should be open about it and reinforce those preferences through consistent judging that we can explain post-round.

Students should be building off of each round at a tournament and should work to make sure that the next round is better than the previous. On their own, students can give rebuttal redos or work on blocks; however, if they get an oral critique after the round they can appropriately focus their redo or block revisions. Without oral critiques the learning process is halted because students debate and then, only after the tournament, do they realize what they could have done differently. Even worse, if it happens to be the last tournament on the topic or the last time they debate the topic, they'll have lost potentially valuable information that may not be easily implemented at the next tournament or on the next topic. More importantly, if the student is unclear about what the judge means they have lost the ability to ask and figure out

exactly what went wrong with their strategy.

The other reality is that not all students have LD coaches who feel comfortable giving them advice or who can help them decipher what a ballot says. The ability for oral critiques can help students who have sponsors taking them on trips or just a parent tagging along as a chaperone. We should embrace all competitors and aid in their growth since we cannot guarantee they will be privileged with the advice and knowledge that comes

with coaches. For some kids their best coaching comes through oral critiques, even when it's from a "lay" judge.

Commentary, no matter how experienced the person delivering it is, provides insights into how that judge would view the round.

Some coaches do not want their kids to hear comments from some judges. I do think that it is important that we monitor what judges say and that tournaments step in and intervene when judges are out of line. However, the same people who do not value what a judge has to say are often also complaining that students do not adapt to them. Not every tournament has strikes (or enough) to eliminate specific judges from seeing your students. Even if you disagree with how a judge views the round, your student can benefit from hearing it themselves and can learn from mistakes to help them and your kids in the future pick up that judge's ballot by gaining insights into how they evaluate a round.

We demand, or at least I hope

we do, for our students to debate appropriately for the judge that they are debating in front of. We expect that they communicate to them respectfully and we should teach our kids to value each judge's idea. Judges should respect what the students are doing and help them understand what their perspective is. A ballot is a great tool and helps tremendously; however, it may not always be enough and it only helps after a tournament is over. In our activity, we should demand that

communication be a verbal two way - between the debaters and between the judges and competitors.

Oral critiques do not have to get into the realm of disclosures. You can give students feedback that is balanced and does not give away the decision of the round. If judges are cognizant of making sure they talk about strategic choices for both debaters then they do not have to give away who they are voting for. However, I do find it odd that in almost all other high school competitions students know how they are doing the entire time. In a football game, tennis match, chess meet, spelling bee, etc. the students are aware of the score and their positioning. To think our students are going to give up in the middle of a tournament or not show up on a second day of competition suggests our students are mentally weaker than other students who compete regularly. I would like to think the opposite.

Tournaments who are concerned about the time it will add to the round could put a time limit on the oral critique and more importantly should utilize speed ballots. If a tournament has runners outside of rooms then

there is time for oral critiques, especially given the time requirements for power matching after the pre-set rounds. I have been at tournaments like Greenhill, Valley, Apple Valley and Glenbrooks where many judges provide oral critiques. These tournaments run efficiently and on schedule because they know that this will take place and they account for it in the schedule. More importantly the educational benefits should be allowed for even if it means teams leave later from the tournament – we spend a lot of money to go on trips and teams should get as much from them as possible.

We need to stop being afraid of judge feedback or afraid of running behind as a tournament. We need to start encouraging oral critiques at all tournaments – local, regional or national. Students deserve to get feedback which they can process more quickly and apply sooner than they ever could without oral critiques. If all tournaments adopt a policy of oral critiques being preferred then we can begin to create a two way of verbalized communication.

(Steven Schappaugh is the Director of Forensics at University School in Florida. He also serves in an instructional and administrative capacity for Summit Debate Enterprises with the National Speakers' Forum and National Debate Forum.)



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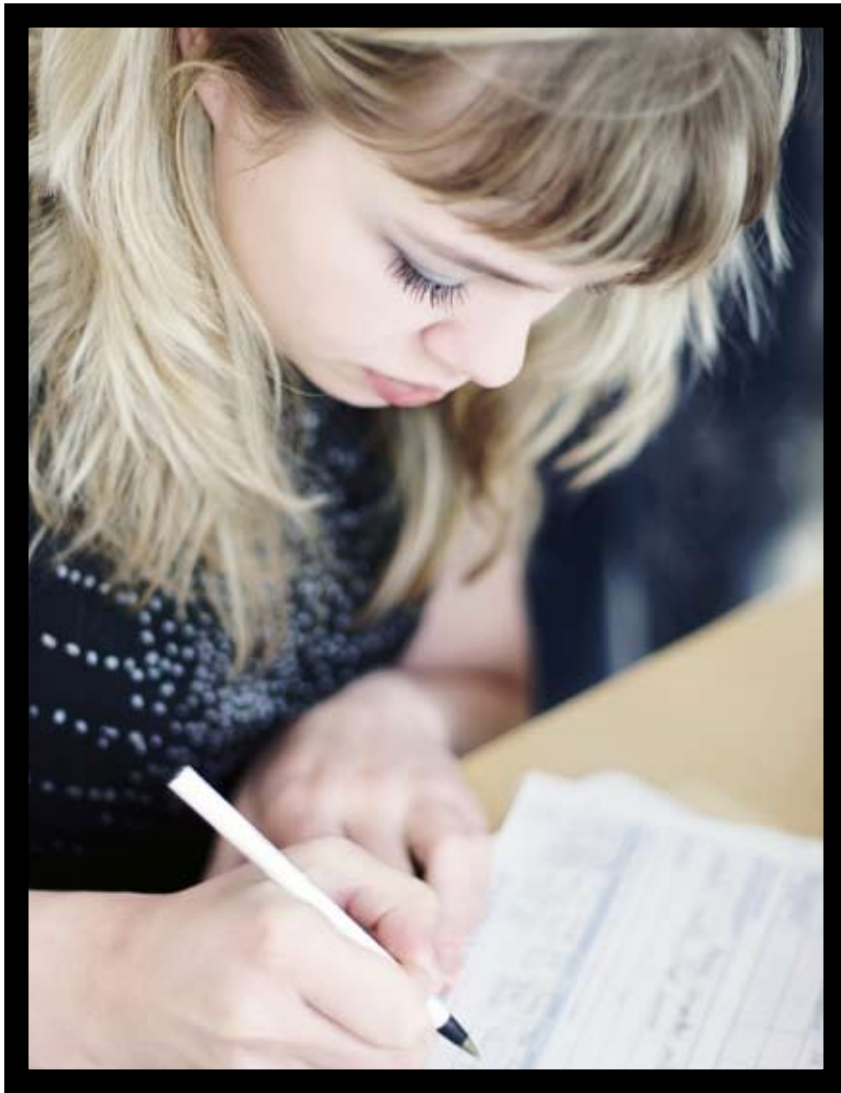
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# Making the Right Choice: A Confession about Extemp File Formats from a Lifelong Extemp

By  
Tomas Cosenza

As shocking as it is for me to consider, this is now my 10th year of coaching Extemporaneous Speaking (not including several years of doubling-up by coaching two teams at the same time). Add to that decade of coaching another 6 years of competition in high school and at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and you can imagine that I've been around just long enough to have used or coached the use of almost every major format for keeping an Extemp File. Throughout this time, I have shifted in preference between several of these formats and have seen success as a competitor and now a coach with just about every format. But, this has come at a cost of hundreds (perhaps thousands) of hours of work on my behalf and on my students' behalves. Given that I want to see more Extempers competing and the quality of competition improving, I wanted to share some of my insights into the value of these different filing formats to help the community and especially new coaches that may have little to no experience with Extemporaneous Speaking.

As it is our custom in the forensic community to present in triads, let me speak of three major filing formats that I am very familiar with through both personal use and my experience as a coach.

First, the traditional topical Extemp file. This may be the most ubiquitous of all of the filing formats. For the uninitiated, the traditional topical Extemp file utilizes an extensive list of potential topics (usually divided into domestic topics,



international topics, and occasionally economic topics) that are scribbled onto manila folders or tiny index tabs in hanging file folders. The task of the Extemp is to fill their files with as many current and useful articles from newspapers, magazines, journals, and other periodicals as possible. The major advantage to this filing format is that it is rather easy to start and the dedicated Extemp will quickly fill as many of those files as possible. This leads me to its biggest disadvantage – clutter. Traditional topical Extemp files are traditionally messy and hard to navigate (especially late in your season). They are heavy and require a great deal of maintenance to preserve their usefulness. As a result, you may need to “purge” the files from time to time; a process that requires both good eyes and a discriminating mind – as well as many hours of time that could otherwise be used to file new articles into your files.

Second, the more contemporary index Extemp file format. This was a format first introduced to me by one of my college coaches, Jessica Nelson, who had brought it with her from Texas Tech. The concept behind the index file format is simple:

Instead of tearing out and copying articles from magazines and other bound periodicals, the Extemp writes a brief summary of the article's contents in an index. When I first used this system, we handwrote each entry on a page devoted to a particular topic (much like the topics featured in the traditional topical file format described above). As a result, we had nearly a dozen 3-ring binders with hundreds of pages (many of which had only a few entries each). Since then, the use of Microsoft Excel-based digital index files has allowed for basic data entry and entry sorting so that students may input article descriptions (as well as citation information) throughout an entire season and simply re-sort and reprint their index. At competitions, Extempers can then look up in their index specific articles that can be found in their hard-copy form and utilized in the preparation and delivery of the Extemporaneous Speech. The ability to quickly locate and utilize the necessary articles is clearly the most advantageous reason to use the index Extemp file format. The biggest disadvantage is that the amount of time needed to properly manage this kind of file system is greater than the traditional topical approach. Services like Extempdex (of which we are a subscriber) help, but this leads to another difficulty – notably that the index system is a passive one, requiring your news sources to adequately cover all possible topics. And there's also the possibility that Extempers may fall into the temptation of consulting

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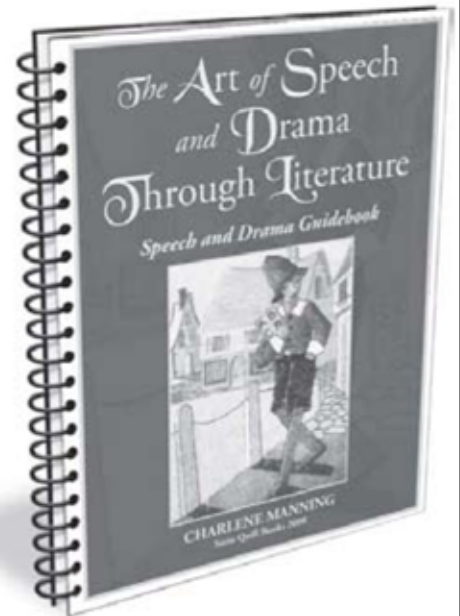
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Third and finally, there is the hybrid (index and traditional topical combined) format. This hybrid approach seeks to take the best of both of the previously discussed formats. My team has utilized this approach for the last few years with varying levels of success. The advantage of the hybrid format over either of its separate components is that it allows for the ease of access seen in the index format while still allowing for the use of topic folders to include topics of greatest need (either because they are quickly-changing in nature or because they are so obscure that most publications do not cover them). However, the greatest disadvantage of the hybrid system is that it requires the greatest investment of time and

resources of either the index or traditional topical formats. Unless you have a stable of Extemp studs and fillies chomping at the bit to work on their Extemp file, the hybrid approach can quickly fall apart and ultimately lead to a sub-standard Extemp file.

So how do you choose? Ultimately, you as the coach (or Extemp squad leader) need to know what your Extemp squad is willing to do in regards to its Extemp filing duties. If you have a large squad of dedicated Extempers, you may opt for the hybrid approach. If, however, you have a smaller group or a group with lower commitment levels, you may opt instead for either the traditional topical or index formats. As for my own squad this year, we'll be going away from the hybrid and opting instead for the index format. Each team is going to have different

needs and different resources. If you were considering making a change or perhaps if you haven't had much of an Extemp program in the past, I hope that this confession (of sorts) has helped.

