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I would like to take a few sentences to thank everyone who helped this year with the IPDA journal. Thank you for the hard work and kind suggestions. I hope this year's addition is a vast improvement from last years. I do grant that this is far from flawless or perfect but with your help it's getting better. I finally want to thank my wife, Becky, for supporting all my wild forensic adventures =).

Editorial:

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A Call to Statesmanship

"The point of being good is that you have the chance to be great," Aristotle.

The format of the International Public Debate Association teaches its competitors to be good. It teaches them clarity, critical thinking and persuasion. I could go as far as to say that it teaches them manners, presentation, and hygiene.

But the argument that I find myself unable to make, the argument that I most desire to make, is that IPDA teaches statesmanship, that it teaches true rhetoric. That it enables our students to learn and to practice public address at its highest level. The level reached so rarely in "real" life, but the level reached for by all who would demand an audience. The level reached by Lincoln, by Roosevelt, and by Reagan. The level missed so famously by both Bushes, by Clinton, by Nixon. The level of the Gettysburg Address, the Challenger Address, the Day of Infamy Address.

And, of course, this problem is far from unique to IPDA. Public speaking teachers, corporate consultants, professional speech-writers, and every debate organization ever formed have all, at least at some level, grappled with this very issue. How is IPDA to be any different? Are we to teach the wind-up oratory of collegiate individual events? Are we to succumb to the logic-only oratory of Parliamentary and Cross-Examination debate? Or are we to continue to be appeased at the stumble-bum, ho-hum rhetoric of most of our own competitors?

I say we can do more! I say we can raise the level of statesmanship expected and practiced in our classrooms and at our tournaments. I say we can and should aim higher! In certain circles, Public Debate is derided as value debate dedicated to the inane, concerned more with the frosting than the cake. I say IPDA is in the perfect position- historically, culturally, and institutionally- to practice and to teach more than "college forensics." I say IPDA can and should be a vehicle to produce true rhetors, statesmen able to move mountains with the sound of their voice, to inspire action in the masses, to change to very course of history with the force of their logic.

Which all sounds wonderful in the abstract, but how do we do it? How do we succeed where others have failed so dramatically? How do we achieve what our textbooks never even dare to dream? How do we systematize that which many would argue is fleeting? How do we dare to expect that which is an exception to the rule?

We do so like true scholars. By identifying it, by analyzing it, and by synthesizing it. In my experience, true rhetoric, true statesmanship, address that inspires and moves, speeches that transcend time and place, have five common characteristics: content that matters, logic that works, passion that moves, values that transcend, and a rhetor who cares.

Content

First, true statesmanship must have content that matters. In this vein, much of the criticism leveled at IPDA is justified. We spend a great deal of our time and energy discussing Britney and Madonna instead of Hillary and Condeleeza, talking about the NFL and MLS as opposed to the EU and NAFTA. But significance, like all communication, is a subjective criteria. What may move me may leave you cold. And surely we can't expect all of our debate topics for every round to concern timely, historically important, culturally significant issues. So, what is a debater to do when faced with yet another topic on the career of K-Fed, sports, or even too small a slice of a larger, more significant issue (like school uniforms).

Might I suggest that it is the obligation of the debaters, the rhetors, to fill their address with content that matters, not the framers of the resolutions. While remaining topical and not resorting to specific knowledge, our debaters can and should raise the level of discourse. Ensconced in every value resolution are ideals that underpin and underlie. Every fact case is rife with causes, effects, and implications. Policy rounds cry out for depth and breadth of logic. Our debaters should be trained in the specific skills of critical thinking. Even while being true to the letter and spirit of a resolution, the larger picture and the microcosm are both valid areas of analysis and argument. Does our rhetoric reach the "depth and breadth and height our souls can reach?" Or are we satisfied with just trying to win a round?

But what does that look like in an actual debate? First, we should do a much better job of encouraging our students to support their contentions. Narratives, statistics, facts, expert opinions- these are good things! I know they only have thirty minutes of preparation time, but be honest, most of them do not use it wisely. As a result we get contentions that are stated, explained and summarized but not supported. We have to do a better job of teaching our young scholars how to do valid research on the internet, of what print resources they may need and making them available, of how to study before going to a tournament. Public debate cannot be content-free debate. If it is, it will die.

Next, we should challenge them to go beyond the denotative definitions of the words in the resolution. I am previewing a bit of logic and values here, but our content should transcend the small-scope, microcosm of the announced topic. Implications, harms, effects, advantages, causes should all be explored and analyzed. Our thirty minute rounds should seem crowded and insufficient. I am not speaking here of case analysis, rather of case construction and support. Our judge may be lay, and our discourse may be lofty, but perhaps we should have so much to talk about that we feel a bit rushed at times. Not in number of points and sub-points, mind you, only in amount of support for our points. A well-supported argument is a thing of beauty!

Logic

Second, true rhetoric has logic that works. Peggy Noonan, the author of Reagan's "Challenger" and "Boys of Normandy" addresses, claims that the logic of a speech is always its most moving element. Fortunately, this is the area which we do best. Our CEDA and Parli. brethren claim the higher ground in this criteria, even equating their brand of debate as verbal chess. However, their logic is limited to one resolution per year in the case of CEDA and limited to specific topic areas in Parli. Even more to the point, Parli. teams are now announcing at the start of the year what they are "running" that year. I can't even begin to fathom how they think they are debating the actually announced topic!

As for us, we have a box on our ballot for logic, we teach case construction and refutation, and we hammer home how important they whole issue is. So, where can we improve? First, in moving away from CEDA and Parli., we have also moved away from policy resolutions. I feel that running a policy case requires a level of logic and a depth of thinking that are missing in the average round. As I have watched the Trey Gibsons, Bob Alexanders, and Keith Milsteads of the world, I have noticed that their best rounds are often those concerning policies. I don't think that is a coincidence. I think policy requires that next level of thinking, and thus, their rhetoric is inspired as well. So, we should keep, or go back to, teaching how to run a policy case. Our students should learn the stock issues. They should be challenged to think through harms and advantages. They should understand plans and how to present them. This improves our ability to think logically.

Second, our desire to speak to the common man has also caused us to speak to the lowest common denominator. We disrespect our judges when we fail to trust them with basic vocabulary and concepts. We water down our language to the point where it is no longer discernable. We should call logical fallacies by name. Sure, we may have to explain them, but so what? It will only take a moment. Our judging pool is untrained, but that doesn't make them unintelligent! It is okay for us to construct a syllogism, to use an enthymeme, and to call out a logical fallacy. "The most moving thing about a speech is its logic."

Passion

Third, true statesmen move their audiences with emotion as well as logic. When was the last time you were moved to tears in a debate round? And yet, Aristotle taught us that a full third of the available means of persuasion falls within the realm of emotion! Why are we not teaching it? Why are we not using it? We know for certain that it is being used in the world into which our trainees are graduating? In everything from campaign addresses to laxative commercials, we are being asked to laugh, cry, or lust! Yet, emotion is MIA in our debate rounds. Why? Excellent texts on pathos line the bookshelves. Examples of great pathos exist in

virtually all of our classic speeches. Our culture is replete with emotional arguments. Yet, I sit and I judge and I try to stave off boredom and just stay awake!

This association is virtually crying out for passion! Our lay judges show up without knowing what they are in for. Move them! Our coaches trek to yet another tournament. Move them! Our teams prep for yet another case. Move them! We must do more than advise our debaters to open with a story or use a short narrative in the summation. We must insist that a speech without passion is a child without a smile! A speech that bores is a knife without a blade! A speech that fails to move is a car that won't crank!

And we have to institutionalize it. It won't happen by hoping it will. We have to make it clear to our judges- if this rhetor doesn't command your attention, don't give it to her. If his speech doesn't move you, don't vote for him. If they don't move you to fear, to empathy, to laughter, to tears- they aren't worthy of your ballot! It has to be a criteria on the ballot and a point of emphasis in the judges' meetings. If we are to train the next crop of great speakers, then we must train them to grab the audience by the throat and not let go. And then, we must reward them for doing so!

Values

Fourth, great speeches contain values that transcend the hear and now and speak to the eternal and timeless. Are we better people for doing what we do? Are we? Has our experience with college forensics made us better people than we would have been without it? I'm not talking smarter, or better speakers, or even more responsible. I'm asking, "Are you a better *person*?" Are you living an examined life? I would dare say that I am not. I love my job. I feel that I have an important job, but I don't necessarily feel like a better person for doing it! I don't feel like I am edified when I come to judge a tournament, when I hold a practice. Our debates, for the most part, do not edify. They don't not appeal to our better natures. They educate, they illuminate, they even enlighten. But they do not, on the whole, edify. They don't appeal to our more noble selves, challenge us to live up to a higher standard, or illuminate the human condition.

Public speaking is, after all, an art form. And art should be more than simply practical, serviceable. It should move us at a level beyond the daily and mundane. It should inspire us to greatness, not just to the routine. It should challenge the very core of our being, not just our choice of breakfast cereal. It should show us what is possible, not just the lesser of two evils. Our debate rounds should do all this and more!

But how? How can a simple debate exercise be turned into the Sistine Chapel? How can we go from teaching prose to teaching poetry, paint-by-the-numbers to oil, chopsticks to Mozart? Not to over-simplify here, but perhaps it is as simple as expecting more. Our students have an endless capacity to surprise and amaze. Perhaps they are simply giving us what we have come to believe is acceptable. We've all seen the entrance exams for colleges 100 years ago. We know that standards across the board are dropping faster than temperatures in November. Perhaps, Public Debate should be a sentinel, a lone guard standing firm against lowered expectations, against the tyranny of grade inflation and against the celebration of the lowest common denominator. Just because it is Public Debate does not mean that everybody can do it or that everybody will succeed at it. Our craft is difficult , and we shouldn't pretend otherwise. We should be gentle, be we should not coddle. We deserve to expect more! And our expectations should be reflected in our classrooms and on our ballots.

Rhetor

And finally, true statesmanship is reflected by the character of the statesman. And I'm not talking about our practice of welcoming and thanking the judge which so often comes across as stilted and forced. And I'm not talking about making your first question in cross-examination, "And how are you today?" I am talking about a speaker who is passionate about her topic. A speaker who is genuinely concerned that her audience understand the topic. A speaker who holds her audience in true esteem. We must teach our speakers to respect their audiences. To communicate that respect. To find points of commonality and community with them. We must remind them of the old adage, "No one cares how much you know until they know how much you care."

IPDA is founded on the principle that teaching our students to persuade one person is teaching them to persuade the masses. And that is true of every rhetorical situation. So, what is that one person asking of us? Do I like you? Do you like me? Can I trust you? Are you acting in my best interests? And, once again, our judges are smart. They know when we are faking it. When we act less than ethically, less than honestly. They don't want to shake our hands while they are trying to remember enough of the debate to fill out a ballot. They don't want to make "small talk" before the round when they are trying to maintain a sense of neutrality. They simply want

address that treats them and the topic with respect, regard even. So, we must become ethics professors as well as communication professors. But how? How doe we teach empathy? How do we teach people to care, genuinely, passionately, about both their topic and their audience?