(**Tomas Cosenza** is the head coach of the SkyHawk Forensics Team at V.J. and Angela Skutt Catholic High School in Omaha, Nebraska. He has coached at both the high school and collegiate levels and has coached NFL, NCFL, and AFA national qualifiers in Extemporaneous Speaking. As a competitor, he was a 4-time national qualifier for the American Forensic Association national tournament, including multiple out-rounds, and was a finalist for AFA All-American honors in 2003.)



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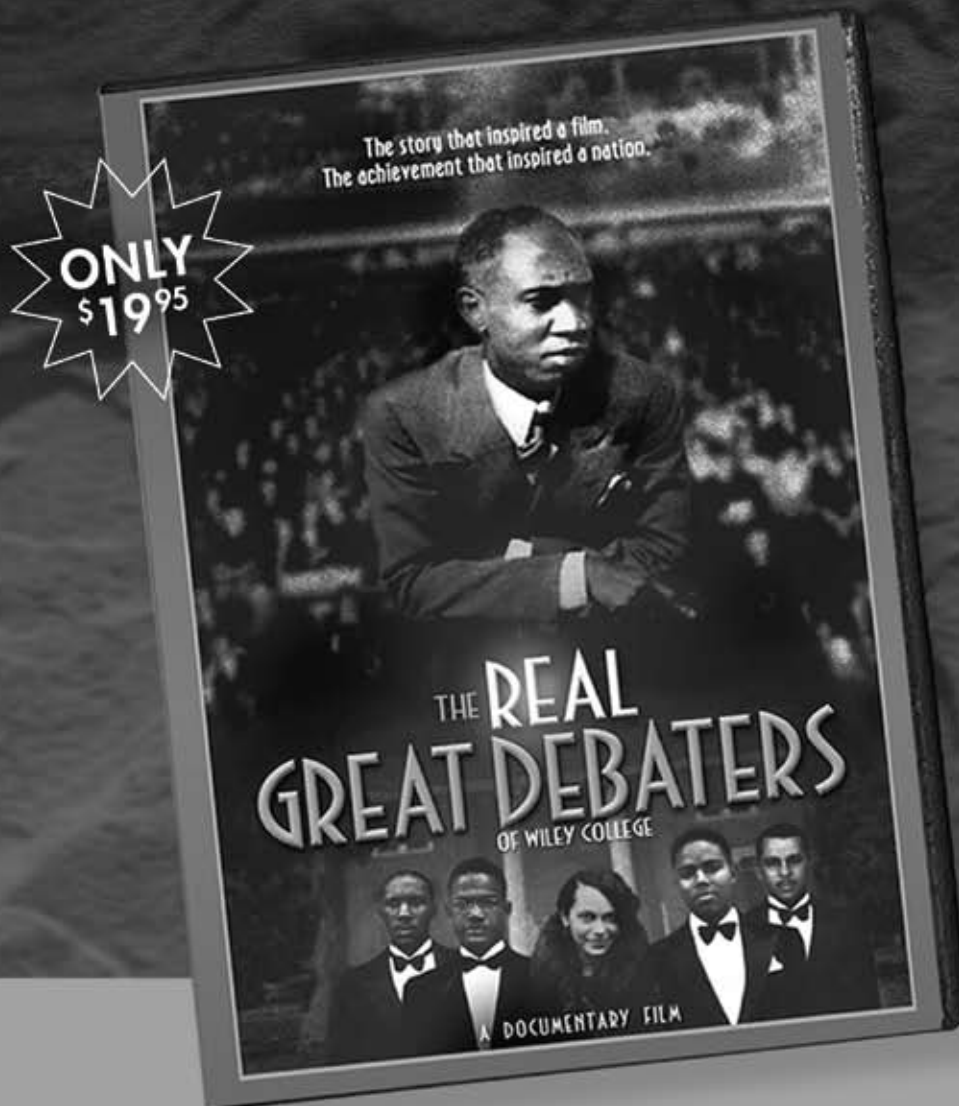
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# Reclaiming Glory: The Wiley College Forensic Society Then and Now

Participating in any college debate program is challenging enough, but with the eyes of Hollywood and the weight of history on its shoulders, the new debate team at Wiley College faces an extra measure of pressure this year.

After a 61-year absence, Wiley College's Forensic Society is back in the news, thanks to a spotlight from the 2007 Denzel Washington film, "The Great Debaters." The film is based on the true story of the 1935 Wiley College debate team, an underdog team from a small black college in the Jim Crow South which overcame great adversity to compete—and win—against the reigning national debate champions.

Following the success of "The Great Debaters," 2007 Mr. Washington offered a \$1 million donation to Wiley College to help restart its debate program. Wiley College has taken on the challenge, hired a new Director of Forensics, Dr. Shannon LaBove, and put together a new debate team, which now faces its first year of formal competition.

During its heyday under the tutelage of its dynamic coach Melvin B. Tolson, Wiley College's debate team reigned victorious for over a decade, losing only one of 75 matches. Tolson founded Wiley's Forensic Society in 1924, because African Americans were not admitted into the national fraternity until after World War II. Among the society's alumni were Henrietta Bell, Hobart Jarrett, James Farmer, Jr., Hamilton Boswell, and the mysterious Henry Heights, whose real-life stories and characters were



the inspiration for the Hollywood movie.

A new documentary, "The Real Great Debaters of Wiley College" shows that the real story of the 1935 Wiley College debate team was no less remarkable or triumphant than the Hollywood version. Wiley College first challenged and defeated teams from African-American colleges like Fisk University and Howard. But Tolson wanted more than to win debates—he wanted to make history by shattering racial stereotypes and challenging segregation. Most of all, he wanted to show that his debaters were the best in the country, period.

The first interracial debate took place with the University of Michigan Law School in 1930. In 1931, Oklahoma City University became the first white southern university to debate against Wiley College. Because of segregation, both interracial debates took place off campus, and while both decisions were in favor of Wiley College, neither were counted as part of the opposing team's official debate season.

The crowning achievement was the debate on April 2, 1935 against the reigning champions, the University of Southern California. The debate took place on the USC campus to an enthusiastic audience of over 2,000. Hobart Jarrett and Henry Heights delivered winning arguments on the topic of the international shipment of arms and

munitions. Hamilton Boswell, who was in the audience at the USC debate, joined the Wiley College debate team the following year.

Being a debate student under Melvin B. Tolson was a life-changing event for Henrietta Bell, Hobart Jarrett, Hamilton Boswell, and James Farmer. As the documentary shows, Mr. Tolson inspired intellectual rigor in his students as well as a commitment to social justice. All went on to play major roles in the Civil Rights Movement, and in 1998, James Farmer—a young alternate at the 1935 debate—received a Congressional Medal of Honor.

The Wiley College debate team remained a powerhouse until 1947, when Melvin Tolson left Wiley College for Langston University, and devoted his attention to his true passion: poetry. By that time, World War II and television had taken its toll—debates were no longer a popular form of entertainment as they had been in the glory days of the 1935 team.

But that was then, and this is now. Standing on the shoulders of giants, Dr. LaBove realizes that the new debate team has a high reputation and a winning record to uphold. But she's also convinced that the new Wiley College debate team will soon make history for itself.

(**Laura Neitzel** is a writer and producer for AMS Pictures, and co-producer of the new documentary, "The Real Great Debaters of Wiley College." She holds a Master's Degree from the University of North Texas.)



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# Is Anybody Listening?

## Reasons a Literary Persona Speaks

by  
Ron Krikac

One of the great masterpieces of Baroque sculpture is Bernini's statue of David. Unlike other classical depictions of this Biblical hero, Bernini's work does not include the severed head of Goliath. Instead David looks into the distance as if watching Goliath and sizing him up. Some early art critics thought that the artist must have sculpted a companion piece to his "David," one depicting the giant Goliath on whom David fixes his gaze. But no such second statue ever existed. Instead, it is David's involvement with the "implied" Goliath in the distance that makes the work so powerful.

This artistic principle, so effectively employed by Bernini, is also very important to the interpreter of prose, poetry, and drama, for each performer, through the use of his or her imagination and body, creates the implied listener to the speaking character. If the performer fails to make the audience perceive the implied listener and fails to establish through the speaker's voice and body the reasons he/she is addressing the implied listener, the performance will be flat and unconvincing.

Students portraying multiple characters in a dramatic interpretation usually create a sense of the listening character(s) because the characters interact, alternating the roles of speaker and listener. On the other hand, performers of prose, poetry, and dramatic monologues



often have problems creating the presence of the listening character and the sense of the speaking character's relationship with that implied listener. As a result, their performances are not as effective as they could be.

Unfortunately, student interpreters preparing their prose and poetry (and sometimes dramatic monologue) performances often fail to answer two essential questions: (1) To whom is the persona speaking? and (2) Why is he/she speaking to that listener? The performer must answer these two important questions before making other performance choices as the answers to these fundamental

questions will influence all other performance decisions.

Students of literature know that authors do not always make the answers to these questions obvious. For this reason, the performer must formulate possible answers and choose the ones that make the most intellectual and dramatic sense. As a wise interpretation coach once observed, "Interpretation involves making a series of choices, most of them wrong." Young performers sometimes object that a choice is a matter of personal interpretation and therefore can't be "wrong." I disagree. Sometimes a choice IS wrong because it contradicts what is stated or implied in the text. Other times a choice is "wrong" because it leads to a weak performance. Finding the most effective choice often takes much time and experimentation.

Frequently students make the too-easy assumptions that the speaker is addressing either "him/herself" or a generalized audience. These assumptions rarely lead to convincing performances. In literature, as in life, most of us don't speak aloud to ourselves or to generalized audiences about our private musings or personal crises. Instead we speak to specific individuals, and we speak with a purpose--to get our particular needs or wants met. Because literature is much more structured and focused than everyday life, the dramatic choices in a work of literature are rarely as arbitrary as they may

seem in “real life.” Therefore the successful interpreter needs to make specific choices about who the implied listener/receiver is, what kind of relationship the speaker and listener have, and the reasons the speaker is saying these words to the listener. The more the speaker shows that he/she is struggling to get something from the listener, the more powerful will be the dramatic tension in the performance.

Well then, why DO speakers address listeners? In their book *Looking Out/Looking In*, interpersonal communication scholars Ronald B. Adler and Neil Towne suggest eight potential reasons that one person self-discloses to another. These same eight reasons can help to clarify a literary character’s intention or motive for speaking to an implied listener.

First, according to Adler and Towne, a speaker may speak to achieve catharsis or cleansing. The character may have a deep need to confess something about which he/she feels guilty or troubled. The speaker wants to “get it off his/her chest.” The seriousness of the confession and the circumstances of its concealment determine how the speaker reveals the information. Sometimes speakers need to “vent,” to pour out the information quickly and forcefully. Other speakers may be more hesitant to speak. Thus they have trouble getting the words out and struggle with the “confession.” Dramatic tension results when the performer shows the character’s opposite desires to reveal and to conceal information.

Second, a persona may speak to achieve reciprocity. In other words, the speaker may reveal information to the listener in the hope that the listener will in turn “open up” to him or her. Such an intention often occurs in the early stages of a relationship, when the

two people are beginning to share personal information with each other. The speaker’s intention in revealing information may be to “draw out” the other person so that he/she will share some personal information and thus deepen the relationship.

Third, a literary figure may speak to achieve self-clarification. The speaker may be confused about a course of action to take and want the listener to help the speaker to clarify his/her thinking. Notice that this is an active choice, as the speaker is implying, “Help me to sort this matter out. Help me decide what to do.” Thus the speaker is dramatically engaged with the implied listener and is actively seeking assistance from that listener.