First, we must allow for it. We acknowledge the "ego barrier" (Calvin Miller, *The Empowered Communicator*) that exists between speaker and audience and teach our students ways of overcoming it. We acknowledge that persuasion is about more than content. It is about personality and trust. Perhaps we even give each speaker an extra minute in the constructive addresses during which, if they choose to use it at all, they cannot mention the resolution. Perhaps we simply teach them how important trust and "like-ability" are. But either way, we must take deliberate, active steps toward teaching our students that character counts.

Second, we judge it. We give our judges permission to do that which they are already doing. We provide them with a vehicle to judge/acknowledge their feelings about a particular speaker. "But that's too subjective. That would lead to too many abuses. That would lead to a 'tyranny of the beautiful people.'" A) "No it's not, no it wouldn't, and no it wouldn't." But B) "Yeah. So?" That's life. We make those types of judgments everyday in every setting. From courtrooms to boardrooms, from dates to interviews, how we subjectively feel about a person influences, determines even, the extent to which we are willing to listen to them, to accept their ideas, to allow them to move us. That's why books like *Dress for Success* exist! We have to give our judges the ability to express how they feel about our debaters because that is a direct reflection of how our debaters feel about them.

So, where does that leave us? It leaves us with a litany of challenges to face, issues to address, and mountains to climb. We need

- Content that matters
- Logic that works
- Passion that moves
- Values that transcend
- Rhetors who care

Anything short of that dishonors the memories of great orators from Demosthenes to Barbara Jordan and Edmund Burke to William Jennings Bryan. It also fails to realize the dreams of Alan Cirlin and Jack Rogers. And perhaps most importantly, it sells shorts the potential of those yet-unnamed students who are to pass through our teams, our rounds, and our lives in the years to come.

There is no weapon more dangerous, no tool more useful, no force more powerful than the spoken word. We must teach it with care and yield it with precision. The challenge is ours for the taking. The world awaits.

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IPDA: Academic debate's minority group.

ABSTRACT

Throughout the history of academic debate there as been a progression of formats that have each reached the same end: that of a highly technical and rapid-fire style. IPDA is a rich subculture within academic debate as it is a highly communication oriented activity. There is a need for this activity and room for growth. This activity is one of the most valuable to students as well as accessible, but only in terms of understanding. It is our responsibility to protect this activity and do what we can to help it grow.

IPDA: Academic debate's minority group.
Introduction

Pocket protectors, glasses, and a complete lack of fashion sense are common stereotypes of debaters. However, as with all stereotypes these simply are not accurate. Debate is a rich subculture of which most people do not have much knowledge. Before explaining the specifics of such a subculture, there must be a clear definition of the term subculture, Aguirre & Turner (2007) offer: "Groups that can be distinguished by their history as well as their distinctive behavior, organization, culture and, perhaps, superficial biological features". When we look at debate as an activity and those that permeate the activity, there is a strong subculture that is put forth which will be seen through an analysis of their history, distinctive traits and general experiences. The main emphasis of this analysis will be placed on the International Public Debate Association (IPDA) as this is a relatively young form of debate and arguably the most pure form of academic debate.

History of Debate

Hensley & Carlin (1999) give a thorough analysis of debate's origins; citing its origins to ancient Greece, and crediting Protagoras as the "father of debate". Protagoras was a pre-Socratic scholar that required his students to argue the pros and cons on a variety of issues. Plato later accredited Protagoras to being a sophist, one who laid more importance on the effect of the communication on the listener rather than truth. Aristotle thus began stressing the importance of truth and examination of both sides of an issue (Hensley & Carlin, 1999). Freeley & Steinberg (2005) continue the history with a more in-depth look at contemporary debate; citing, from the ancient Greeks to recent history debate continued in academia as an exclusive activity that was lacking in uniformity. By the 1940's, tournament debate grew in popularity with the creation of the National Debate Tournament (NDT). The NDT was the primary style of debate for the next 30 years under direction of the American Forensic Association (AFA). Debates would take place across the country and schools would compete for bids to participate in the NDT. By 1971 there was a dramatic shift in the direction of debate with the inception of the Cross Examination Debate Association (CEDA). Their creation was largely due to a need for a stronger emphasis on communication skills as the NDT became a very technical and rapid-fire style of debate. In 1996 CEDA and NDT "merged" by utilizing the same debate topic for the year. By this point there were only two distinct differences: 1. NDT was a tournament whereas CEDA was an organization and 2. NDT was still exclusive where the CEDA National Tournament was inclusive of all CEDA debaters. As with the creation of CEDA, debaters began to get fed up with very technical and rapid-fire debate. They would then create an organization to compete in; all with the emphasis being on communication skills; but all (except

IPDA) would fall down the same rabbit hole and become increasingly technical and more rapid-fire. (Freeley & Steinberg 2005).

When we look to academia we see there are many organizations and clubs that are available to students. One of the least known is that of debate, and more specifically IPDA debate. IPDA is a subculture within a subculture and has just recently begun to flourish.

Distinctive Traits of IPDA Debaters

Strange (2006) outlines seven distinct characteristics of debaters: public speaking skills, critical thinking skills, listening skills, argumentation skills, analysis and investigation of public issues, influencing others, and independent thought. These skills shift debaters from the macro-population into a subpopulation all of their own. These skills are finely tuned over the career of a debater and become useful tools in their lives, which will be discussed further in the last section.

First, public speaking skills are an integral part of any debater. Fellows (2003) states that "Americans fear public speaking more than they fear death". Debaters have taken this fear and charged toward it head on. The ability to conquer the fear of speaking in front of people, is one most have not taken steps to overcome this fear. Granted, debate is not the only medium by which one can overcome a fear of public speaking, however, it is one of the most pervasive. The ability to speak well in front of an audience has a multitude of benefits that can help one in any career or profession.

Second, critical thinking skills are crucial to debate. Bassham, Irwin, Nardone and Wallace (2002) define critical thinking as: "the general term given to a wide range of cognitive skills and intellectual dispositions needed to effectively identify, analyze and evaluate arguments and truth claims, to discover and overcome personal prejudices and biases, to formulate and present convincing reasons in support of conclusions, and to make reasonable, intelligent decisions about what to believe and what to do". Debate being an activity of advocacy and argumentation critical thought must be pursued to evaluate the claims of those refuting argumentation laid forth. Our society is increasing in its lack of ability to critically evaluate what we are told. When we see three times the news coverage of Anna Nicole Smith's death than the war in Iraq, we are not examining what is truly important. This is not a new trend, our society tends to "go with the flow" than analyze the arguments put forth by those in charge, racism and McCarthyism demonstrate this. The trained debater, however, questions everything.

Third, listening is a lesser known milestone of debate. Brownell (2006) presents a model for listening comprising of: hearing, understanding, remembering, interpreting, evaluating and responding. Moreover, Brownell asserts that most people don't listen; rather they impatiently wait for their turn to speak (Brownell, 2006). Utilizing the components within this model of listening allow the debater to effectively interpret and appropriately respond to the claims of the opposition. These skills are quite effective in everyday situations where miscommunication typically happens due to poor listening, as 80% of the responsibility for effective communication lies with the listener (Brownell, 2006).

Fourth, argumentation skills have permeated debate from the time of the ancient Greeks. Freeley & Steinberg (2005) define argumentation as "reason giving in communicative situations by people whose purpose is the justification of acts, beliefs, attitudes and values" (Freeley & Steinberg, 2005). The most common model of argumentation was developed by Stephen Toulmin and is referred to as the "Toulmin model". The basic structure of an argument within this model is claim (a conclusion that is trying to be reached), grounds (evidence in support of the statement) and warrant (evidence and reasoning that moves from the grounds to the claim to justify the conclusion). When one listens to people put forth an argument, most of the time, one will notice their argument is lacking in one of these areas. However, people untrained in even rudimentary argumentation skills don't analyze the arguments placed before them. This is especially important in the Democratic republic in which we live. When those in charge tell us we must go to war, we must evaluate the claims laid forth and evaluate if the conclusion follows from those claims.

Fifth, analysis and investigation of public issues is a skill developed through debate. The propositions within debate are grounded within the realm of reality and typically follow some sort of trend within current affairs. The debater must analyze the situation and any historical context that is relevant to effectively argue within their side of the proposition. Furthermore, the topics can be vague and abstract on only superficially meaningful. However, a well trained debater can take the deeper rooted meaning from any topic that only tangentially seems worth examination. When a debater begins to finely tune their skills they become better

informed citizens looking at public policy through a critical eye, something of which our founding fathers would have been proud.

Sixth, influencing others is a primary concern of any debater. A debate round is typically done in front of an audience or a judge, with the end goal of persuading them to their side of the debate. The ability to use this influence can be a benefit to society or harm. However, even mere knowledge of the tactics employed by those that would wish to persuade is a benefit to society, as we can then determine whether or not we truly wish to be persuaded in such a direction and aren't falling blindly for some trick.

Finally, debaters develop independent thought. In public education there is a stronger emphasis placed upon memorizing instead of actual learning (The Morning Star Academy, 2007). The environment fostered through debate discourages the mere memorizing of facts and incorporates actual learning. We all have heard the famous phrase "four score and seven years ago…" and know it as the Gettysburg address. However, ask an average student what the implications of that speech were and they will most likely stumble. However, a debater uses independent critical thinking skills and is ready to give analysis on the speech and the impacts we can see from that speech even to this day.

The Debate Experience

As a debater there are many sacrifices that must be made in order to gain a competitive edge within this activity. The experience is unlike any other and can not fully be conveyed to another, it is unique and something that can only be fully appreciated when experienced. When looking at minority groups we tend to think of "the little person" stereotype and tend to get a negative perception of their experience, especially in terms of racial minorities; with debate, that is not always the case.

The typical IPDA season lasts from September through April, culminating with the national tournament. Over the course of two semesters there are 10-16 tournaments. There is much traveling done with teams that are very competitive going to most, if not all, tournaments. Students give up their free weekends to travel to another university to engage in intellectual competition against other schools. Beyond just merely traveling teams will meet anywhere from 1 to 5 times a week for practice. The time spent preparing and sub sequentially competing in tournaments is consuming and rather tolling on the individual. However, the skills acquired in debate carry over into their school work and give them a competitive edge within their studies.

There, typically, is much support for such academic programs, especially from faculty and staff. The upper echelons of administration however, seem to only want to appear to support academic competition. Typically these activities are under funded, one of the major roadblocks to bringing in new schools into the IPDA community, and don't receive much tangible support from the administration. Some schools only means of competition come from students personally funding their own excursions on debate trips, which are yet another price the debater must pay to compete.

In the end though, debate experience has empirically proven to pay off. Richey (2007) conducted a study of former IPDA national champions on their career success post-involvement with IPDA. His findings showed that there was an overwhelming interest within two particular career fields, teaching and law (Richey, 2007). These findings aren't surprising when looking at the skills debaters acquire through their involvement within the activity.