Fourth, the speaker may be seeking self-validation. This is not the same as self-clarification, although it is similar. The person seeking self-validation from the listener has already made a choice and perhaps already carried out an action. The persona seeking self-validation wants approval from the implied listener, wants the listener to say that he/she has made the right choice or has done the right action. As human beings, we often make decisions about which we are uncertain. A speaker may urgently need self-validation from someone he/she respects. Thus a search for self-validation isn’t passive, but rather a strong and powerful implied request for assurance.

Fifth, a literary character may speak for identity management (sometimes called impression management). In other words, he or she may be trying to create a specific impression for the listener. A character may try to “put his/her best foot forward” to impress the other person, perhaps someone to whom he/she is romantically attracted or someone he/she must convince to trust him/her. In other situations the

identity management may be more devious. The speaker may be trying to create a false impression in order to take advantage of the listener. A character who tries to mislead another character for whom he/she has no genuine concern would be an example of such a dishonest effort. An encounter can be dramatically powerful if the audience perceives that the speaker is dishonest whereas the listener does not. In serious situations such strong dramatic irony tends to grip an audience. In lighter situations, the audience’s understanding of the deceptive character’s motives provides humor.

Sixth, a speaker may seek to achieve relationship maintenance and enhancement. Such a speaker is actively trying to strengthen or rebuild a relationship with the listener. Again, this decision may seem like a passive choice, but it is not. The speaker, faced with some obstacle he/she must overcome, actively tries to achieve the goal. The audience must sense how important it is to the speaker to maintain or enhance the relationship; otherwise it loses interest in the encounter.

Seventh, the persona may speak to gain some kind of social control. The speaker reveals the information to the listener in an attempt to get the upper hand in a situation. For example, a character may tell his/her boss about a job offer from another company in an attempt to get the boss to match or better the offer. This kind of situation is high in dramatic tension as the audience knows what the speaker is trying to get, and it also is aware that the speaker’s attempt at control may backfire. Of course, the speaker is also aware of these two factors; thus his/her investment in the encounter is very high.

Eighth, a literary character may speak as an attempt at manipulation of the listener. Although the seven

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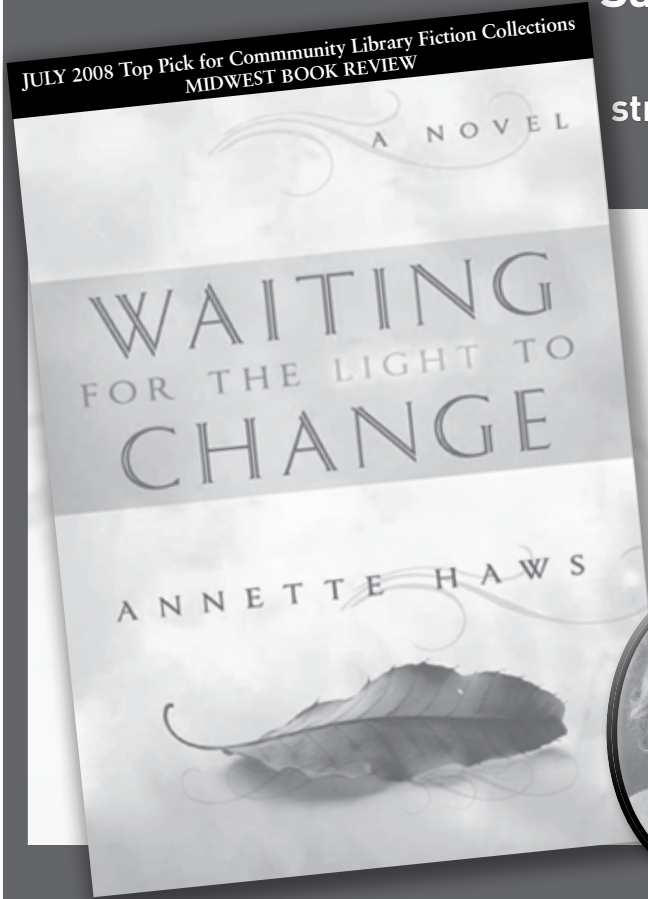
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situations above may suggest some degree of manipulation as the speaker is trying to achieve a specific response from the listener, the character using manipulation has probably devised a premeditated scheme to get his/her needs met, and the plan usually involves a deceptive attempt to get the listener to do something he/she doesn't want to do. The ulterior motive that the speaker reveals to the audience but conceals from the listener creates powerful dramatic tension. A sexual seduction is a strong example of a manipulator at work.

It's important to understand that the eight intentions discussed above don't form a definitive list. Numerous other possible intentions may appear, and sometimes a character has multiple intentions in speaking; for example, impression management in order to manipulate. These eight are merely

some illustrations of the possible overriding intentions or objectives of the speakers in short scenes. The performer must analyze the encounter further to discover and reveal moment-by-moment intentions or tactics to achieve the speaker's ultimate objective. In addition, the performer must clearly show that the tactics are consistent with the speaker's overall objective in the scene. Without such consistency the encounter may seem confusing to the audience, which will then become disengaged with the scene.

One other important matter should concern the performer: he or she must remember that the speaker is making a **STRONG** attempt to achieve his/her goal. The stakes must be high. The speaker must **FIGHT** to achieve his/her goal or objective. A weak intention or a weak attempt to achieve an intention will be dramatically boring.

Poems, prose pieces, and plays are all dramatic works with dynamic characters struggling to achieve their objectives. Literature is not about the day nothing happened. It's about the on-going tensions that exist as people struggle against obstacles to get what they want. Unless the speaker of a literary work can, like Bernini's David, show his/her dynamic involvement with the implied listener of the message, the performance will lack an essential element. Only the performer's full commitment to show the dramatic encounter between the speaker and the implied listener will engage an audience in a riveting performance.

**(Ron Krikac is a three diamond coach and a member of the NFL Hall of Fame).**

# COUNTERPLANS

by  
**Stefan Bauschard**

## Introducing Counterplans

A counterplan is a plan advocated by the negative that is an alternative to the affirmative's plan. The most essential defining element of a counterplan is that it is competitive – the negative must prove that the counterplan is better than the *affirmative plan* and a *combination of the plan and all or part of the counterplan*.

For example, imagine that I suggest that we take a lunch break to go to McDonald's. Going to McDonald's is my plan. You suggest that we should go to Burger King (BK) instead of going to McDonald's. You say it is *better* to go to BK than McDonald's because BK has chicken fries.

If you demonstrate that it is better to go to BK because BK has chicken fries you have made it through the first hoop – you have proven that the counterplan is better than the plan. What you have not proven, however, is that it wouldn't be wise to go to both. As the original advocate of going to McDonald's, I'll suggest a permutation – combining the affirmative plan with all or part of the counterplan – to go to McDonald's **and** BK. This captures the benefit of going to BK – to get the chicken fries – while still maintaining that we should go to McDonald's. The permutation proves that going to BK isn't a reason not to go to McDonald's – or that the counterplan isn't a reason to not support the affirmative's plan.

You can prove that we need to do the counterplan *instead* of the plan in a couple of different ways. First, you could prove that it is net-beneficial to only support the counterplan. This can be accomplished by proving that McDonald's is bad and the overall benefits of going to BK outweigh

the problems caused by going to McDonald's. Second, you could prove that doing them both will result in some disadvantage that demonstrates that it is unwise to try to do them together.

To prove that it is net-beneficial just to do the counterplan, you could, for example, argue that the McDonald's I suggest going to is in a bad neighborhood and eating at McDonald's therefore will increase the risk that you will be robbed or shot. Going to BK – even if you can't get a great McDonald's salad there – will still be net-beneficial because the threat to your personal safety outweighs the benefits of eating a salad at McDonald's.

You could also prove that doing both – the permutation – is a bad idea. For example, you could argue that if we did both we would spend too much money, leaving an inadequate amount of money to buy some ice cream. Or, you could argue that if we tried to go to both in the amount of time we had available for lunch that it would increase the risks that would be involved in a car crash.

The other way to prove your counterplan is competitive is to prove that it is mutually exclusive. To do this you need to prove that you *can't* do both the counterplan and the plan. It is a hard thing to prove – rarely are two courses of action mutually exclusive. But, it is possible to imagine mutually exclusive courses of action. The affirmative could, for example, increase the number of people participating in AmeriCorps while the negative could counterplan to abolish it.

Of course, if you prove the counterplan is mutually exclusive with the affirmative plan, you must still

prove that it is net beneficial – that the benefits of acting on the counterplan outweigh the benefits of acting on the plan.

Proving that a counterplan is competitive – by either proving that it is net-beneficial or mutually exclusive and then net-beneficial – is a process that occurs throughout the debate and doesn't depend on a single argument. When arguing that a judge should vote for a counterplan, you are arguing that overall it is a good idea compared to the plan.

## Types of Counterplans

The best way to understand what a counterplan is involves understanding the different types of counterplans and how they work. After you read through each, you will have a better understanding of what it means for a counterplan to be competitive.

**Agent counterplans.** An agent counterplan is a counterplan that uses a different agent than the affirmative does. For example, if the affirmative's agent is the Supreme Court, the negative may choose to counterplan with the Congress. Negatives will argue that disadvantages that are specific to court action --- such as those that address the implications of the court ruling on the legitimacy of the court, will prove that it is better to support congressional action alone.

Agent counterplans aren't limited to Congress counterplan against court action. If the affirmative uses the Congress the negative could counterplan with the courts and argue that court action is less likely to be blamed on President Bush, reducing the political threat of the plan to the Republicans in the mid-term elections.



**Plan inclusive counterplans.** A plan inclusive counterplan or “PIC” is a counterplan that does one or more parts of the affirmative’s plan and argues that the part, or parts, that it doesn’t do are bad.

Take the McDonald’s example. If my counterplan is to go to McDonald’s and get a Super Value Meal,” you could counterplan to exclude the French fries” from my plan and argue that the French fries are the most unhealthy part of the meal. You would likely claim that you solve for my advantage – reducing hunger pangs at mid-day – while avoiding the unhealthy parts of the meal.

PICs are very strategic counterplans since they are often able to solve all of the affirmative’s harms while avoiding a usually small, but important, disadvantage.

To counter the spread of PICs, affirmatives have substantially reduced the specification in their plan. For example, instead of saying “Go to McDonald’s to get a super value meal,” they are likely to only commit to going to McDonald’s. They will not specify what they will eat there.

The reason that they do this is because if they don’t specify, and the negative does specify what we should eat, they can simply have a permutation to “go to McDonald’s” and “get a Super Value Meal” without the french fries.” They will argue that the negative’s alternative is not competitive with their relatively vague proposal.

**Advantage counterplans.** An advantage counterplan is a way the negative can solve for a specific advantage without doing the plan (usually any of the plan – distinguishing this type of counterplan from a PIC). For example, imagine that the affirmative team said that we should support national service because this would hurt President Bush politically and that if he is hurt politically it will cause him to attack Iran, which is a good thing. The negative could simply counterplan to attack Iran and argue it is

bad to support national service. These counterplans force affirmative team to claim advantages that can really only be solved by their affirmative’s plan.

**Process counterplans.** A process counterplan implements the affirmative’s plan through a different process than the negative uses. Most of these counterplans claim that they are different than process the affirmative uses – fiat, which according to modern understandings, passes the plan unconditionally and forever.

Popular process counterplans include subjecting the plan to a popular referendum, asking NATO or one of our allies if they favor it, or having the plan be implemented through a Presidential veto or Congressional override. Negative teams will almost always claim that the counterplan process will still result in the adoption of the counterplan, but that the process the counterplan uses – one that is usually mutually exclusive with the one that the plan uses – has many benefits.

**Uniqueness counterplans.** These are the most difficult counterplans to understand and these counterplans are presented by the negative far less frequently than any others. The basic idea behind a uniqueness counterplan is that the negative can run a counterplan to make the disadvantage unique.