In final summation, IPDA is a rich subculture within the subculture of "academic debate". This is an activity that has many long lasting worth while qualities that must be preserved at such a delicate time of expansion. Anything we can do as an organization to preserve the spirit of this activity while promoting it to our colleagues and friends is going to benefit not only this activity and those involved, but will have lasting impact on the society as a whole.

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THE VALUE OF VALUES

If...existence precedes essence, and if we grant that we exist and fashion our image at one and the same time, the image is valid for everybody and for our whole age. Thus, our responsibility is much greater than we might have supposed, because it involves all man-kind. ... Therefore, I am responsible for myself and for everyone else. I am creating a certain image of man of my own choosing. In choosing myself, I choose man.

Sartre, *L'existentialism est un Humanism,* 1947, p.37

In this passage Sartre is pointing out the awesome responsibility placed on humans because they are free. It is also very similar to Richard Weavers' view of the nature and purpose of rhetoric. That rhetoric "truth plus its artful presentation" (Weaver 53) addresses itself to the most important of all ends, the persuading of human beings to moral and ethical thoughts and actions based on morals and ethics(Weaver 1970). Weaver, as a neo-platonist, views the goal of true rhetoric as the attempt to improve the audience by showing them better versions of themselves.

In the early 1990's a legal scholar named Pierre Schlag wrote a series of articles that attacked the use of normative (value) thought and rhetoric. He does this in two main ways 1) he denies that people have free will and 2) he believes that value talk is not persuasive or effective and should be taken out of rhetoric. This paper will first set up Weavers' definition of humans and rhetoric. This paper will then set up Schlags' argument against normative rhetoric. Finally, the paper will show the flaws in Schlags' argument and how it violates the definition of humans and rhetoric according to Weaver.

Throughout the history of collegiate debate all the styles of debate have begun with ethos, pathos, and logos were primary concerns. As the different styles developed they evolved into concentrating on logos and forgetting about ethos and pathos. IPDA now stands at the beginning of that evolutionary step. By addressing Schlag's arguments it is hoped that the members of IPDA will remember to keep logos balanced with ethos and pathos.

Review of Literature

First, Schlag attempts to argue that we should discontinue the use of normative rhetoric (values terms in argumentation). He points out that each and every social, legal, and political event is represented as an event calling for a value-based choice. He does not feel that any of our choices make any direct effect on society or politics. Schlag believes that telling people that they have choices (free will) just reinforces the current societal structures and prevents any real change from occurring (June 1991, 1702). Schlag posits that the basic belief that people are free actors is the main problem. It causes people to believe that "sovereign individuals...control the levers of social machinery." But no real control of the "social machinery" exists so normative rhetoric just serves to reaffirm the current "bureaucratic practices" (June 1991, p.1739). In other words the belief in free will only serves to reinforce the power of the state.

Viewed in this light, we can understand normative legal thought not as a noble attempt to criticize and reform the structures and practices of bureaucratic domination, but rather as a kind of discourse that has already been unconsciously captivated by those very same structures and practices. The pathways, the issues, the problems of normative legal thought are already constituted by bureaucratic domination...Rather than contributing to our understanding or to the realization of the good or the right, all this normative argument perpetuates a false aesthetic of social life – one that prevents "us" from even recognizing the sort of bureaucratic practices that constitute and channel our thought and action (Schlag, June 1991, p.1740).

In April of 1991, Schlag argued that normative language was not what it represented itself to be, but that it was a tool of social control. He feels that this type of rhetoric is simply used to "reproduce" the "ugly realities" that it condemns (p. 805). In this way he views normative rhetoric as merely a "language game" (November 1990, p.183). This sets up Schlag's argument in two parts: 1) he denies that people have free will and 2) He believes that value talk is not persuasive or effective and should be taken out of rhetoric.

Now let's look at the theories of Richard Weaver, who divides humans into three parts body, mind and soul. He sees the body as the "physical being" where the mind and soul are stored. Body is the part of the human that, because of a desire for "sensory pleasure," can cause immoral behavior. The mind gives us the capacity "judge between right and wrong." Soul is what guides the human body and mind to choose between good and evil. In all three parts of Weavers' definition of humans is the belief that humans possess free will. Humans have the "power of choice" and the responsibility to base those choices upon truth, ethics and values (Weaver, 2002). Weaver is not alone in this belief that humans, by their nature, are free actors. Margaret Radin and Frank Michelman argue that "subjectivity" or "agency" is an irreversible and basic aspect of our "experience of (human) being." Part of what we do, as thought-creating actors, is to think about ways to make the world better and ourselves better actors toward it. We cannot deny our own free will. "We cannot speak the sentence of denial except as speaking subjects, affirming by speaking the sentence what the sentence means to deny." In other words, by questioning free will you also "(re)affirm, (re)create, (re)construct" free will (1991, p. 1058). Daniel Dennett, refers to free will as a "biological endowment" that society extends and enhances. That it comes from a desire to be in control of ourselves and not be controlled by others. In other words, we want to be responsible for our actions (1984, p. 169). He goes on to state that one of two statements would then be true: (1) genuine free will exists or (2) at least, the illusion of free will exists. The former state is the most desirable, but the latter, if it were the best we could hope for, is still worth wanting. It seems that it would be a member of the "familiar class of life-enabling or life-enhancing illusions: the illusion that one is still loved by one's loved ones; the illusion that one has several more years to live when one hasn't; the illusion that in spite of one's physical ugliness, one's inner beauty is readily manifest to others" (1984, p.168). The very decision to use any type of rhetoric presupposes free agency. Those who deny free will in rhetoric are in an "embarrassing position: they are left advising (pretending to advise? seeming to advise?) the audience that advising is pointless" (p.155). The "scientific determinist" (those who believe that all human thought and behavior are predetermined by previous actions) herself must reckon with the power of beliefs, sacred traditions, new ideas, great leaders, simply because they are among the most recognizable, "determinable causes in history." Otherwise, she is forced back on a kind of "mystical, inhuman fatalism that would be fatal to the historical sense." If everything that has happened is the only thing that could possibly have happened, we might as well close the book. The reason we don't is that even the determinists and fatalists are always implying that there were "real alternatives," and that humans made the "wrong choice." Whatever we believe in theory, "we continue in practice to think and act as if we were not puppets" (Muller, 1952, p.37).

This basic view of humans leads Weaver to believe that humans are not thinking machines. They have feelings and require values and ethics to give life meaning and purpose (1970, p.317).

Next, lets turn to Weaver's definition of Rhetoric: "truth and its artful presentation"(Weaver, 2002, p. 164). To understand this, we must first look to where he believes that humans find truth. Weaver divides knowledge into three categories: 1) facts, 2) theories, and 3) values which he also calls emotions or the "metaphysical dream." Following Plato, Weaver depicts truth as residing in the ideal at the third level of knowledge. Truth is the degree to which things and ideas in the material world conform to their ideals, archetypes, and essences. He contends that 'the thing is not true and the act is not just unless these conform to a conceptual ideal.' Truth, then, resides at the level of the metaphysical dream, not at the level of individual facts (Weaver, 2002, p. 161). Weaver terms the search for this truth a "dialectic." Meaning "a method of investigation whose object is the establishment of truth about doubtful propositions" (Natanson, p. 375). So, because rhetoric is "truth plus its artful presentation," in order to truthfully be considered rhetoric, it must be preceded by a dialectic or search for truth. The desired result would then be to persuade the audience to follow the relative truth that was found during the dialectic. "The honest rhetorician therefore has two things in mind: a vision of how matters should go ideally and ethically and a consideration of the special circumstance of his auditors" (Weaver, 2002, p. 164) Then, because humans are not "thinking robots," but feeling beings that require emotional and value appeal to be persuaded, it follows that to persuade a human that normative or value language would be required. As stated earlier, values come into existence because the human way of being requires that they be "an actor for ends, a valuer of ends." In fact, no discursive utterance and, in particular, no argument can be thought of as non-normative or value free in the broadest sense of the term, because language has so many built-in "moral" categories (Berlin, 1969, p. 115). Normative language also seems essential for finding and giving sound ethical reasoning. As Martha Nussbaum, a Professor of Philosophy at Brown University, put it:

To remove the beliefs about worth on which love, fear, grief, and so on are based is indeed to remove many sources of pain, but the resulting life may seem flat and lacking in wonder. And it may also be lacking in a type of information that is critical to good ethical and also legal reasoning: to respond with the pain of compassion at the sight of another person's suffering is to understand the importance of that suffering in a way no uncommitted person could possibly do. Without the information given by such emotions few difficult issues concerning poverty, or damages, or privacy, or mitigation, could be well addressed (1994, p. 351).

Discussion

Let's begin by attacking the first part of Schlag's argument in two ways. First, is the idea of determinism or lack of free will itself is bad. If determinism were true, and adequately accounted for the actual world, there is a clear sense in which, despite all the extraordinary "casuistry" which has been brought to avoid this conclusion, the notions of human and moral responsibility would no longer apply to any actual states of affairs or at least lack application (Berlin, 1969, p. 71). Second, Schlag's argument against free will itself is flawed. The issue being emphasized is not logic; it is rhetoric. It seems like a "rhetorical futility" to argumentatively tie value language failures of "critical self-consciousness and methodological reflectiveness to its undeniable, but seemingly inexpugnable, trait of normativity" (Radin and Michelman, 1991, p. 1022). In other word, we should not associate failures of pathos to persuade to a flaw in the overall use of pathos.

Next, Schlag argues against the use of normative language by adding a postmodern gloss. Schlag's effort to analyze values from outside the "maze of normativity" is extremely problematic. Schlag believes that most scholars reside within this maze characterized by "dreariness," but that a select few have found a way out, gained perspective on the maze, and now engage in a fruitful questioning that reveals rather than obscures the law. It seems unlikely that such a dramatic escape can take place. Just when a scholar believes that she has scaled the last wall of the maze, she will be "confronted by a boundless horizon of paths endlessly circling within the ambit of the same maze." Hope for escape must always be dashed in the end, but this does not mean that individuals within the maze are without ethical or political significance. The central problem for contemporary values is not "the maze of normative legal discourse," but the failure to recognize the maze as an unavoidable condition of rhetoric (Mootz, 1994, p.878-9). It also seems important to point out that Schlag relies on normative language in several places.

[T]his [talk-talk genre] simply argues that we should talk [some] new talk . . . Variations on this old talk/new talk include the following: we should talk . . . more normatively, [or] more contextually . . . [etc.] or in that hopeful humanist way until we figure out what the hell we're doing up here 30,000 feet from earth arguing about how we should land (1990, p. 170-1).

The problem with Schlag's this argument is that it seems to be in a "paranoid style." The "paranoid style" of rhetoric is characterized by "an intense, sharply perceptive but narrowly focused mode of attention" that results in an attitude of "elaborate suspiciousness." Paranoid individuals constantly strive to demystify appearances; they take nothing at face value because they regard reality as an obscure dimension hidden from casual observation or participation (Mootz, 1994, p. 879). Some argue that such detachment is not paranoid if it is warranted by the facts. In other words, if Schlag's description is correct, he is piercing socially held delusions rather than exhibiting paranoia. However, "Schlag's claims are analogous to a person's assertion that he or she is being followed by Martians who are disguised as average human pedestrians. Although we would not consider these peopleperson to be paranoid if it turns out that they are in fact being followed by Martians, we might agree that this person exhibits a paranoid style" This "paranoid style" draws into strong question the accuracy of his or her beliefs. The "paranoid style not only is a suspect strategy at the outset, it is a strategy that feeds on itself and becomes more and more fantastic in each of its incarnations." With an ever increasing intensity, the "paranoid style" co-opts the theorist and prevents her from retrenching or revising her approach, even when the "bankruptcy of the paranoid style is manifest" (Mootz, 1994, p. 885).