For example, say the negative runs a Spending disadvantage and the affirmative says, “Non-unique – We are about to spend another \$80 billion” in Iraq. The negative says, “Counterplan – don’t spend that \$80 billion in Iraq.” The negative will argue that their counterplan is net-beneficial because it is undesirable to spend money (they save money relative to the status quo) and that the permutation to do both still involves the plan spending money, which is bad.

You have to be very careful when writing a uniqueness counterplan. Imagine, for example, that implementing the plan would only cost \$1 million. If you counterplan to not spending \$80 billion that the status quo

spends, the permutation (doing the plan and not spending the \$80 billion) we are about to spend in Iraq, still results in a net savings of \$79,999,000,000! The permutation solves the entire link to the disadvantage!

## Counterplan Competition

The basics of counterplan competition have been covered in the introductory section of this chapter. Two things are worth emphasizing. One, in order to win that a counterplan is better than the plan you have to win that it is net-beneficial to do only the counterplan as compared to the plan and a combination of all of the plan and part of the counterplan. Counterplan competition is fundamental – *No* judge will accept a counterplan unless the judge determines that it is competitive.

**Counterplans Do Not Need to Solve.** Many debaters think that a counterplan *has* to solve the affirmative harms, or at least must *attempt* to solve them. This is *not* true. A counterplan could fail to solve any of the affirmative harms but still be net-beneficial because the disadvantages to the affirmative case outweigh the original harms. In this instance, it would still be net-desirable for the judge to vote for the counterplan.

## Answering Counterplans

There are three basic ways to defeat a counterplan. First, you can argue that it is net-beneficial to vote for the plan rather than the counterplan. Second, you can argue that the counterplan is not a competitive alternative to the affirmative’s plan – that both *could* and *should* be done. Third, you can argue that the type of counterplan that the negative has presented is theoretically illegitimate. You can do all three of these, but any single approach, if successful, will defeat the counterplan.

Attack the counterplan solvency. In attacking the solvency of the counterplan, you want to argue that the counterplan will not solve for the

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affirmative's case advantage(s). Often, the counterplan will clearly solve one or more of the advantages, but not other advantages(s). If the counterplan obviously doesn't solve one of the advantages, point that out and then make as many arguments as you can as to why it doesn't solve the others. Your arguments do not need to be complete – you do not need to win that it will not solve the advantages *at all*. If you can reduce the solvency some, you should be able to argue that voting affirmative is *net*-beneficial because the remaining amount of affirmative advantage that the counterplan doesn't solve for outweighs the negative's disadvantage that doesn't link to the counterplan.

It is important in the 2AC that you keep in mind what advantage(s) the counterplan doesn't solve, or at least doesn't solve very well when allocating your time covering the negative's case arguments. You want to focus on extending the advantage(s) the counterplan doesn't solve very well because it is those that you'll certainly need to win by the end of the debate.

**Present disadvantages to the counterplan.** You should try to find arguments that link to the counterplan. For example, if the counterplan spends money and your plan does not, you could run a spending disadvantage to the counterplan.

You always need to be careful that the disadvantages that you run against the counterplan do not link to your own affirmative plan. If you run disadvantages to the counterplan that also link to the plan, and you the negative then decides to jettison the counterplan, you may be in trouble because the negative will argue that those disadvantages link to your plan – and now only to your plan.

**Test the competitiveness of the counterplan.** You test the competitiveness of the counterplan through what is called a permutation. You should always make at least two permutations. First, make a permutation that simply says “do both.” This will

protect you at the end of the debate in the event that the negative does not end up winning that the counterplan is net-beneficial. In this instance, you can easily argue that the judge should simply vote to “do both.” If you do not, the negative team may argue that although its counterplan isn't net-beneficial, it is still simply better than the affirmative plan and try to win on that since you have no permutation.

**Second, you should write a permutation** that includes all of the plan and all or part of the counterplan that combines the two in a way that *prevents one or more of the disadvantages that the negative has argued from happening*. For example, if the affirmative plan is to have the federal government implement a national service program, and the plan doesn't specify that the federal government pays for it, and the negative runs a states counterplan with a spending disadvantage, your permutation could be to have the federal government implement the program and to have the states pay for it.

**Argue that the counterplan is theoretically illegitimate.** As will be discussed in the last section of this chapter, there are a number of theoretical controversies regarding counterplans. Affirmatives can make arguments that each of the type of counterplans discussed above are theoretically illegitimate, that the negative couldn't be able to get rid of the counterplan if they wish, and the counterplan has to either be topical or non-topical.

There is always some theory argument that can be made against counterplans. You should make at least some theory arguments in the 2AC because this will force the negative to spend a lot of time on these arguments in the 2NC or the 1NR since they are all or nothing arguments for the negative. If the affirmative wins one of these arguments then the negative will at least lose the option of extending the counterplan, and may even lose the debate.

## Extending a Counterplan on the Negative

There is only one “type” of disadvantage, so it is relatively easy to make suggestions for extending disadvantages in the block. The fact that there are many types of counterplans makes this somewhat more difficult.

When you extend a counterplan on the negative, regardless as to the type of counterplan that you run, there is one primary goal that you have to keep in mind – you have to prove that the counterplan is better than the plan or a combination of the plan and any or all of the counterplan. Every argument you make has to be made with that idea in mind.

You should start by giving an overview of the counterplan. In your overview you should establish the following:

A) Specifically what the counterplan does. Often, counterplans are read very quickly in the 1NC and it is difficult for both the judge and the opposing team to make out precisely what the counterplan does. The affirmative may have used preparation time to figure out exactly what it does, but the judge is probably still left in the dark. Take a few seconds to explain your counterplan.

B) Explain if and why the counterplan solves. If you are arguing that the counterplan solves some or all of the affirmative case harms, explain why the counterplan solves each of the harms that you are claiming it solves.

C) Explain why it is net-beneficial to vote for the counterplan. Be willing to acknowledge that the counterplan may not solve for some or all of the affirmative advantage(s), but argue that it is still net-beneficial because the counterplan avoids X or Y disadvantages that have a greater impact or chance of occurring than the harms identified in the 1AC.

After giving this overview, proceed through the line by line of the 2AC counterplan answers.

It is *very important* that you keep

in mind that a counterplan is just *one tool* in your overall strategy. You need to win that the counterplan is *net-beneficial*, not that it is some inherently good idea.

To win that the counterplan is net-beneficial at the end of the debate, you'll need to make sure you spend time covering the disadvantage that you say the counterplan avoids and make sure you devote considerable time to answering any affirmative harms that the counterplan may not be able to solve for. You *must* allocate your time well to win a counterplan debate, dividing it between the counterplan flow itself, any disadvantage(s) that you wish to argue the counterplan avoids, and any defensive arguments that you'll need to win on the case flow if your counterplan is unlikely to solve all, or some, of the affirmative case harms.

### **Deciding When to Run a Counterplan**

Counterplans are very popular in debate. At the varsity level of competition, it is almost assumed that the negative will at least advance a counterplan in the 1NC, even if they chose not to go for it as part of a winning strategy in the 2NR.

The popularity of the counterplan is somewhat self-fulfilling – counterplans are advanced frequently in modern debate because people know a lot about counterplans and people are always thinking in terms of counterplan options when devising negative strategies.

Counterplans are also popular because they are valuable strategic weapons for the negative. As the discussion of the various types of counterplans makes clear, most counterplans claim to solve all or at least most of the affirmative harms without forcing the negative to engage in a debate about the truth of each of those harms claims.

While it is true that counterplans are strategic weapons, they are also strategic hindrances. Negative teams

may be forced to forgo arguing particular disadvantages because those disadvantages also link to the counterplan. Different types of counterplans are often theoretically questionable, so the negative may lose the debate because they either have to spend too much time in their speeches on those theory questions or because they may lose the theory debate. Counterplans are also more complicated than many other arguments, and inexperienced debaters may simply not be able to keep track of all of the different arguments made in counterplan debates.

### **Counterplan Theory**

As noted earlier, counterplans introduce many theoretical controversies. There is no space in this volume to entertain each of them since the debates could occupy an entire volume unto themselves. I do, however, want to briefly introduce you to each of the key questions so that you are aware of them and are encouraged to learn more about them.

**Can the negative run a counterplan?** Although the ability of the negative to counterplan is generally accepted, there are some arguments as to why the negative may not even be able to counterplan in the first place. One, there is no “should not” in the negative. The argument is that the affirmative derives its fiat power from the word *should* in the resolution and that there is no “should not” resolution for the negative. Two, affirmative should not have to be prepared to defend against every theoretical alternative to their plan – there are simply too many.

Although these arguments are interesting, three more powerful arguments have generally carried the day. One, the status quo is often wrong – hard to defend. To take a contemporary example, the current war in Iraq simply is not working. Almost no one agrees that it is working and, consequently, the

negative shouldn't have to defend something that is (almost) impossible to defend. Second, if the affirmative gets to change the world, so should the negative. A counterplan is a reciprocal opportunity for the negative to get to do what the affirmative gets to do. Three, competitive counterplans are really disadvantages – they are the opportunity cost of voting for the affirmative. If you vote affirmative, you can't do the counterplan, and the counterplan is good. That essentially makes the counterplan a disadvantage.

**Does the counterplan have to be (non) topical?** In the past, many believed that counterplans had to be non-topical. In some parts of the country, some people still continue to hold this belief.

The reason that some believe that counterplans have to be non-topical stems from the idea that the negative has to negate the *resolution*. A topical counterplan arguably supports the resolution because it would be an example of the resolution being true.

The reason that this view is no longer strongly held is because most now hold that the focus of the debate is the affirmative's *plan*, not the resolution. If the negative's job is to refute the plan, not the resolution, it doesn't matter if the counterplan is topical.

A small minority of individuals have argued that counterplans *have* to be topical. The argument in favor of this is that it restricts the potential number of counterplan options that the negative has. Though this does impose a limit, it is a rather artificial limit, and since counterplans are really opportunity costs of not doing the affirmative plan, it doesn't make a lot of sense to argue that they have to be topical. Disadvantages certainly do not have to be topical.

**Are the different types of counterplans fair?** There is a debate about the merits of each of the individual types of counterplans discussed above? Is it legitimate (fair

and/or educational) to simply switch the affirmative's agent, counterplan with most of their plan (a PIC), change the process through which their plan is implemented, or solves affirmative's non-uniqueness arguments? All of this is a matter of intense debate, although at least on the "national circuit," most individuals believe that these types of counterplans are acceptable.

**Does the negative have to advocate the counterplan in the 2NR if they advance it in the 1NC?** Negatives can "kick" out of disadvantages, kritiks, or topicality arguments that they advance in the debate. Their ability to do that is unquestioned. They do not need to advance every argument in the 2NR that they originally initiate in the debate. They only need to advance a combination of arguments that proves that the status quo, the counterplan, or the kritik alternatives are better than the affirmative. But, some argue, the negative should have to extend the counterplan in the 2NR if they advance it in the 1NC.

Unlike the legitimacy of negative counterplans in general, there is no consensus at all in the debate community as to whether or not the negative should be allowed to abandon a counterplan they originally advanced in the 1NC. There is some tendency in favor of it in the contemporary college community, but there is a tendency against it in the high school community.

The debate over whether or not the negative can kick the counterplan has advanced to the circumstances under which they can kick it and whether kicking it under those specific circumstances are desirable.

If the negative argues that they can kick the counterplan whenever they want (any condition), then the counterplan is said to be "conditional." Conditionality can also be defined to include that the judge determines *after the debate* if the counterplan is in play. This would occur when the 2NR goes for a conditional counterplan and instructs the judge to first evaluate the

debate with the counterplan in mind, but if the judge were to conclude that the negative would lose the debate, the judge would then evaluate the debate without the counterplan to determine if negative could then win the debate. This latter definition is rarely utilized, but you should be aware of this use of the conditional counterplan.

A more "limited" form of counterplan conditionality is called "dispositionality." Dispositionality is generally defined to mean that the negative can dispose of the counterplan unless the affirmative only argues that it is bad if the affirmative "straight turns" it – to borrow the language of disadvantages. Many judges find "dispositionality good" (also called "dispo good") arguments to be persuasive.

### **Committing to the Status of the Counterplan**

Many people will ask in the cross-examination what the "status" of the counterplan is. In other words, is it conditional, dispositional, or will the 2NR be going for it. Judges will expect you to answer this question. Some things to consider when answering:

If you are, if you know you have no other choice, it makes sense to just say you are going for it. You will eliminate an important theory argument from the negative's arsenal. You will, of course, show your hand (make it obvious you are going for the counterplan in the 2NR), but depending on what other arguments you have in the debate.

If you are certain you are going to kick the counterplan, I strongly suggest reconsidering whether or not you really ought to run it. There is generally little merit to advancing an argument in a debate that is a certain loser. Advancing a counterplan that is theoretically questionable that you know is a lose makes even less sense. Judges will expect you to answer this question. Some things to consider when answering:

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If you are certain you are going to kick the counterplan, I strongly suggest reconsidering whether or not you really ought to run it. There is generally little merit to advancing an argument in a debate that is a certain loser. Advancing a counterplan that is theoretically questionable that you know is a lose makes even less sense.

### **Conclusion**

Counterplans dominate modern policy debate practice. They are important strategic weapons for the negative, and being able to defeat many different types of counterplans is essential if you want to be a good debater.

Learning about counterplans is also important because counterplan theory has informed the development of modern day critique theory. The subject of critique is what will be explored in the next chapter.

### **Review & Discussion Questions**

- 1) What is a counterplan?
- 2) My plan is to go to school on Friday. Offer a counterplan and explain why it is net-beneficial.
- 3) Explain four different ways to answer a counterplan
- 4) Why might you run a counterplan? Why not?

(Stefan Bauschard is the President of PlanetDebate.com, Director of Debate at Lakeland Public Schools and Debate Coach at Harvard Debate.)



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# PUBLIC FORUM: In Search of the “Holy Grail” in Debate

by  
Shane Stafford

Just to begin, I want to make clear I am not convinced Public Forum Debate has ended our search for the “Holy Grail” form of debate. In fact, I am still not sure what we envision that grail to look like. Clearly, we have been searching since 1979 and the beginnings of Lincoln Douglas debate. I was involved a couple of weekends ago in a presentation about different formats of debate at the CTAM (Communication and Theatre Association of Minnesota) convention and I talked with the audience about the history of this search. The audience was primarily newer coaches who wanted to know their options in beginning debate. We talked of different formats: policy, LD, public forum, parliamentary and “classic” format (classic format is a home grown format of debate developed in Minnesota). To a great degree each of the formats listed after policy was a search for an option “more desirable” than the current format of policy debate. I will state for the record that I still love policy debate, but that I also believe any debate is good debate. My new students at Blake are probably very tired of hearing my refrain that “an argument is an argument” and each of the formats can promote good argumentation.

So, does the public forum format meet the goals of our search? The question becomes what are we searching for? April 2009 will be five years since the discussion between Kate Shuster and Jim Copeland about the value of the public forum format of debate. I am sure there are some people who believe that discussion is moot because we clearly seem to be sticking with public forum and the format is growing. I find these two articles valuable to review because we should be constantly looking to refine and improve our offerings to students. Coaches should occasionally review the Shuster article. Just as I remember Kate as a debater, she is incredibly persuasive in this article. You cannot ignore her ideas just because you do not think that the parliamentary format of debate is the answer to the search. She lays out some core goals and values for debate and we should always be reviewing how NFL events match up with those goals and values. Shuster asks if public forum meets the goal of teaching critical thinking. She lists some of the commonly accepted skills:

- Evidence evaluation
- Argument construction and refutation

- Identifying assumptions of arguments
- Constructing solutions for problems
- Determining the weaknesses and strengths of arguments and
- Recognizing logical fallacies. (p.17)

Copeland starts his article with a focus on the television age and how audiences have changed. He seems to justify many of his arguments based upon the need to adapt our format of public forum debate to the desires of television audiences. In the end I think that Shuster is too harsh about public forum debate; her arguments seem to fall into the “public forum is evil and parliamentary debate is good” trap. Public forum debate does teach critical thinking skills and research, perhaps not as well as parliamentary format, but each of the alternative formats improves critical thinking to some degree. I think Copeland sells us short and seems to only focus on the need for meeting the demands of a television style audience. I believe we coach debate to teach needed skills; especially skills that may have been eroded by television and technology. (Don’t get me wrong, those who know me understand I

LOVE television and technology). I want to advocate that we seek to improve the student's "21<sup>st</sup> Century skills." The skill set varies according to the source you look at, but let us use these three concepts.

- \*Creativity and Innovation Skills
- \*Critical Thinking and Problem Solving Skills
- \*Communication and Collaboration Skills

I would argue we have been looking for a format that keeps the critical thinking and problem-solving skills of our various debate formats, but also finds a way to continue to value communication and collaboration skills. The goal becomes finding a format that provides the intersection of argumentation and public speaking. I believe that public forum (or for that matter parliamentary) moves us in that direction.

If one looks at public speaking classes at major universities around the country there is a general consensus on what are good skills to teach. We can inform and improve the public forum format by looking at a few of these skills. There are four I would like to discuss:

- Delivery and Organization
- Extemporaneous Speaking Style
- Audience Analysis
- Supporting Materials

**Delivery and Organization** – The public forum format seeks to place a value on delivery. We commonly teach our public speaking students to have a clear outline prior to writing their speech. We look for a good introduction and conclusion, an appropriate organizational

pattern to the speech, and delivery skills that will allow the message to be understood. We can teach students the value of a good "full circle" introduction and conclusion and ask them to incorporate this into their initial constructive speeches. Why not teach public forum debaters strategies of "attention-getting devices," since these will help the speech become memorable in the mind of the listener. The typical speech has an outline and clear organization but often doesn't use the "signposting" strategies of a competitive debate format. It seems we can encourage our public forum debaters to use more of their own "voice" when they transition between a signpost and a quotation. Typically, a policy debater will read "signpost, label and evidence" with none of their own voice in between these elements. The public forum debater can insert his or her own rhetoric between the label and evidence.

### **Extemporaneous Speaking Style**

– Public speaking classes tend to teach the students a variety of speaking styles, but the emphasis is on learning extemporaneous speaking style. Shuster argues that we should spend more time on impromptu speaking. I would argue that while both styles are important, we hope that most of our speaking situations are closer to extemporaneous format. We want a situation where there is a certain amount of preparation of what we say, but not to the extent of being memorized or manuscript. Bennett's idea of "flex arguments" matches up with this goal of extemp speaking. I think the "flip of the coin" format also helps emphasize this type of speaking, and I was

always a strong advocate of the flip. The one thing that troubles me is how the flip has caused confusion for judges and tab rooms. But, if we can solve that issue, I believe the flip reinforces the demand for more extemporaneous speaking skills. Finally, I think the crossfire encourages impromptu and extemporaneous skills. I like the point of information skill in parliamentary format, but do not believe that one is clearly superior to the other. Both methods move us to more "discussion style" interactions between the debaters in the round.

**Audience Analysis** – Public speaking values the concept of audience analysis. We teach our students to adapt their content to their audience. One of the more interesting speech assignments we did when I taught at University of Maine was to require the last two persuasive speeches to be on the same topic. But, the student had to adapt and change the speech given the assumption of a sympathetic audience for the first speech and a hostile audience for the second speech. A radical but interesting idea would be to have public forum judges fill out a short form the morning of the debate. They could checkmark an age bracket, a political affiliation, and maybe yes/no to say five questions about the topic. Maybe the topic selection committee prepares a standard "audience analysis form" for each topic announced. Prior to the debate each team could look at that "judge card" for 1 minute. Regardless of whether that suggestion is a possibility, I think the discussion over appropriate judges enters into the audience analysis discussion.



There appears to be a controversy over the lifting of the ban on debate coaches judging. It seems to me that audience analysis demands that we allow any type of judge to view this event. The fear was that our debate coaches would somehow “taint” the event; it seems just as likely that a “coach” could value the public speaking aspects of this format and encourage debaters to develop those skills. Our speech and debate coaches are in this for the “long haul” and they need to be able to judge the event and help shape the positive refinements of the future. Keeping one of the foci of public forum debate on public speaking will ensure that “citizen” judging will still be critical to the success of the event.

**Supporting Materials** – Shuster makes some good arguments about the difference between “evidence” and “quotations.” I would suggest we look at how we view “supporting materials” in the public speaking realm. Nothing in the public forum format prohibits us from changing the way we view support. A well-used quotation

from an authority is just one type of supporting material, no better or worse than many other categories. We should encourage public forum debaters to diversify the supporting materials they use. The use of a statistic in a crossfire question, or an individual’s story in a speech can be effective without necessarily quoting the exact words of an author. Additionally, explaining

“Coaches should look at the skills of good public speaking and find ways to incorporate those skills into the public forum format.”

the concept of supply and demand economics and applying that concept to an argument can be just as effective as reading a direct quotation. It is not the format that increases or decreases the use of the student voice or different types of supporting materials; it is how we coach our students.

Whether public forum, parliamentary, or even “classic” style debate provides us with the “holy grail” we have been looking for since 1979 is uncertain. But, we know that public forum debate is growing and it behooves us to be diligent in our examination of this format. The event is not perfect and we need to examine its current form and use, as well as older criticisms like Kate Shuster’s article. I would advocate that public forum is not as broken as Shuster argued and not as perfect as Copeland argued. Coaches should look at the skills of good public speaking and find ways to incorporate those skills into the public forum format. This will help us develop a debate format that values argumentation and communication and hones 21st century skills.

(**Shane Stafford** is the Director of Forensics at The Blake School in Minneapolis, MN. Contact him at [sstafford@blakeschool.org](mailto:sstafford@blakeschool.org))

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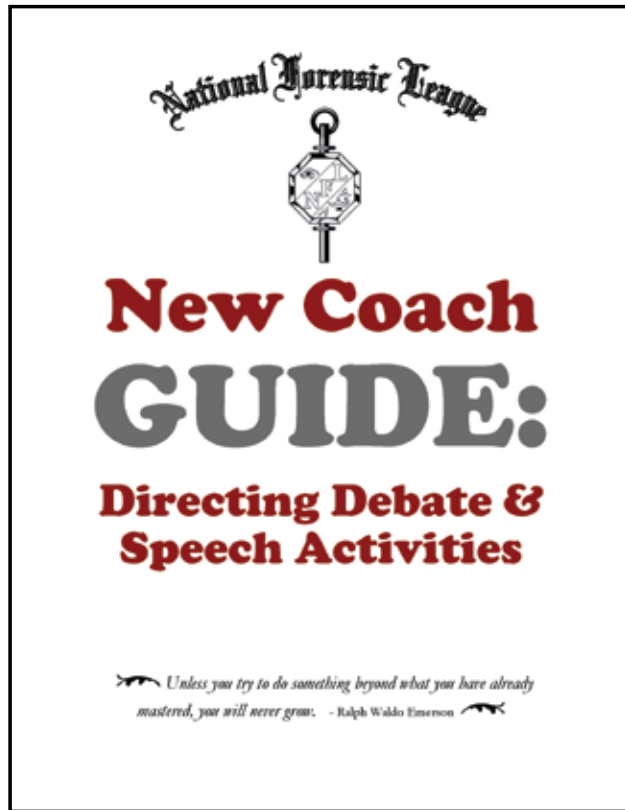
James Copeland, “Ted Turner Public Forum Debate: Not Just Another Contest,” April 2004, Rostrum.

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Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills --[http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=254&Itemid=120](http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=254&Itemid=120)

# Mentoring



## Coach Guide

Your **definitive** guide to administering and coaching a debate and/or forensics/speech program. All new school/chapter advisors receive one as part of the *NFL Record* notebook, or you can download it from [www.nflonline.org/CoachingResources](http://www.nflonline.org/CoachingResources).