When I speak of the paranoid style, I use the term much as a historian of art might speak of the baroque or the mannerist style. It is, above all, a way of seeing the world and of expressing oneself.... Of course, the term "paranoid style" is pejorative, and it is meant to be; the paranoid style has a greater affinity for bad causes than good. But nothing entirely prevents a sound program or a sound issue from being advocated in the paranoid style, and

it is admittedly impossible to settle the merits of an argument because we think we hear in its presentation the characteristic paranoid accents. Style has to do with the way in which
ideas are believed and advocated rather than with the truth or falsity of their content (Mootz p. 876).
Schlag no doubt, as a person dealing with everyday life, is entirely free from paranoid tendencies. Why, then, does his argument assume such a counterproductive posture? Schlag does not engage his audience in a shared quest for decency and happiness in an often brutal and traumatic world, but instead challenges such a normative quest as being symptomatic of deeper-seated problems. Schlag's radicalism is extended to the point of destroying its own foundation. "A collection of discourses that in their strategic maneuvering have precluded the possibility of being discursive, have succeeded not just in being destructive, but in being self-destructive" (Mootz, p.888).
In the end the strongest argument against Schlag comes from Weaver's definitions of humans and rhetoric: Despite the pressure exerted by the cultural ideal, individuals always have freedom of choice in their actions with regard to it. They may uphold the conception of truth of the culture, or they may place their own viewpoints above the expression of the ideal and the welfare of the culture. Proper motivation for action leads people to select the former option and to work to resolve the discrepancy between what is and what should be in the culture. Weaver recognizes, of course, that individuals never can comprehend the cultural ideal perfectly and often will fall short of enacting it. Yet, if the truth in the ideal is recognized and the individuals of a culture work toward its actualization, they will be united in a strong, vigorous culture (Weaver, p. 163).

Conclusion

From the point of view of Sartre at the beginning of the paper, Schlag is attempting to escape the responsibility of choice. In doing this, he violates the essence of humans and rhetoric. As Weaver shows normative values cannot and should not be separated from humans or their rhetoric.
IPDA is a great example of the use of values in argumentation. What it seems to lack in dialectical truth it makes up for in artful presentation. Our rhetoric must continue to explore the values behind the policy decisions we make. Society is based on humans, and even though humans posses logic and should use logic more, rhetors must not abandon the values and emotions that humans need.

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Apples and Oranges: Advocacy for a Postmodern Interrogation of Weighing Mechanisms

Abstract
As the IPDA has grown, the weighing mechanism has become an expected part of advocacy. Often, weighing mechanisms are seen as instrumental parameters which aid both debaters and judges in assessing the merit of arguments offered. In this essay, the weighing mechanism is recast as a mechanism which legitimates statements that conform to specific worldviews while restricting all others. From postmodern perspective, the weighing mechanism threatens to submerge important arguments and potentially mislead interlocutors as to the efficacy of the prima facie advocacy. The essay concludes by imagining how this perspective might inform case rebuttals.

A famous consumer advocacy magazine recently published a study examining the relative merits of the myriad toothpastes available to consumers. The article concluded that, although there was little difference among the competitors, a relatively cheap toothpaste was the best at whitening smiles. Though the study sought and found the product which whitened smiles best, it ignored the fact that the winner was significantly more abrasive than other competitors. Highly abrasive toothpastes, when used with frequency, can erode significant quantities of tooth enamel. Unfortunately for consumers, abrasiveness was not a weighing mechanism used in judging toothpastes. This bit of trivia should, I hope, help tease out the importance of weighing mechanisms in evaluation.

In this essay, I will note the types of weighing mechanism analysis I encountered in my career as a debater. Next, I will offer a postmodern perspective on the value and utility of weighing mechanisms. Finally, I will close with a proposal for the application of this perspective in public debate.

Praxis in the IPDA

I once estimated that I had competed in over three hundred IPDA preliminary rounds between the 2000-2001 and 2006-2007 seasons. In that time, I observed three general approaches employed by debaters when dealing with the affirmative's proposed weighing mechanism: appeasement; competition; and critique.

The first approach, and by far the most common, is to simply accept the weighing mechanism as offered and attempt to win the debate within the confines established by the affirmative. If the affirmative has proposed a cost-benefit-analysis, for example, the negative simply begins looking for ways to cast their arguments as costs which are to be weighed against the affirmative's benefits. The debater representing the negative might simply tell the judge that she will abide by or accept the affirmative's weighing mechanism. This sort of admission is typically followed with a statement like, "now let's get into the arguments." The unfortunate effect of this approach is that the negative advocate is forced to restructure her arguments in such a way that they may lose their original salience. Imagine being possessed of an excellent argument about the potential of the affirmative advocacy to infringe upon privacy and restrict free speech. Now imagine listening in horror as the affirmative begins her closing speech by telling the judge to ignore those important points because those arguments, though interesting, are non-topical because the weighing mechanism for the round demands that those harms be quantified in finite ways so as to be weighed in the cost-benefit-analysis. At this point, some readers may be clamoring that a good negative advocate will somehow spin their arguments to fit inside this weighing

mechanism. While this may be true, I still believe that this conformity to the affirmative weighing mechanism weakens the strength of the negative debater's arguments and, therefore, her chance at victory. More importantly, it may lessen the educational value of the round for the judge.

A second approach, which seems to have crept in from Lincoln-Douglas competition, occurs when the negative reiterates the affirmative's preferred weighing mechanism and proceeds to offer her own. Typically, the negative case proceeds under this weighing mechanism without attention to the original. Savvier interlocutors attempt to refute the usefulness or appropriateness of the affirmative weighing mechanism while leaving their own to be judged as preferable. Other less capable orators seem happy to simply articulate their own weighing mechanism and never really address the original. This is the prototypical "two ships passing in the night" example. At best, the savvy debater has destroyed her opponent's weighing mechanism and established yet another weighing mechanism which undoubtedly also serves to limit and restrict the kind of arguments and evidence which are to be taken as proof in the round. The result is a win for the debater, but perhaps less for the judge.

A third, and thankfully less common, approach to dealing with weighing mechanisms has been application of the critique (more frequently spelled kritik among debaters). The kritik, which finds its origins in German and French criticism, poststructuralist philosophy, and more recently in speed-reading policy types of debate, argues that there is something inappropriate or harmful within the thinking of the affirmative's advocacy that should prevent a thoughtful judge from voting in favor of the proposition. These arguments are typically treated as *a priori* calls for judgment, regardless of the actual claims made by the affirmative. Possibly because some come to the IPDA out of allergic reaction to speed-reading policy debate or perhaps because explaining these arguments to lay judges proves difficult, this kind of analysis has, until now, been a relatively rare occurrence. As Bennett (1996) notes, critics have leveled several important complaints at this style of refutation. The first argues that kritiks serve as one-trick-pony wrecking balls, which knock down constructs but establish nothing helpful themselves. This line of thinking suggests that if the negative has no better solutions, then we would be silly to throw out the affirmative advocacy simply because it is not perfect. Critics also have argued that the result of this type of argument is that the judge is urged to vote against something rather than voting for anything. Members of the debate community have also voiced concerns that the kritik unnecessarily adds density and esoteric vernacular to a pursuit already brimming with technical jargon. In addition to understanding the code debaters use to refer to their arguments, novices dealing with kritiks must begin to wrestle with the fabulously abstruse wordplay of Michel Foucault, Martin Heidegger, and Jacques Derrida if they hope to defend against them. Still others wonder if the affirmative is obligated to fix every related social problem before their advocacy can be accepted. An advocate encouraging the judge to vote in favor of a policy to double funding for law enforcement, for example, should not have to solve the problem of sexism in law enforcement (a preexisting problem to be sure) in order to prove that higher levels of law enforcement are warranted. These are just the tip of the iceberg, but should suffice to show the amount of discomfort the kritik has created for some in the debate community.

At bottom of any of these approaches lies the assumption that a properly selected weighing mechanism does the work of effectively valuing arguments for or against any given resolution. However, a postmodern approach to weighing mechanisms will suggest a more complicated understanding of the relationship between weighing mechanisms, arguments, and judgment.

A Postmodern Perspective

Postmodernism: the definition of the word is perhaps as contested as that of rhetoric. Postmodernism is not just that which follows modernism in temporal order, but that which opposes modernism. Thus, readers may profit from a brief recapitulation of modernism's tenets.

Modernism, which relies upon Enlightenment-era notions of the rational human subject and the empirical nature of reality, encourages the systematic interrogation and improvement of existence through the application of rational scientific techniques. According to Lucaites and Condit (1999), "In the modern worldview, the universe is a relatively simple, stable, and highly ordered place, describable in and reducible to absolute formulas which hold across contexts" (p. 11). The fruits of modernism can be found in projects such as the industrial revolution, Marxism, and humanism. Each of these projects claims that successful application of their principles will result in the betterment of life. Unfortunately, this progress which was to extend our lives and grant us comforts also

delivered pollution, urban sprawl, processed food, structural unemployment, corporate conglomeration, the dissolution of the nuclear family, and an astounding number of new ways to kill others: mustard gas, machine guns, automatic weapons, napalm, Agent Orange, and the atomic bomb readily come to mind.
Many were horrified when the events of the middle and late 20th century brought them to see science, one of modernism's most sacred cows, as the means by which humans achieved their most barbaric and deadly deeds (Best & Kellner, 1991, p. 3). Sarup (1989, p. 123) explains, "The decline of the unifying and legitimating power of the grand narratives of speculation and emancipation can be seen as an effect of the blossoming of techniques and technologies since the Second World War, which has shifted emphasis from the ends of action to its means." The result of this revelation is a deep "incredulity toward metanarratives" (Lyotard, 1979, xxiv). It is a refusal to believe in the power of religion, science, education, humanism, capitalism, and other ideologies to fully explain life or deliver humankind to some perfect future. In the place of such belief is substituted a healthy skepticism which examines efforts to instantiate these worldviews to understand how they necessarily conceptualize the world, render some parts visible and others invisible (and thus not eligible to be spoken about), and distribute power throughout society. Though this discussion could continue at length in examining all the various implications of this shift, it should suffice to say that a postmodern perspective demands a serious interrogation of the way weighing mechanisms operate in our debates.