This guide includes a step-by-step timeline of the season, how to record points, tips for recruitment and fundraising, as well as sample forms.

**New Coaches:** Are you overwhelmed? Do you need assistance with the processes and procedures of running a program, registering for local contests, and finding judges, among other things? We can offer a helping hand!

**Experienced coaches:** Do you remember what it was like to struggle through your first years? Help us keep this activity vital! Volunteer to mentor a new coach today.

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contact Adam Jacobi, Coordinator of Member Programs and Coach Education  
at: [jacobi@nflonline.org](mailto:jacobi@nflonline.org).

# Teaching Research Methodology: Laying the Foundation for Solid Evidence

by Adam J. Jacobi

Last month, we looked at models of curriculum design, to create an overarching vision for success in the classroom. Taking that overarching framework for scope and sequence into account, this month we look at a skill that forms the basis for all proof in public speaking: research. Proficiency in this area is a benchmark for construction of supporting proof in any informative or persuasive endeavor, whether preparing for debate, drafting an oration, or even understanding the background to an interpretive selection.

## **Generative Topics**

Every teacher or coach faces the reality that students come to us with a variety of skill levels, and this becomes quite apparent in the area of research methodology, given the vast possibilities and media by which students can access information.

The ultimate aim of research is to build a portfolio of information that establishes credibility, by which arguments can be warranted. We can trace the premium placed on this all the way back to Aristotle, who in his advice *On Rhetoric*, discussed the importance of *ethos*. Just as *ethos* serves as an appeal to authority, it serves as the etymological origin of the word “ethics,” which reminds us how important academic honesty

is in research. Giving students this background, as well as some pertinent examples in current affairs is key to allowing them to “buy in” to the notion of how important research is – and can be.

I open any lesson on research by inviting my students to dissect the word itself: the root “search,” meaning to look for, and the prefix “re,” meaning again. (I credit Michael Dutcher and James Roland for this idea, which I heart at the NFL/IDEA/U.S. State Department 2004 International Debate Exchange Program at Catholic University of America). I immediately follow this by saying in my most deadpan voice and facial expression: “it does not mean clicking on the first result in Google or Wikipedia, and settling for that.” Persistence and imagination allow for the best results: the most informed researcher, which allows for the best-prepared debater or extemper, the most original orator, and the most relevant interper.

Research methodology is a well-planned process that goes far beyond just finding sources. It involves laying out a decisive “game plan” including key words/phrases, and strategies on approaching different types of sources, evaluating the relevance and integrity of those sources, and documenting where they

were accessed. So many students “miss the boat” on those last two skills, and incorporate irrelevant or biased sources, or forgot where they found something.

A concept I try to underscore when opening a unit on research is the importance of stepping away from the computer and mapping out ideas on paper first. This allows students to resist the urge to call up their favorite search engine and begin searching aimlessly for ideas. In urging brainstorming of key words and phrases, I tell students to just allow themselves to think freely, unbridled by judgment. As a full group, I model the process by having the class assist me with brainstorming a generic topic (one usually suggested by a student). Once they have listed a variety of ideas, I then have them filter what they think are the most descriptive key words, and then do a quick search for some background reading of a merely encyclopedic nature to gain a “working knowledge” of a topic. Then, we return to the brainstorm and retool as necessary. Almost every time as student responds “this is the ‘re-’ you were talking about!”

Some of the most basic skills are sometimes taken for granted: understanding the difference between fact and opinion, distinguishing between primary and secondary

sources, harnessing the variety of resources available (online databases, academic journals and other library materials).

## **Understanding Goals & Backward Design**

Research is an important universal skill that applies across curricula, must like the four zones of literacy: reading, writing, listening and speaking. Research is a great example of why looking backward from the end result is so important: what information can build the credibility for an argument or idea, how should it be searched for and where? In his article, “Logic in LD,” (Rostrum, November 2004), Jason Baldwin examines two types of research: “The first sort is general research conducted for the purpose of finding arguments to prove a resolution true or false. The second sort is focused research to support this or that premise of an argument which you have already constructed.” The importance of the first type cannot be overstated: gaining enough background knowledge on a topic to focus further research is, perhaps, the most important step.

One of the best ways to gauge effective learning is to apply content to standards. State education agencies often have their own sets of standards, often adapted from a variety of national standards. The National Council of Teachers of English, and International Society for Technology in Education both offer brief standards for research (both cited in the bibliography to this article), but the most comprehensive comes the non-profit Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning think tank, which has outlined these standards for research at Level IV (grades 9-12) within the language arts discipline (substitute “speeches” for “research papers” in standard 8).

What is particularly effective with this set of standards is it arranges the research process in a chronological sequence of steps:

1. Uses appropriate research methodology (e.g., formulates questions and refines topics, develops a plan for research; organizes what is known about a topic; uses appropriate research methods, such as questionnaires, experiments, field studies; collects information to narrow and develop a topic and support a thesis)
2. Uses a variety of print and electronic sources to gather information for research topics (e.g., news sources such as magazines, radio, television, newspapers; government publications; microfiche; telephone information services; databases; field studies; speeches; technical documents; periodicals; Internet)
3. Uses a variety of primary sources to gather information for research topics
4. Uses a variety of criteria to evaluate the validity and reliability of primary and secondary source information (e.g., the motives, credibility, and perspectives of the author; date of publication; use of logic, propaganda, bias, and language; comprehensiveness of evidence)
5. Synthesizes information from multiple research studies to draw conclusions that go beyond those found in any of the individual studies
6. Uses systematic strategies (e.g., anecdotal scripting, annotated bibliographies, graphics, conceptual maps, learning logs, notes, outlines)

to organize and record information

7. Scans a passage to determine whether it contains relevant information
8. Writes research papers (e.g., includes a thesis statement; synthesizes information into a logical sequence; paraphrases ideas and connects them to other sources and related topics; identifies complexities and discrepancies in information; addresses different perspectives; organizes and converts information into different forms such as charts, graphs, and drawings; integrates quotations and citations into flow of paper; adapts researched material for presentation to different audiences and for different purposes)
9. Use standard format and methodology for documenting reference sources (e.g., credits quotations and paraphrased ideas; understands the meaning and consequences of plagiarism; distinguishes own ideas from others; uses a style sheet method for citing sources, such as the Modern Language Association, American Psychological Association, or Chicago Manual of Style; includes a bibliography of reference material)

<<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/standardDetails.asp?subjectID=7&standardID=4>>

## **Performances of Understanding & Ongoing Assessment**

In the spirit of emphasizing creative spirit, allowing students to perform research tasks, a teacher can encourage a love of research by encouraging students to brainstorm topics of interest where students have a significant amount of

inquiry. After all, what can be more exhilarating than finding the answer to a nagging question? Create an online “scavenger hunt,” one of the more popular classroom research benchmark activities. Foster a “game-like” atmosphere with friendly competition, simulating a tournament atmosphere, while emphasizing research results. By allowing students to conduct a variety of research tasks, they will learn the value of being efficient (using allocated time wisely and quickly) and persistent (looking for the best sources possible).

A great tool to use in tandem with a scavenger hunt is Kathy Schrock’s Guide for Educators, one of the most definitive online indices of Web-based resources, offers great tools for evaluating Web sites: <http://school.discoveryeducation.com/schrockguide/eval.html>.

Several activities are available here: [www.forensicsonline.net/lessonplans](http://www.forensicsonline.net/lessonplans).

Three common ways of teaching note taking from research are: (1) direct quotation, (2) paraphrasing and (3) summarizing. Making sure students maintain a sensitivity toward context, as well as citing where they found these sources reinforces academic honesty.

The most important aspect of ongoing assessment is to give feedback to students, early and often, regarding their demonstrated proficiency in conducting research. This starts with benchmark activities, such as the scavenger hunt, and continues through when students conduct initial research for a speech or debate case. It’s perhaps more important for a coach to look at the initial research and make sure the student is on the right course before

s/he traverses a misguided course to the final destination.

(Adam J. Jacobi is the NFL’s Coordinator of Member Programs and Coach Education. He has taught Communication and International Baccalaureate Theatre, instructed institutes, and is a one-diamond coach of three national champions).

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# The National Forensic Library

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## VOLUME I

### **CX 101 Developing the Negative Position in Policy Debate Cross Examination**

*Instructor: Diana Prentice Carlin, University of Kansas*

Addresses several key points in The Negative Position - reasons for use, ways to construct, how to use in a round, risks involved. Length: 53:00

### **CX 102 Constructing Affirmative Positions**

*Instructor: Greg Varley, Lakeland HS, NY*

Winning suggestions for novice debaters in the basics of affirmative case construction by exploring these two issues: evaluation of the resolution and building a successful affirmative case. Length: 45:00

### **CX 103 A. Speaker Duties: The Conventions of Debate**

*Instructor: Bill Davis, Blue Valley HS, KS*

For novice debaters - outlines the responsibilities of each speaker from 1AC to 2NR and the only three rules of debate.

### **B. Stock Issues in Policy Debate**

*Instructor: Glenda Ferguson, Heritage Hall School, OK*

For novice debaters - gives background and applications of significance, inherency, solvency, and topicality. (Both topics on one tape) Length: 61:00

### **CX 104 Cross Examination - Theory and Techniques**

*Instructor: Dr. George Ziegelmueller, Wayne State University, MI*

An in-depth study of the finer points of cross examination: asking factual questions, using directed questions of clarification, using questions based on tests of evidence, reasoning and preparing stock questions. Length: 48:00

### **CX 105 Advocacy - How to Improve Your Communication in the Context of Debate**

*Instructor: Dr. George Ziegelmueller, Wayne State University, MI*

Recommendations for improving your speaking style. Length: 56:00

### **CX 106 "Unger and Company," Chapter 1**

*Moderator: Dr. James Unger, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.*

Top collegiate debate coaches "debate about debate" in a McLaughlin group format. Topics include Experts in Debate, Topicality, Judging, and Impact Evaluation. Length: 60:00

### **LD 101 Debating Affirmative in Lincoln Douglas Debate**

*Instructor: Pat Bailey, Homewood HS, AL*

*Marilee Dukes, Vestavia Hills HS, AL*

Topics include designing affirmative strategy - considering the type of resolution, introductions and conclusions, establishing a value premise, rules for justifications and duties of 1AR and 2AR. Length: 56:00

### **LD 102 Debating Negative in Lincoln Douglas Debate**

*Instructor: Pat Bailey, Homewood HS, AL*

*Marilee Dukes, Vestavia Hills HS, AL*

Topics include organizing the negative constructive, strategies and rules governing the negative rebuttal. Length: 58:00

### **LD 103 Cross Examination in Lincoln Douglas Debate**

*Instructor: Aaron Timmons, Newman-Smith HS, TX*

Tips in conducting successful cross examination with student demonstrations and critique. Length: 48:00

### **LD 104 What are Values? And Applying Value Standards to Lincoln Douglas Debate**

*Instructor: Dale McCall, Wellington HS, FL*

Detailed examination of value standards as they apply to LD Debate. Length: 52:00

### **INT 101 An Overview of Interpretation and the Qualities of an Effective Selection**

*Instructor: Ron Krikac, Bradley University, IL*

Issues explored are definitions of interpretation and discussion of the characteristics of a winning national cutting. Length: 49:00

### **INT 102 Script Analysis**

*Instructor: Ron Krikac, Bradley University, IL*

Script analysis including reading aloud, finding details, determining specific relationships and creating a sub-text. Many helpful suggestions and illustrations. Length: 35:00

### **OO 101 Coaching Original Oratory: A Roundtable Discussion 1**

*Moderator: Donovan Cummings, Edison HS, CA*

Five outstanding coaches discuss various oratory strategies: appropriate topics, use of humor, involvement of the coach, reliance on personal experience. Length: 49:45

### **OO 102 Coaching Original Oratory: A Roundtable Discussion 2**

*Moderator: Donovan Cummings, Edison HS, CA*

Five outstanding coaches discuss delivery techniques and strategies: importance of delivery, coaching delivery and gestures, improvement of diction. Length: 35:00

### **OO 103 Oratory Overview**

*Instructor: L.D. Naeglin, San Antonio, TX*

Examines elements in winning orations that listeners and judges want to hear and see. Based on empirical data, an excellent look at judge analysis. Length: 1 hour 25 min

### **OO 104 Orator Introductions and Conclusions**

*Instructor: L.D. Naeglin, San Antonio, TX*

A continuation of OO 103. By understanding judge and listener analysis, speakers can use information to create winning intros and conclusions. Length: 59:25

### **OO 105 Oratory Content**

*Instructor: L.D. Naeglin, San Antonio, TX*

From examples of national competition, tips on how to support ideas successfully in oratory with humor, personal example, analogy, etc. Length: 56:20

### **EXT 101 Issues in Extemp: A Roundtable Discussion 1**

*Moderator: Randy McCutcheon, Albuquerque Academy, NM*

Outstanding extemp coaches discuss getting students involved in extemp, organizing an extemp file, using note cards and applying successful practice techniques. Length: 43:00

### **EXT 102 Issues in Extemp: A Roundtable Discussion 2**

*Moderator: Randy McCutcheon, Albuquerque Academy, NM*

Continuation of EXT 101. Topics covered include organizing the speech body, use of sources, humor, and use of canned or generic introductions. Length: 48:00

### **EXT 103 Championship Extemp: Part 1 - US Extemp**

*Moderator: Randy McCutcheon, Albuquerque Academy, NM*

A critique of two US Extemp national finalists by a roundtable of outstanding extemp coaches. Length: 41:00

### **EXT 104 Championship Extemp: Part 2 - Foreign Extemp**

*Moderator: Randy McCutcheon, Albuquerque Academy, NM*

A critique of two foreign extemp national finalists by a roundtable of outstanding extemp coaches. Length: 41:00

## VOLUME II

### **CX 107 "Unger and Company," Chapter 2**

*Moderator: James J. Unger, The American University*

The Unger-led panel of distinguished collegiate debate coaches clash over the following areas: Inherency, Structure, Generics, Counterplans, and Real World Arguments. Length: 59:00

### **CX 108 "Unger and Company," Chapter 3**

*Moderator: James J. Unger, The American University*

This third chapter of "Unger and Company" contains several differing opinions about Presentation, Intrinsicness, Institutes, and Direction. Length: 58:00

### **CX 109 Introduction to Debate Analysis: Affirmative**

*Instructor: James Copeland, Executive Secretary, NFL*

A clear and precise introduction to affirmative case and plan writing for novice debaters. Length 1 hour 12 min.

Tapes sold only to NFL member schools!  
MORE TAPES, NEXT PAGE

## Volume II (Continued from prior page)

### CX 110 Paradigms

*Instructor: Dr. David Zarefsky, Northwestern University*  
Renowned debate coach and theorist David Zarefsky presents his ideas on paradigms in argumentation. This lecture is required viewing for all serious debaters. Length: 54:10

### CX 111 Demonstration in Debate and Analysis

*Instructor: Greg Varley, Lakeland HS, NY*  
A detailed explanation of the step in a policy debate, from opening to closing. Using the final round debate from the 1992 NFL Nationals in Fargo, Coach Varley has produced a "winning" tape for novices and experienced debaters. Length: 2 hours

### CX 112 Flowing a Debate

*Instructor: Greg Varley, Lakeland HS, NY*  
Students view strategies for proper flowing of a debate in this talk by prominent coach Greg Varley. Length: 35:25

### CX 113 Recruiting Roundtable

*Instructor: Greg Varley, Lakeland HS, NY*  
Three outstanding coaches with different programs offer ideas for recruiting new members. Includes a great film that can be used as a recruiting tool. Length: 53:10

### LD 105 How to Prepare for Your LD Rounds

*Instructor: Dale McCall, Wellington HS, FL*  
A comprehensive discussion of preparations students need to undertake to compete confidently in LD. Length: 35:00

### LD 106 Value Analysis in LD Debate

*Instructor: Diana Prentice, University of Kansas*  
An examination of the value analysis by an outstanding debate coach. Length: 35:00

### LD 107 LD Debate: The Moderate Style

*Instructor Pam Cady, Apple Valley HS, MN*  
Provides invaluable advice on developing a moderate debate style. Two student debaters demonstrate. Length: 53:00

### LD 108 Rebuttal Preparations

*Instructor: Carol Biel, Chesterton HS, IN*  
Coach Biel moderates a group discussion with outstanding young high school debaters. Length: 55:00

### INT 103 Interpretation of Poetry and Prose

*Instructor: Ruby Krider, Prof. Emeritus, Murray State KY*  
Professor Krider offers a colorful and insightful exploration of the role of the interpreter of prose and poetry. Her lecture is divided into three parts: Catch that Image, Chat Chat Chat, and Make Us Believe You. Length: 85:00

### INT 104 Critique of Interpretation

*Moderator: Ron Krikac, Bradley University, IL*  
Three esteemed coaches analyse and critique performances in humorous and dramatic using examples drawn from national final rounds. Length: 59:25

### INT 105 Introduction to Poetry Interpretation

*Instructor: Barbara Funke, Chesterton HS, IN*  
Coach Funke shows how to choose a poem and how to establish commitments as a performer. Length: 56:20

### INT 106 Characterization in Interpretation

*Instructors Pam Cady, Apple Valley HS, MN  
Joe Wycoff, Chesterton HS, IN*  
Cady teaches vocal characterization while Wycoff engages in a discussion on physicalization. Students who competed at the 1993 Nationals are used throughout the presentation. Length: 54:00

### INT 107 Breaking the Ice

*Instructor: Rosella Blunk, Sioux Falls, IA*  
How does one go about putting students at ease in a performance environment? Coach Blunk and her students offer fun and easy activities. Length: 34:25

### GEN 101 Ethics in Competition

*Instructor: Joe Wycoff, Chesterton HS, IN*  
Hall of Fame Coach Joe Wycoff speaks about ethics in forensic competition and other related topics in this entertaining and candid presentation. Length: 40:00

### EXT 105 First Experiences

*Moderator: L.D. Naeglin, San Antonio, TX*  
Former high school extemp speakers discuss how they got started and share advice they found invaluable. Length: 42:30

### EXT 106 Expert Extemp: Advanced Techniques

*Moderator: LD Naeglin, San Antonio, TX*  
Panelists detail skills and techniques they've learned. Length: 44:30

### EXT 107 Expert Extemp: Speech and Critique

*Moderator: LD Naeglin, San Antonio, TX*  
The panelists listen to an extemp speech delivered by Jeremy Mallory of Swarthmore College and provide an in-depth critique of his presentation. Length: 42:30

### EXT 108 Advanced Extempore Speaking

*Instructor: James M. Copeland, Executive Secretary, NFL*  
Covers the Basics of research, file building and outlining as well as advanced concepts: the rule of the 4 sevens, topic selection and attention factors. Length: 85:00

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# How are YOU Giving Youth a Voice?

## \*A New Feature\*

by NFL Director of Development, Bethany Rusch

Individuals across the country are giving NFL youth a voice each day. Each month, an NFL giver will be featured in this format to highlight the incredibly dedicated efforts of parents, coaches, students, and other supporters. Our long-standing tradition of excellence in high school speech and debate education will be highlighted through the stories of our lifeline - YOU.



*Tim pictured center, awarding a Timothy C. Averill Debate Education Fund grant to the Boston Debate League.*

Tim Averill debated policy at Topeka West HS (KS) and went on to serve as an NFL coach at Manchester Essex Regional High School in Massachusetts for 35 years. At just 23 years old, he started the debate program at what was then known as Manchester High School. This future NFL five-diamond coach planted the seeds for what has grown into the 90 student Manchester Essex Regional High School Debate Team. Now retired from Manchester Essex, Tim has served the past four years as the debate coach for Waring School in Beverly, MA.

Tim found his own high school debate experience so influential that he committed his entire career to furthering the development of his debate students' lifelong skills. Tim became an advocate at all levels, working to raise awareness of the value of participation in high school speech and debate. His "think-outside the box" approach to coaching led to intergenerational debates at a local retirement community, bocce ball at tournaments, and free scrimmages for new programs, currently co-sponsored by Jonathan Peele, head coach at Manchester Essex.

When this NFL Hall of Fame member retired from Manchester Essex in June of 2005 – the same year he was named NFL Coach of the Year - he decided that his work wasn't finished. Tim began the next chapter of his life by joining Waring School and founding its debate team. Further, Tim's former students continued to nurture the seeds he had planted 35 years prior as a new coach by beginning the Timothy C. Averill Debate Education Fund. His NFL alumni have worked tirelessly to raise money for this special fund to strengthen the debate program at Manchester Essex and ensure its future success. Not content to give back to only the program for which he now acts as Coach Emeritus, the Timothy C. Averill Debate Education Fund also aims to provide support to surrounding communities to begin their own debate programs in an effort to foster local competition and to support the Boston Debate League (NAUDL).

How's THAT for giving youth a voice?

*Think someone you know should be featured here? E-mail ideas to: [Bethany@nflonline.org](mailto:Bethany@nflonline.org)*

# The Billman Book Club

Encouraging Life Learning in Leadership



November's Book of the Month:

The 8th Habit:  
From Effectiveness to Greatness

Covey, S. (2004). *The 8th Habit*.  
New York: Simon & Schuster.

Sometimes you know a book is a winner before even opening the cover: Other times, someone spills the beans right after you turn the first page. Sitting in the Atlanta airport, *The 8th Habit* in hand, I hear the woman across from me say, "That's my book!" Alarmed, I looked up, thinking, "No, I brought this from home." "That's my *book*," she said again, smiling and nodding vigorously. "It's real good."

What she didn't explain, however, and I have since learned, is precisely why Steven Covey's follow up to his wildly successful *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* struck a chord with readers across the country. Covey addresses our desire for personal meaning by arguing that attaining fulfillment is quite simple. He writes: "When you engage in work that taps your talent and fuels your passion – that rises out of a great need in the world...herein lies your voice, your calling, your soul's code" (p. 5). He calls this process of discovering our talents, passions, and potential contributions "finding our voice" (p. 26). Finding our voice and helping others find theirs gives our lives fulfillment and meaning.

## The Problem

Like any good orator, Covey explains the problem and its causes before outlining the solution. The dilemma that many people face, he contends, is uncertainty about their purpose and vague intuition that they should be doing more. Unfortunately, this unhappiness tends to spread to relationships, depleting them of trust and sincerity. Stripped of personal fulfillment or supportive relationships, many people unnecessarily languish in mediocrity.

## The Cause

The situation noted above arises when our daily work fails to engage us as whole people. As Covey contends, "human beings are not *things*...they are four dimensional - body, mind, heart and spirit" (p. 21). Activities which fail to engage us in each dimension, Covey argues, will leave us unfulfilled. For example, if our work is not challenging, our minds will be neglected. If we do not care about our work, our hearts will be neglected, and so on.

Who is to blame for our discontent? We are, Covey argues (p. 41). Along with a four-dimensional nature, each individual is born with the ability to make choices. In fact, this discretion

distinguishes humans from other animals (p. 43). While we may not be able to control our surroundings, we always have a choice about how to respond to those surroundings. This space, this ability to choose, makes us ultimately responsible for our own destinies. Or, as Covey explains, it empowers us and makes us accountable for our own lives (p. 43).

## The Solution

Covey asserts that because each person is solely responsible for engaging his/her mind, body, heart, and spirit, each of us has an obligation to find our voice. Finding our voice, our unique place in the world around us, will enable us to serve and grow as a whole person.