How Weighing Mechanisms Work

Imagine the average American couple shopping the Saturday newspaper for a new automobile. The wife notes that she has many errands to run that day and instructs her husband to "just pick the best car." What sort of car might the husband purchase? He may find himself scratching his head as he wonders what his wife meant by "the best." One can imagine that the best car might be the sporty convertible if his wife believes that the best cars are the ones that are the most exciting to drive. But if the best cars are the ones that cost the least, the convertible begins to look like a poor choice. What our hypothetical husband lacks is a weighing mechanism; a method of valuing the cars based on specific attributes to find the best one.
Weighing mechanisms make decisions possible by installing a worldview or ideology which instructs interlocutors as to: which qualities are important and which are not; which topics are suitable for discussion and which are taboo; and which solutions are acceptable and which are not. Altheide and Johnson (1994) point out that the traditional application of weighing mechanisms acts to promote the "nineteenth-century model of science-as-the-physical-sciences" (p. 487). In other words, any given weighing mechanism sets parameters for decision makers; it tells them what parts of the universe to look at and how to measure those parts. Data which do not conform to such a model are discarded. For example, when a cost-benefit-analysis is used, all potential considerations must be stated in terms of quantifiable costs and benefits. Those things which do not translate into costs easily are either significantly undervalued or nonexistent within that worldview. One might imagine how the issue of abortion might sound if all arguments for and against were rendered solely in terms of profits and costs. Furthermore, solutions which we may prefer for a variety of unrelated reasons may appear less attractive when seen only for their value as profits or losses. Bochner (2000), reminds us, "criteria always have a restrictive, limiting, regressive, thwarting, halting quality to them, and they can never be completely separated from the structures of power in which they are situated" (p. 269). Thus, I conclude that weighing mechanisms are not simply devices for weighing arguments, but are rhetorical filters which legitimate and restrict arguments based on their adherence to specific and limited metanarratives.
If the reader takes seriously these charges against weighing mechanisms, a change is called for. If weighing mechanisms are rhetorical filters which invoke imperfect ideological metanarratives, our traditional approach to the weighing mechanism seems problematic. In the section below, I offer a potential approach to public debate which aims to better incorporate this postmodern perspective while retaining the sort of practicality that surely constitutes some of the IPDA's allure for debaters, coaches, and audiences.

Pragmatic Pluralism

At this point, I hope readers find themselves in a bit of a conundrum. On the one hand, I have argued that weighing mechanisms are useful and perhaps essential to good decision-making. On the other hand, I have

asked readers to humor me as I advocate a postmodern perspective which damns weighing mechanisms as inexorably imperfect, restrictive, ideologically grounded rhetorical filters. It is my contention that we can alleviate, if not solve, the discomfort this paradox creates by embracing what I will term pragmatic pluralism. Pragmatic pluralism might be described as an attempt to avoid the most extreme sort of restriction caused by the traditional application of weighing mechanisms by means of pluralism. First, it would take the weighing mechanism as a necessary element of decision making. Perhaps because of the need to sell more and more, we find ourselves increasingly surrounded with choice wherever we go. Clearly, we must use some means to choose one or some among the multitudes. Second, given their imperfect and ideologically-based nature, weighing mechanisms should be viewed with great skepticism. Third, a better decision is one which is informed by as many perspectives as is feasible. Readers might remember the old axiom that "two heads are better than one." When imperfect means of perception are to be used, more confirmation and triangulation are preferable. How might this play out in a public debate round? Hypothetically, a debater tasked with opposing a resolution might, instead of simply accepting or refuting a given weighing mechanism, accept and counterbalance the weighing mechanism with several others. In such a case, the debater would essentially be saying to the judge, "My opponent has presented one of many possible ways to see this case. While I can and will attempt to refute the case on this basis, I also feel it would be a disservice to our aims of education if I also did not mention the other equally important perspectives that the affirmative's advocacy ignores." I should note that this approach should not be confused with the beginner's mistake of ignoring weighing mechanisms. The skilled interlocutor employing this approach would surely be conscious of the ways that weighing mechanisms inform and shape discourse and, thus, would work to include all those arguments (and weighing mechanisms) which could inform the case.

If such a perspective were applied, debaters would be free to present important arguments from a variety of perspectives rather than just the one originally offered by the affirmative. One can imagine that this would aid in the articulation of arguments which might otherwise be rendered unimportant by particularly narrow weighing mechanisms. Such an approach would surely attract criticism. In the next section, I will attempt to anticipate some of the more significant claims that might be made against this advocacy.

Underview

Though the ranks of the IPDA are generally gregarious, some might take issue with this pragmatic pluralism. Devout postmodernists may complain that my proposal does little more than augment one restrictive filter with a few others. I will first admit that my proposal asymptotically approaches but never meets the standards that a radical postmodernism requires. A fervently postmodern answer to the weighing mechanism would resemble total chaos. It would require an infinite set of perspectives as varied as the limits of symbolic expression allow. In other words, a radically postmodern approach would require an infinite array of weighing mechanisms. This sort of advocacy, assuming it were possible, would require far more preparation and ability than the typical college-level IPDA round affords us.

Furthermore, such an approach might be inimical to our association's larger goals. Perhaps the feature of the IPDA of which we are most proud is its applicability. Coaches like to tell administrators that their debaters are learning skills which will better equip them to deal with life after college. Life after college frequently requires decision-making based upon imperfect research, tight deadlines, and distracted audiences. With these considerations in mind, I have offered pragmatic pluralism as an improvement. In pragmatic pluralism, audiences are provided with a number (as many as the debaters can research and present effectively) of perspectives which inform their arguments. So, while pragmatic pluralism is no magic bullet for the ills of modernism, it provides a significant improvement for ameliorating the most important problems created by traditional implementations of weighing mechanisms.

Another significant criticism may come from those who would agree theoretically with my argument but find themselves at a loss in considering how to explain such an approach to the average judge. I agree that this represents the most significant impediment to applying pragmatic pluralism to an IDPA round. It seems likely that the first few times a debater attempts to use pragmatic pluralism in a rebuttal, the affirmative will complain mightily. They may say, for example, that if the negative cannot prove a problem with the prima facie weighing mechanism, then it must be accepted and used as the gold standard for valuing arguments in the round. I would suggest that this complaint and others like it would be handled by our hypothetical pragmatic pluralist who

would explain the need for multiple weighing mechanisms, possibly through a simple analogy like the ones included in this paper.

Still others may say that pragmatic pluralism unnecessarily muddies the decision-making process. They might claim that arguing from multiple perspectives makes judging near impossible. “How,” they would ask, “are judges to sort out financial arguments, ethical arguments, moral arguments, and legal arguments?” I would simply remind them that such decisions are a necessary part of our everyday lives. And still we muddle through.

Finally, some may say that such an approach requires far too much work for the payoff. One could imagine the difficulty of erecting the intellectual apparatuses of postmodernism and pragmatic pluralism before a lay judge. One might also remember debate rounds in which the resolution reads, “Candy bars are better than ice cream,” or some such variant. A person possessed of such an imagination and memory might rightly complain that what I ask is far too much work for what is likely to be a small payoff. They will say, “How much more education can we gain in a round about candy bars and ice cream?” This criticism, I believe, points up a larger question: what is the ultimate goal of IPDA debate? I suspect that some will echo my old friend, Steve Goode, and say that the IPDA should, above all else, be fun and educational. Others may say that all debate is an activity that aims to sharpen the mind and teach interlocutors, through experience, the art of eloquence.

If the reader happens to fall into that first camp who say that the IPDA should be fun and educational, I would say that that this approach can be no more or less helpful than the resolution to which it is applied. Regardless of how one approaches the topic, “Candy bars are better than ice cream,” does not promise much in the way of education. On the other hand, if you believe that debate is about sharpening mental acuity and fostering eloquence, I see no problems in encouraging students to take up the task of adapting this approach in any round.

Conclusion

As we shop for our homes, cars, laundry detergents, and political candidates, we use weighing mechanisms for separating better and worse options. In this essay, I have expressed a postmodern perspective which renders these weighing mechanisms as imperfect, restrictive, and ideologically-based rhetorical filters. In an attempt to alleviate the problems created by our reliance on any given weighing mechanism, this paper advocates pragmatic pluralism. It is no perfect answer; perhaps it complicates the calculus of evaluation or requires more mental lifting than some would prefer to undertake on their weekends. However, I suspect that the added education and consideration provided to the round may be well worth the effort.

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Ethics in Public Debate

Introduction

Debate, like all other types of communication, places ethical burdens on an individual. As Freeley notes, "Because we use debate as a means of influencing human behavior, the mature, responsible advocate will be concerned with ethical standards for debate" (p. 31). Yet, the pressure to win often tempts debaters to compromise their ethical standards (Chandler and Hobbs, p. 389). This behavior is counterproductive because, ultimately, unethical behavior decreases our ability to influence others. Aristotle argues:

Persuasion is achieved by the speaker's personal character when the speech is so spoken as to make us think him [sic] credible. We believe good men [sic] more fully and readily than others: this is true generally whatever the question is, and absolutely true where exact certainty is impossible and opinions are divided. . . . (H)is [sic] character may almost be called the most effective means of persuasion he [sic] possesses. (p. 25)

The purpose of this essay is to help clarify ethical behaviors in International Public Association Debate. This essay will proceed by discussing the ethical standards for communication developed by Olbricht and by Brockriede, proceed to explain how these standards must be viewed in a slightly different light when applied to advocacy situations, highlight the implications of these ethical standards for public debate, and, finally propose three solutions for the ethical problems cited.

Ethics in Communication

Olbricht, in "The Self as a Philosophical Ground of Rhetoric," posits that ethical communication must be grounded in genuine concern for the self of the receiver. The self constitutes or creates itself through choice. In other words, people determine who they are by the choices they make. For example, choosing to debate greatly affects those who make that choice. Likewise, choosing not to debate affects those individuals who make that choice. The point is that it is an individual's choice to debate or not to debate. Either choice says something about who one will become. Olbricht adds that we must offer individuals authentic choices if we are to be truly ethical. Authentic choice making means that the individual has been given enough information to make an informed choice. The information must not be false or misleading. The individual makes the choice they would make "given all the facts." This view towards "right speech" is part of Buddhism's Noble Eightfold Path" "Right speech concerns your intention. Are you using speech because you're trying to manipulate the world and other people? Or are you speaking in order to help yourself and others wake up" (Hagen, p. 79)? Thus, unethical communicators deny individuals choice and/or relevant information. Worse yet, they provide individuals with false information. The goal of rhetoric changes in Olbricht's view. We are to be more concerned with providing authentic choices than we are to be with persuading the receiver to accept our view of the world. When we provide the ability to make informed choices, we have provided a service to an individual

because we have helped him or her make a choice about who he or she will be. According to Olbricht:
Persuasion in this case has succeeded equally as well when the auditor has understood an argument and has decided to reject it, as when he [sic] is moved and accepts it. Selfhood is enhanced both in rejection and acceptance, when what is at stake is understood. (p. 33)

Similarly, Brockriede, in "Arguers as Lovers," believes that ethical communication respects the humanness of the receiver. We must treat others as humans to be ethical. One treats another as a human by allowing him or her to act like a human. What do humans do? They make informed choices. So, any communication that denies an individual the ability to make a choice and/or to correctly process information is unethical. Brockriede says there are three stances an arguer can take: arguer as rapist, arguer as seducer, and arguer as lover. The arguer as rapist denies choice. He or she forces his or her opinion on the other person. Brockriede thinks intercollegiate debaters are rapists: Another place to find the rapist's attitudes and intentions in the adversary situation is the intercollegiate debate. The language is symptomatic: "We killed them last round." "We destroyed them." "We cut them down." In all such situations the rapist's attitude toward coarguers is contempt, his [sic] intent is to victimize, and the act itself, given one other ingredient (a victim), is rape. (p. 3)

The arguer as seducer denies authentic choice making because the receiver's decision is based on false or misleading information. The receiver is tricked into accepting a position.
The arguer as lover treats the other individual as a human by providing him or her with information and allowing him or her to make a choice. Another important characteristic of the lover is that self is risked. Self is risked because love involves a dialogue between the lover and the receiver. In this dialogue, the lover tries to honestly see the other person's point of view. The self is risked because in truly seeing the other person's point of view, the lover may see that he or she needs to change—to make another choice. Rapists and seducers do not risk self; their communication is unilateral in nature.

Is it possible for a debater to live up to the ethical standards provided by Olbricht and by Brockriede? Should a debater admit he or she is wrong? Should a debater present information on both sides of the issue to the judge? These questions will be answered in the next section of this essay.

Ethics in Advocacy Situations

In the above views on communication ethics, one must provide the receiver with complete information and allow him or her to make a choice. The ethical arguer risks self in that in the process of arguing one realizes he or she is wrong and needs to change. Debate, and other adversarial advocacy systems of argument such as the courtroom, work against love and ethical behavior because competition is emphasized--a win and a loss are recorded.

So, is debate inherently unethical? It doesn't have to be. However, one needs to shift one's perspective to see how Olbricht's and Brockriede's systems of ethics could work in a debate. The adversaries as a whole, both the affirmative and the negative together, must be viewed as the "arguer." Complete information is given to the judge (or audience) only with both sides fulfill their assigned duties and the judge is given the freedom to choose the winner of the contest.
In fact, such an advocacy system would become unethical in nature, if one side were to forsake its assigned position. Hobbs and Wilkins note:
. . . (A)cademic debate is designed to teach advocacy skills. An advocate, in this context, is one who speaks on behalf of an assigned position—for example, lawyers in a courtroom. The prosecution is assigned to speak on behalf of the state in favor of guilt. The defense is assigned to speak on behalf of the defendant in favor of innocence. A defense lawyer is not rewarded for finding a better way to convict his or her client than was discovered by the prosecution. Similarly, the affirmative is assigned to advocate a resolutional position. The negative is assigned to advocate a nonresolutional position. Why should the negative be rewarded for finding a better way to advocate the resolution than the affirmative? They would not be fulfilling their roles as advocates—they would be forsaking their "client." (p. 124)
Of course, advocates are not allowed to perjure themselves in defense of their assigned position. False or misleading information is unethical in a debate.

Ethics in Public Debate

While there are many applications of the above principles which could be made to public debate, this essay will focus on two: the habit of some affirmatives to define the resolution in a way which takes the negative's ground and the tendency of some debaters to lie. This is not a unique observation on this essay's part, Spadley (p. 55) comments, "Experiencing a competitor misrepresenting IPDA rules to a lay judge or manipulating terms in the resolution to fit case files is infuriating, but unfortunately, these phenomena are all too familiar to debaters."

It is the strategy of some affirmatives to define the resolution in such a way that obvious, expected, and reasonable negative ground becomes affirmative ground. This is an instance of forsaking one's assigned position (or client). In observing debates at International Public Debate Association tournaments, it can be puzzling as to why so many affirmatives agree to topics which are obviously lopsided in favor of the negative. This "puzzle" is quickly solved as one watches the affirmative define the resolution in such a way that they take the negative's expected ground. Black became white and white became black. For instance, in a debate over the resolution "the traditional concept of marriage is outdated," the affirmative case consisted of explaining that the concept of one man married to one woman for a lifetime was a wonderful idea. "Outdated" was defined as being viewed incorrectly by society.

The International Public Debate Association practices make this forsaking of assigned ground easy to accomplish. According to the Bylaws of the IPDA Constitution, Article 1, J:

Affirmative's are allowed to define resolutions pretty much as they see fit.

However, Affirmative interpretations and definitions must leave Negatives fair ground for the debate. If an Affirmative's case is too lopsided and/or tautological (used to define itself as winning by definition), this opens the door for the Negative to provide an alternate set of definitions. But the Negative can only redefine terms if the Affirmative has abused its prerogative. If the Affirmative can demonstrate adequate Negative ground when challenged, then Affirmative definitions will have presumption.

Currently, it is up to debaters to police how they interpret topics themselves. A strict reading of the constitution makes how one defines words a non-issue—as long as ground is supplied. IPDA debaters should not give into the temptation of saying that the important thing is winning and that defining a topic to mean its opposite is simply a strategy, or part of the game, that works with lay judges. According to Hill and Leeman, "Part of the problem, of course, arises from the model of professional sports (which debaters often adopt). There, winning is often paramount and breaking rules is 'acceptable' as long as the umpire or referee doesn't catch you" (p. 18). Unfortunately, unethical behavior can lead to unfair advantages. As Ulrich points out, "If unethical choices did not often result in a competitive edge for the individuals that violated the code, there would be no need for articulating these violations" (p. 104). Debaters need to learn to defend their assigned ground.

It is also surprising to discover that many debaters feel free to lie in public debate rounds. Some debaters lie about facts. Debaters, for example, have claimed in rounds that Republicans are liberal and Democrats are conservative and that going without sleep for long periods of time has no affect on a person (and she should know because she is a psychology major). There is no way to prove that these assertions are lies because published documentation is not allowed. One does not have to produce the facts from a reliable source, and one cannot disprove the facts from a reliable source. It is one debater's word against another. The use of lay judges compounds this problem because they often do not have the knowledge or expertise to recognize which side is telling the truth. The temptation to lie and make unfounded assertions to win the debate is tremendous. Debaters also lie about debate theory and rules—sometimes creating false rules in an attempt to "force" lay judges to vote for them. For example, one second affirmative rebuttal said it was perfectly within the rules of debate to allow her to answer a disadvantage she had dropped in her first rebuttal. Saying that new arguments are allowed in rebuttals is a lie. Again, evidence cannot be read by either debater to prove the rule, and the use of lay judges means they will not know the rules. Again, the temptation to lie in order to win the debate is enormous. Debaters must resist the temptation to perjure themselves.

Solutions

First, debaters should choose to be ethical on their own. Choosing to be ethical is the correct choice. I am reminded of Bartanen and Frank's plea for ethical behavior in debate. They write:

We hope that you will aspire to achieve higher ethical standards. Such aspirations are particularly timely in light of the unethical behaviors exhibited by some public officials, athletes, and business people. The forensic activity exists, in part, to foster the best and most ethical rhetorical behavior. We hope you will do

your best to enhance the integrity of the forensic activity by actively promoting and exhibiting ethical debate practices. (p. 198)

Hollihan and Baaske add: Set high standards for yourself as an arguer and treat others with respect and dignity, and we believe that the people who interact with you will be more likely to treat you in the same way. In the process, the argumentative marketplace will become a more civilized and valuable place for the free exchange of ideas, and for the pursuit of policies and programs that will improve all our lives. (pp. 11-12)

Hobbs notes:

> . . . (D)ecide to be honest and ethical in your attempts to secure the ballot. Be fair and be honest. If you are not sure about a fact, don't use it. If you are in rebuttals, don't bring up new arguments. Never lie. To paraphrase the golden rule, make the kind of arguments you want others to present to you when you are faced with an important decision. If you were buying a car, would you want the salesperson to make up "facts" about the car's safety, reliability, and gas mileage? (p. 30).

Second, IPDA should consider holding experimental tournaments which use two judges in each round. One judge would be a lay judge and assigned the task of making the decision of who won. The second judge would be trained in debate and assigned the task of enforcing the rules. For example, the trained judge would point out any misrepresentation of the rules made by debaters and any new arguments made in rebuttals. This system would be analogous to the United States jury system where a judge enforces the rules of the justice system on lawyers so that jurors can reach a fair decision.

Third, IPDA should consider changing the constitution to allow for debaters to challenge not just the lack of ground, but the ground taken by the affirmative. Debaters should be able to challenge whether or not the affirmative is truly representing the assigned "client."

Fourth, debaters should be given a formal way to address any lies and misrepresentations made by their opponents in a round. Two-person policy debate formats, such as NDT and CEDA, have a long standing tradition of allowing debaters to stop a round on the basis of falsified evidence. A debater may challenge the opposing team's evidence as fabricated. The round stops and the challenger must prove that the evidence is fabricated. The challenged team is given a chance to authenticate the evidence. If the evidence is found to be fabricated, the team that falsified the evidence is given zero speaker points and a loss. If the evidence is found to be authentic, the challenging team is given zero speaker points and a loss. IPDA should develop a similar structure.

Conclusion

This essay has reviewed Olbricht's and Brockreide's theories concerning communication ethics in which ethical communicators allow the receiver to make authentic and informed choices. In debate, and other assigned advocacy situations, the opposing sides form a whole which should be considered the rhetor. Informed and authentic choices are possible in such situations when both sides are honest and argue to the best of their abilities their assigned sides. Public debaters need to flee both the temptation to define the resolution in such a way that they do not defend the ground assigned to them in the resolution and the temptation to lie about facts or debate theory. One's arguments must be worthy of acceptance, not just effective.

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DEFENDING A CORE POSITION IN IPDA DEBATE

Abstract

Based on an analysis of actual IPDA debates, it seems obvious that too many debaters rely on straight refutation to win rounds. This seems to be especially true when debaters are on the negative. And often, when defending a position on either side, debaters allow their arguments to become scattered and diffused across a wide range of issues. While the strategies of straight refutation and a wide spread of arguments are often successful in non-IPDA debate, this paper argues that taking and defending a clear core belief system may be the best basic strategy for both the affirmative and negative in IPDA.[i]

Introduction

Debaters are always searching for an edge to help them achieve victory. This is the natural order of the universe and the way things ought to be. Of course, they are also developing life skills to build confidence, fluency, and persuasiveness. But to the competitor life skills are usually secondary to the goal of winning in the hear and now. Why else would NDT/CEDA debaters practice absurdly rapid delivery of techno-speak arguments.[ii] High speed-jargonistic delivery isn't being sought for its own sake. It's an artifact of the desire to win. And this is what usually wins in the U.S. on the 'traditional' debate circuits.

Debate coaches, on the other hand, should be searching primarily for ways to help their students develop confidence, fluency, and persuasiveness. For a coach, the development of life skills ought to be the essential goal and winning should be incidental. But from what I've observed, winning for its own sake has become the primary goal of too many debate educators. I've witnessed coaches actually drilling their debaters on speed delivery. This surely must be in the pursuit of victory rather than of pedagogy.