In this vein, everyone has an obligation to make good choices which further the goal of finding his/her voice. On this subject, Covey notes that making good choices consists of taking the best available option in a given situation. In some cases, he reminds us, this may mean saying "no deal" to a new path if we feel it silences our voice (p. 172).

Finding our own voice is significant, but the greatness to which Covey alludes in the subtitle of his book occurs when we help others find their voices. Happily,



the bulk of what we do in the National Forensic League involves helping others, specifically high school students, find their voices. Covey would applaud this.

However, he would remind us that helping someone find his or her voice involves more than helping that person learn to speak. Finding voice means inspiring them to explore their passion, talents, and conscience. In other words, students' *communication* of what they think, feel, and believe is most significant when it reflects an *understanding* of what they think, feel, and believe.

Finding one's voice and helping others to find their voice is a lengthy process, and Covey devotes a substantial amount of text to strategies which make this process easier. He makes the observation, as do so many other leadership experts and our own NFL Code of Honor, that integrity is the paramount virtue for finding voice (p. 148). Living without integrity is taxing on the spirit, he argues, and will only undermine efforts for growth in the long run.

Maintaining integrity also makes a person trustworthy, positioning him/her to lead others effectively. Covey notes, however, that trust "is a noun and a verb," (p. 147), which means that we also have a responsibility to demonstrate our trust in others. Giving people space to grow and trusting them to make their own choices may be difficult, but it is critical in the process of helping others find their voice.

### Application

In a book about finding your voice, it is not difficult to draw parallels to our forensic community. However, three key points warrant specific attention:

1. We have to find our voice first. As Covey mentions, we will not be able to leader others effectively until we reflect on our own passion, talent, and conscience.
2. Students, like us, are whole people. When coaching, it is important that we address them on a variety of levels. Ensuring that students have access to topics that interest them is a good step in this

direction.

3. Finding success means maximizing our positive choices. While we cannot control many aspects of the forensic experience, including our budgets, the composition of our teams, or other competitors, we can always choose the way we respond to these stimuli. Such choices, if wisely made, will empower us and inspire others.

From question and answer sections at the conclusion of each chapter to the DVD of inspirational videos at the back of the book, *The 8th Habit* deserves a look. More important, it deserves reflection and potential application in our own lives. Above all, we should remember Covey's admonition that "to know and not do, is really not to know" (p. 33). Personal action is the best way to discover that the path from effectiveness to greatness means making a choice to find our voice and to help others find theirs. It's a commitment, to be sure, but a worthwhile journey for all of us.

-J. Billman

## ATTENTION STUDENTS, ALUMNI, COACHES AND PARENTS:

A month ago, the NFL unveiled the newest version of ForensicsOnline.net (FOL), donated in 2007 by alum Jason Mehta. As one of our community's greatest resources and (virtual) gathering places, the NFL sought ways to ensure that FOL remained a unique and vibrant part of the forensics world. To that end, the site has been designed as portal for forensics, including features common to several social networking sites.

As part of its "Giving Youth a Voice" campaign, NFL encourages its members -- students and coaches -- to



weigh-in on the fall election, current trends in culture and society, as well as continue to provide one another support through this online medium.

The forums from prior versions of FOL remain intact, but with improved security and anti-spam features. Additionally, this version includes a fully-functional blog interface, tournament calendar (to which any member user can submit tournaments to be listed), resource sharing area, photo albums, and much more.



# Faulty Speaker Recognition Systems: “Longest Standing” and “Activity” Waste Time



by Adam J. Jacobi

While I have coached Dramatic Interp., Policy Debate and everything in between, my passion seems to have become Student Congress Debate. Perhaps it's because I discovered early in life that communication is the crux of how our democratic society works, and the dynamism of lawmaking is a true test of problem solving at work. To that end, I introduce you to the monthly “Congress Connection” column, where I will ponder issues central to this event, and endeavor to bring it to the masses!

In the last Rostrum article I penned about Congress (November 2006), I discussed what I dubbed “urban legends” of Congress: the use of procedures that are not actual procedures! I also pondered ethics and the efficiency of chambers: upholding the ultimate aim that Congress is really more about speaking and debating than it is about the procedure. To that end, I present some new parliamentary customs that have arisen, and my observations and recommendations, accordingly.

Foremost is the much-maligned conundrum of speaker recognition. The prevailing parliamentary rule in most leagues is precedence, that is, those speakers who have not spoken, or who have spoken least. However, before precedence is established, recognition is still random, and subject to the bias of the elected student presiding officer. So, to combat this, recency was devised, adding one priority layer to precedence by recognizing the legislator who spoke least recently (earliest). When employed,

recency actually continues for the duration of a session, in companionship to precedence. In my observation of Congress chambers across the country and in different leagues, students have chosen to adopt this norm on their own, lending credence to its effectiveness.

In their quest to appear impartial, students who preside have devised less effective and efficient measures to recognize speakers before precedence is established. The first of these is longest standing, which recognizes speakers who stood first (and conceivably, continued to stand) on each side of debate for a particular legislation. The problem with this is twofold: the presiding officer has to take the time to write down everyone who stood, taking care to note shorter persons in the back of the room, plus, the order in which s/he writes the names is still random, but subject to bias. So, this approach fails to mitigate bias, and actually adds more time to figuring recognition, taking time away from legislators to speak.

Next, there's the notion of activity, which is even less effective than Longest Standing. Here, presiding officers track questions, and in some cases, motions by students on the floor. Those who advocate this system assert that it encourages more interaction in a chamber. The reality is that students make gratuitous motions and ask meaningless questions just to get recognized. And, guess what? The presiding officer has

control over who to call on for motions and questions, so this little magic trick of illusion only shifts the perception of bias away from recognizing speeches. Again, extra time is wasted in figuring these fallacious factors of mitigating bias. What's more, the NFL added one minute of questioning after each speech following the sponsorship, which encourages more interactivity. However, that period should not be used gratuitously, either. It should be reserved for meaningful, substantive questions that truly extend or clarify debate.

The bottom line is that longest standing and activity are a waste of time, because they do not truly aid a presiding officer in adding objective priority layers to the recognition system.

Beyond the effective recency method, there aren't any prevailing norms I've observed that mitigate the need to randomly recognize speakers before precedence is established. Beware those that claim to eliminate that bias, because they're usually a smoke and mirrors approach that can actually waste more time.

Next month, I'll discuss abuse of voting blocs and other manipulative measures that discourage smaller and starting Congress programs. If you have any comments, concerns, questions or ideas you'd like to pose in this column, please let me know! E-mail [jacobi@nflonline.org](mailto:jacobi@nflonline.org).

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## Report of NEW NFL Members & Degrees by State

### September 1 - September 30, 2008

	Degree of Merit	Degree of Honor	Degree of Excellence	Degree of Distinction	Degree of Special Distinction	Degree of Superior Distinction	Degree of Outstanding Distinction	Degree of Premier Distinction
Alabama	18	3	1	2	2			
Alaska		1						
Arizona	5		1		1			
Arkansas								
California	24	29	27	15	6	2		
Colorado		1						
Connecticut								
Delaware								
District of Columbia								
Florida	57	41	17	15	3	5	1	
Georgia	47	18	14	10	4	2		1
Hawaii								
Idaho	1							
Illinois	2		5	5		2		
Indiana	1		2			1	1	1
Iowa	2	2	7	2	4	1		
Kansas	92	15	15		12	5	2	1
Kentucky	3	1	1	22				
Louisiana	4	1				1		
Maine								
Maryland	8	7	10	5	2	1	1	1
Massachusetts		1						
Michigan								
Minnesota	1		1					
Mississippi	42	14	3		2	2		
Missouri	4	4	1	5	1	1	1	
Montana								
Nebraska			1	1		1		
Nevada	4							
New Hampshire								
New Jersey			1					
New Mexico	1				1			
New York	3	1	6	4	2	2	2	
North Carolina	1	5	1	4		1		
North Dakota	26	3	3	2	2	1	1	1
Ohio				1	1			
Oklahoma	6		1	1				
Oregon								
Pennsylvania						2		
Rhode Island								
South Carolina			2	3	1		2	
South Dakota								
Tennessee	15	3	4	7	1			
Texas	133	49	36	35	10	21	9	2
Utah		1	1	1	1			
Vermont								
Virginia			1			1		
Washington	1	1						
West Virginia	5	2	1	1				
Wisconsin	2	2		2				
Wyoming								

# Affiliates - Welcome!

**The National Forensic League National Debate and Speech Honor Society  
welcomes the following New NFL Programs:**

Asbury School	AL	International Business & Communications Studies at Olympic	NC
Cathedral Catholic HS	CA	Mallard Creek HS	NC
Los Osos HS	CA	North Raleigh Christian Acad	NC
Castle View HS	CO	Phillip O Berry Academy of Tech	NC
All Saints' Academy	FL	Trinity School of Durham and Chapel Hill	NC
Carrollwood Day School	FL	Preston HS	NY
Maynard Evans HS	FL	Classen SAS	OK
Paul J Hagerty HS	FL	Northwest Classen HS	OK
South Plantation HS	FL		
Wheeler HS	GA	Emerald HS	SC
Dwight D Eisenhower HS	IL	Wren NS	SC
Flint Hills Christian School	KS	Iroquois HS	SD
Hazard HS	KY	Marty Indian School	SD
Louisville Male HS	KY	Taipei American School	TAIWAN
Seaholm HS	MI	East Literature Magnet HS	TN
Anoka HS	MN	Canadian ISD	TX
Brentwood HS	MO	Cypress-Ranch HS	TX
Staley HS	MO	Juab HS	UT
The Principia School	MO	Salem Hills HS	UT
Murrah HS	MS	Bullard HS	TX
North Platte St Patricks	NE	Saint Thomas' Episcopal School	TX
Sage Ridge School	NV	Riverheads HS	VA
		Mount Rainier Lutheran High	WA
		Arrowhead HS	WI

**M**ark Your Calendar for the  
**2009 NFL National Speech Tournament!**

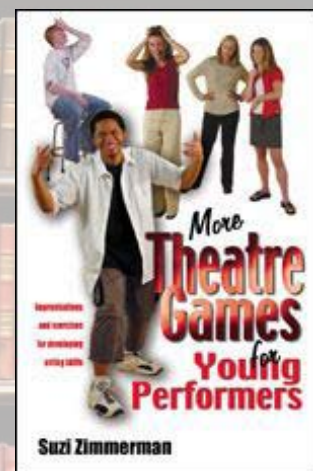
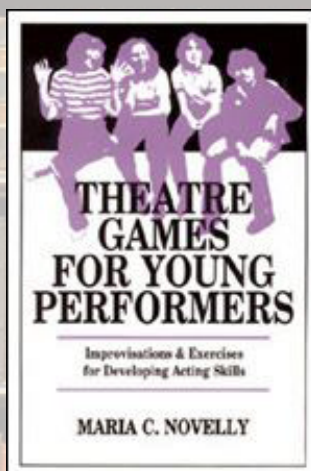
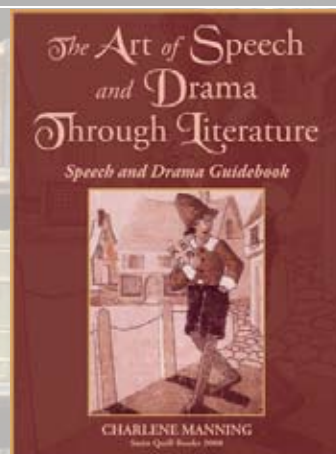
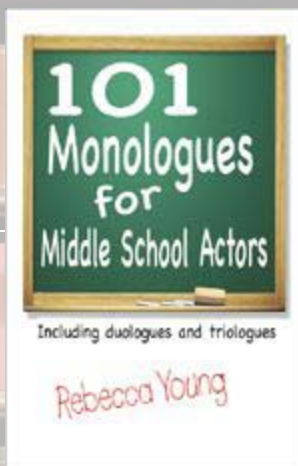
**June 14<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009  
Birmingham, Alabama**





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