IPDA has provided a rhetorical alternative which permits both debaters and coaches to participate in a debate activity where the twin goals of victory and pedagogy are complimentary rather than antithetical. But at a recent tournament[iii] it struck me with great force how some strategies of IPDA debaters may de driven by the ghosts of our NDT/CEDA past. And while it is certainly true that many current debate practices which have derived from this heritage are quite valuable, it is also true that many others have been far more negative. This essay is an attempt to isolate what I believe to be one problematic manifestation from our murky roots and to suggest a cure.

The Roots of Refutation

Strategy is often driven by either the fear of refutation or by the desire to refute. On the affirmative side, the main force seems to be fear of refutation. This is illustrated by the question, "How do we design cases to protect ourselves from soon to be refuting negative opponents?" On the negative, the larger driving force seems to be the desire to refute. This is illustrated by the question, "What is the best way to attack affirmative cases in order to win debates?" Modern refutation theory was developed in a period when it was standard practice to debate policy resolutions. And the main theory which developed out of this period suggested that the negative had four main refutational strategies: Straight Refutation, Refutation with a Defense of the Present System, Refutation with Minor Repairs of the Present System, and Partial Refutation with a Counter-Plan

Straight Refutation. The most straightforward negative strategy is to simply disagree with everything the affirmative has said. In the simple version of this strategy, all the negative need do is to run down the affirmative case in order and dispute each claim in order. The main problem with the simple version, of course, is the danger of contradiction.[iv] Another problem is that your best arguments receive less attention (having to share time with your worst ones) and can get lost completely in the inevitable storm of objections. In a more sophisticated, and a much more effective, version of this strategy the negative thoughtfully selects a "platform" of issues to refute. Agreeing with some claims and disagreeing with others, negatives present the strongest refutation possible. But with both the simple and the more sophisticated variation, this strategy limits itself to refutational arguments.

Refutation with a Defense of the Present System. With this strategy negatives add a strong defense of the present system to a sophisticated refutation of the affirmative case. This strategy involves adding some additional issues to the negative platform of attacks - items that will involve defending the present system rather than merely attacking the affirmative case. Obviously, it is still important to be sure that all of the issues included in the negative platform are mutually supporting and non-contradictory. The arguments in support of the present system are generally presented as a semi-independent 'negative case.'

Refutation with Minor Repairs of the Present System. In some cases, it is politic to admit some flaws in the present system. The status quo isn't perfect. But the basic negative position is that we are better served in fixing the present system than in abandoning it for some unknown new system (the affirmative case). Hence, the platform of issues presented by the negative includes refutational items, carefully selected concessions of some affirmative claims, a limited defense of the present system as it is, some limited calls for 'minor repairs' to the present system, a strong defense of the repaired system, and a comparative analysis of how the repaired system would be far superior to the affirmative plan. The main advantage of this strategy is that it lets the negative avoid having to defend a badly flawed, indefensible status quo. The main weakness of this strategy is that it concedes some legitimacy to the affirmative case. And things can become confusing. But, since the affirmative has the burden of proof, confusion usually works to the advantage of the negative side. Thus, the tendency for a minor repairs strategy to create 'confusion' may often work to the advantage of the negative in traditional policy debates before traditional policy judges.

Partial Refutation with a Counter-Plan. There are times, of course, when the wisest course of action is to cut your losses and run. When the affirmative indictment of the present system is beyond obvious criticism and the present system is beyond reasonable defense, the best affirmative strategy may be to agree with the affirmative that 'something needs to be done.' In this case, the negative presents a carefully worded agreement that problems exist; then an even more carefully worded disagreement about the nature of that problem; and finally the a most carefully worded counter-plan (a non-topical alternative to the affirmative plan). This strategy allows negatives to avoid wasting time and losing credibility in banging their heads against irrefutable claims and to invest that time instead in presenting reasonable alternatives to affirmative cases. The negative gives up presumption but gains a major strategic advantage compared to any kind of defense of the present system.

It's easy to see how this system of thought developed from a policy perspective and how some of these strategies may only be somewhat applicable to resolutions of fact, value, or definition.

We must also note that these roots of refutation include the theory that the affirmative has the 'burden of proof' and the negative has 'presumption.' From this theoretical perspective, presenting a coherent case is a necessity for the affirmative to meet its burden of proof. But for the negative, defending a coherent case is just an option. According to the theory of presumption, if the affirmative cannot meet its burden of proof, the negative automatically wins. So while the affirmative side is almost forced to present and defend a coherent position, the negative has the option of coasting on straight refutation. Negatives, in traditional policy debate, can—and often do—employ all kinds of unreasonable and confusing strategies. They attack as much as possible and defend as little as possible, relying on the fact that a traditional, expert judge, when faced with chaos, is very likely to vote negative on presumption.

But the success of this "slash and burn" strategy depends on the presence of a "qualified" judge in the back of the room. And by "qualified" I mean, judges who are familiar with and can be counted on to abide by

the currently fashionable theories and common practices in the debate community. Lay judges are often unfamiliar with contemporary debate theories and practices and can be expected to lean heavily on common sense in deciding who won a debate. When faced with chaos, lay judges are more likely to vote for the side that presented and defended the most coherent and compelling core position.[v]

But in IPDA, the traditional burdens of the affirmative and negative debaters have been redefined somewhat. Item number 15 from an official IPDA "Instructions for Judges" handout[vi] states:

Decide who won the debate. Award the decision to whomever you think was the better debater and/or whomever had the best arguments. Decide quickly. The Affirmative has the burden of proof, but if you're not sure--Award the decision to the Best Speaker.[vii]

So what happens when NDT/CEDA refutational practices are used in non-policy debate and before lay IPDA judges?

A Psychological-Rhetorical Theory of Refutation

Many years ago, a friend of mine taught me to play bridge and brought me to a 'serious' contract bridge club. In serious bridge competition everyone plays a system and each player has a clear set of 'rules' concerning how the bidding and the play should proceed. If someone makes a mistake, that's a source of irritation but it's excusable. However, if someone intentionally breaks a rule, that's a cause for moral outrage. Not knowing any better, and given my poker background, I 'bluffed' in bidding a particularly bad hand. It turned into quite a learning experience for me. I'd never seen two sweet little old people go suddenly berserk like that before.

Sound like anyone we know? NDT/CEDA Debaters often become incensed when they make an argument in a debate round only to have it rejected by the judge. Debaters have been taught the rules and expect – no, make that DEMAND – that judges evaluate their rounds in terms of the rules they have been taught. So if negative debaters decide to 'spread' affirmatives, and thoroughly confuse the issues in the process, they expect to be rewarded by winning the ballot unless the affirmatives can keep up with them and unconfuse things. And when judges don't vote this way you can often hear strident voices of outraged debaters throwing berserker fits of their own.

But true lay IPDA judges, by definition, don't know any better. They don't know official debate rules and theories. And they often don't play by them even when they do. In my experience, lay judges apply a psychological-rhetorical set of standards to evaluate debates. This kind of mental processing is, I believe, very similar to the way lay jurors evaluate arguments presented in a trial or the way lay voters evaluative arguments presented during an election campaign.

Hence, the lay IPDA judge is likely to apply rule #15 above in a very natural and honest way. The rule isn't there so much to 'tell them how to vote.' It's there to tell them 'it's OK to vote your natural inclination.' From a practical, psychological-rhetorical perspective what does this mean? I can only guess. But based upon a great deal of feedback from lay, classroom judges over the years, I think the following is a fair description of the psychological-rhetorical criteria being used by the typical lay IPDA judge:

First: ***Make a 'gut decision' about who won.*** The reasons for a 'gut decision' may not be obvious, even to the judge, but it's clear from conversation this happens a lot. Gut decisions are rationalized after the fact, but only if necessary. If lay judges aren't pressed about why they made a decision, they typically give none and spend very little time thinking about it after the decision is made. If lay judges are pressed, or they have to make comments on a ballot, they will find reasons to justify their gut decision. But they do not make decisions based on theory and rules and are unlikely to apply official debate criteria even when made available to them.

Second: ***If the gut isn't clear, vote for the debater whose position you most agreed with.*** If there is no clear 'gut winner,' lay judges generally fall back on voting for the position they most agree with. Lay

judges find it very hard to vote against their personal convictions. In fact, I'm pretty sure that personal biases contribute mightily to many 'gut decisions.'

Third: ***If the issues aren't clear, vote for the debater you liked the most.*** When there is no gut winner and the judge has no particular bias concerning the resolution, lay judges fall back on voting for ethos.[viii] There are, of course, times when ethos rules. There are debates where the lay judge just happens to like one speaker far more than the other. Or conversely, debates where the lay judge dislikes one speaker far more than the other. In such cases, ethos may become the primary reason for the decision and other reasons will be rationalized to justify that decision. But from available evidence, ethos only becomes a major criterion for a lay judge's decision in extreme cases or when gut feelings and prior beliefs are fairly evenly matched.

Fourth: ***And if all else fails, vote for the debater who was 'the best speaker.'*** The 'Instructions for Judges' sheet states in its final sentence: "The Affirmative has the burden of proof, but if you're not sure--Award the decision to the Best Speaker." The bit about "burden of proof" was added first. It was primarily a sop to the more traditional debaters competing in IPDA and for new IPDA debaters who have received a strong education in traditional theory. They wanted lay judges to be 'told' about the burden of proof. But in actual practice, most classroom judges had a very a hazy idea what this technical directive really meant in the context of decision-making. They frequently asked how they were supposed to apply this rule. If they were told, "when you're not sure, vote for the negative," they would, of course, vote negative. But this smacked too much of traditional debate practice and seemed to encourage 'bad (rhetorical) behavior' by debaters when on the negative. So the bit about 'Award the decision to the Best Speaker' was added later. And it was deliberately put in the last sentence and with capitalization to suggest this as a final and ultimate criteria. This criterion was easily understood by even the least sophisticated judges. Lay judges in even the closest debates could, in the great majority of cases, identify a 'best speaker.' After being used in years of competition, this criteria resolved almost all ties and did so with great fairness and without encouraging NDT/CEDA type rhetorical practices.

Now if I'm right about the way lay judges generally apply these criteria, and I'm pretty sure I am, it's important for IPDA debaters to stop complaining about judges and to learn how to persuade them. And THAT will lead to the development of some real life skills. So what does this mean in actual IPDA rounds?

Practical Implications for IPDA Debaters

Earlier, I mentioned a recent debate round which sparked my thinking about this subject. The topic in that round was, "Resolved: the benefits of tourism outweigh the costs."[ix] The affirmative, of course, coasted on a relatively straightforward, unambiguous, and consistent defense of the international practice of tourism. The core position being defended was inherent in the resolution and extremely clear to everyone in the room.

The negative, on the other hand, did not seem to be defending anything. This might in part have been the result of the wording of the resolution. But wording aside, the negative made no obvious attempt to develop and present a core position. Instead the audience was treated to an example of the first refutational strategy discussed above (straight refutation). What came out was a long series of confusing attacks on tourism. These included such scattered issues such as health care, the environment, international law, trade policies, and terrorism.[x] And the impact of these attacks, when contrasted with the clear affirmative case, was in my opinion negligible.

What is a Core Position: It's important that we start the practical advice with a definition of 'core position.' This is for clarity and to avoid misunderstandings. But let's not make this any more complicated then it needs to be. If you can explain your fundamental belief about the world with respect to the resolution in a few short sentences so that an eight-year-old would understand it, then you have identified your 'core position.' If you can't do this, you don't have a core position to defend. It's really that simple.

Consider the tourism resolution above: The affirmative core position might be expressed in this way: "Tourism means people all around the world going on vacation to visit each other. There is a big business to help people do this. And this is good because it helps people learn about each other, it makes jobs for

people, and it does a lot of other nice things for the world." Now, I'm not suggesting you actually defend your affirmative case in these terms, unless of course your judge happens to be an eight-year-old. But you need to clearly understand what your core position is to be sure that all of your argumentation and examples are consistent with that position.

The negative in that debate did not have a core position. The negative merely had a long, confusing list of objections. But what might the negative speaker's core position have been? Perhaps something like this: "When people all around the world spend too much time going on vacation to visit each other lots of bad things happen. They waste a lot of money, they make a lot of mess, and they make it easy for bad guys to hurt good people. A little visiting is OK but right now there is too much and we need a lot of new rules to make it a good thing." As I said, this is not a strong position for the negative because this is not a good resolution for the negative. But at least this position is clear. And if you can out-debate your opponent, you may well win the lay judge's ballot. Without a core position to contrast with the affirmative case, the lay judge is unlikely to know whether you have out-debated your opponent or not.

Developing a core position is like forging a chain: A debater presenting a case is like a blacksmith forging a chain. You've only got a limited amount of time to forge your chain. You can use that time to forge a few big links or a lot of little links. And those links can clearly fit together (with a good core position) or they can fit badly and be disconnected. Which chain will support more weight?

The traditional rules of NDT/CEDA might reward the fragmented scattered chain because by the end of the debate everything seems chaotic. But the psychological-rhetorical criteria of lay judges make it likely they will compare the two chains, give each a tug, and prefer the one which at a gut level would seem to work best. So how does this knowledge help debaters and coaches in IPDA?

The practical advice I offer for defending a core position in IPDA is based on the criteria of lay judges presented above. And while the following advice is presented in terms of the four criteria, the debater may well be unaware of which the judge is actually likely to use in making the decision. Hence, my general advice would be, try to win on all four:

First Criterion: ***When judges are making gut decisions about who won:*** Topic selection comes first. The importance of topic selection is hardly a revelation for IPDA debaters, but thinking about core positions during topic selection might offer something very useful to consider during the striking process. Quite soon, you are going to want to defend a core position about the resolution. So look for a topic which allows you to do so – a topic that will allow you to develop a case which presents a strong, clear, and fairly simple chain of reasoning.

And remember that the other three criteria can clearly influence this one. If your position is extremely attractive or a complete anathema to the judge, if you come across as the good guy or the bad guy in the debate, and if you come across as a comparatively superior or inferior speaker to your opponent; these can all heavily influence the judge's gut decision. But also remember, you don't have to sacrifice defending a core position to achieve an advantage in any of these areas.

Second Criterion: ***When judges are favoring positions closest to their prior beliefs:*** This is an exercise in audience analysis at its practical best. The more you know about your particular judge or judges, the better you can adjust to their prior beliefs. Clearly, it makes a difference in topic selection and case design if your judge is a bleeding-heart liberal or an arch conservative. So the more useful information you can discover about your judge before you debate, the better your chances will be. But often times you can't. Or what you do discover isn't very helpful. What then?

Then you try to design your case as much as possible around universally accepted values. Death is bad. Jobs are good. Waste is bad. The environment is good. Theoretically, you can't develop your entire case with non-controversial claims. If you could the resolution wouldn't be debatable. However some cases are more extreme than others. If you happen to know your judge holds an extreme view, you can develop a case to match that view. Otherwise, I'd recommend trying to avoid extreme positions. In any case, be sure

whatever interpretation you develop – on the negative as well as on the affirmative – is presented so that your core position is clear and well defended.

All of this suggests that having a strong general knowledge base is very helpful to an IPDA debater. This is obviously true when designing an affirmative case. But a strong knowledge base is even more valuable when debating on the negative. The affirmative may throw you a curve and you'll need to adjust with almost no time to do so. Remember, judges are likely to have a fair amount of knowledge concerning their own beliefs. You don't want to sound like a fool to the judge because of your relative ignorance.

Third Criterion: ***When judges are voting on ethos:*** How can public speakers consistently project themselves as having high ethos? This is a common and well explored topic in almost any good public speaking textbook. Less commonly, it is included and developed in debate textbooks (which is something of an indictment of the 'state of the art' in traditional debate). Your goal is to present your case and yourself in such a way that the judge thinks you are a good person. As a comparative judgment in a debating situation, you want your audience to think you are a 'better' person than your opponent.

This is partly a matter of content and partly is a matter of style. And having a clear core position from which to present and defend your arguments may be your best hope of coming across as having high ethos. A major line of scholarship considers all human communication, especially persuasion, from a storytelling perspective.[xi] Hence, debate might be considered an exercise in comparative storytelling. Whose story is the audience going to like better and find more convincing? Part of this depends on the story itself and the way it's told; part depends on the qualities of the story teller.

Years ago I presented a paper in which I set out a list of ten criteria for persuasive storytelling.[xii] The first among these involved the ethos of the presenter. There were four sub-criteria which determined how credible the narrator/speaker was likely to appear to an audience: Access, Expertise, Virtue, and Attraction. Translating these into an IPDA debate context:

Access means making the judge believe that your evidence came from a reliable source and that you're not just 'making it up.'

Expertise means convincing the judge that you really understand what you are talking about.

Virtue means making the judge feel that you are trustworthy – that you are being honest and telling the truth as you know it.

Attraction is the quality of presenting yourself to the judge as being likable, friendly, supportive, interesting, and dynamic.

Fourth Criterion: ***When judges are voting for the best speaker:*** Here again there is a wealth of information in public speaking textbooks. There is also an unfortunate paucity of such information in debate textbooks.[xiii] But the other aspects of public speaking aside, if you are going to be an effective, persuasive speaker before a lay judge, you might want to keep a storytelling paradigm in mind. In this sense, one essential element of storytelling is having a clear core position to present and defend.

This criterion suggests that before lay judges one should avoid such traditional debate practices as spreading, using debate jargon, shouting all the time, avoiding eye contact with the audience (so you can maintain eye contact with your notes), and making overly harsh, negative statements about your opponents or their arguments.

There is, or should be, nothing terribly surprising about the practical advice being offered in this paper. Select a topic you can 'sell' to your judge; develop a strong core position relative to that topic; be as knowledgeable as you can on a variety of subjects; use your core position to organize your materials and arguments; try to be 'the good person speaking well;' and work to develop a high quality, persuasive delivery. It should be the goal of every debater and every debate coach to emphasize these practical skills.

These are the life skills for building confidence, fluency, and persuasiveness with which we opened this discussion.

Broader Implications

If the basic argument being advance in this essay is true, that developing and defending a 'core position' is generally the most effective strategy for both affirmative and negative speakers before lay judges - and I strongly believe this argument is true – then it may have important implications for such diverse rhetorical venues as political elections, courtroom trials, advertising campaigns, classroom teaching, and any number of other persuasive/advocacy contexts.

Political candidates should do better with voters if they project a limited number of clear core positions rather than a large number of detailed policies. Consider the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections by way of example. I would call the reader's attention to the 2008 primary election debates as well.

Courtroom lawyers should do better with juries if they defend a clear core position rather than scattering their arguments over a broad range of issues. Contrast the O.J. Simpson criminal and civil trials by way of example.

Advertising campaigns should be more successful with consumers if they develop and consistently project a limited core position with respect to their product. This is such a well known principle on Madison Avenue that almost any good ad campaign will serve as an example.[xiv]

And in my opinion, classroom teachers will generally do better with students if they enter each course and each class session with a clear core position concerning what they are trying to teach, why students should be interested in learning it, and how the students are likely to apply that learning in the future.

Good luck; happy debating; and have an even happier personal and professional life.

Endnotes:

[1] An earlier version of this paper was presented at the International Public Debate Association National Convention in Monticello, Arkansas, April 2005. Hence, much of the language in this essay reflects the state of IPDA debate at that time. I considered trying to revise this manuscript to make that reflection of the current state of IPDA Debate more accurate, but I quickly realized that I am no longer in close enough contact with actual IPDA debate rounds to do so. However, I felt that this particular form of obsolescence would not diminish the value of the content of this analysis, so I simply left the language alone.

[ii] From what I hear, NPDA is well on the way to heading down this same road. This is a trend I predicted some years ago as being almost inevitable. "A Sociological Approach to Improving Style in Academic Debate," *Southern Journal of Forensics*, 1997, 3, 170-201.

[iii] The Pineywoods Showdown, Stephen F. Austin University, Nacogdoches, Texas, March 5-6, 2005.

[iv] There is a wonderfully succinct illustrative example of the contradictory problems of straight refutation which I like to use. It is based on a traditional Jewish joke: A woman demands a pot from her neighbor. The woman claims 'her neighbor borrowed the pot, it was a new pot, and it was never returned.' The neighbor replies, "I never borrowed the pot, it was an old pot, and I returned it in better condition than when I got it."

[v] This judging tendency has been known to drive NDT/CEDA debaters wild when debating IPDA for the first time. Their gut reaction is that THEY are right and IPDA is wrong. Hence, it is quite common to hear these NDT/CEDA transfers, and their coaches, calling for major reforms of IPDA – more specifically, the extensive training and qualifying of IDPA judges. But, of course, if IPDA ever gives in to this pressure and starts down that road, it might as well simply vote itself out of existence. Then the IPDA students and

coaches can go back to doing traditional debate or NPDA. And it won't matter whether they actually join another association or continue as IPDA. With trained, expert judges in IPDA, you will eventually (15 years at the most, based on the CEDA and NPDA experiments) find that the style of IPDA debate has morphed back into the NDT/CEDA style – i.e., speed, jargon, abusiveness, faddish trends, canned cases, and highly non-rhetorical styles of delivery. And, by the way, the really good news is that AFTER traditional NDT/CEDA debaters and their coaches have gotten used to the new way of doing things, they often fall in love with IPDA and lose their desire to reform it. I have always taken this to mean that we are doing some things very right and that we are sponsoring a very valuable educational activity.

[vi] That is to say, this was the primary (but not exclusive) IPDA "Instructions for Judges" handout in use when I finished my work as Executive Secretary in 2002.

[vii] This was from the 2003 version of the handout – the last year I was an executive officer in IPDA.

[viii] Ethos, of course, is one of Aristotle's three main criteria for a persuasive speaker. Quintillian defines this as "the good man (person) speaking well." For our purposes we can consider ethos to be the quality of being a knowledgeable, honest, trustworthy, likable, and skilled speaker.

[ix] The astute reader will note that this is a badly worded resolution. Why? It puts the 'burden of proof' on the negative. I.e., tourism is de facto a major industry all around the world. It fuels travel, it creates jobs, it stimulates local economies. Many people depend on it for their livelihoods. Hence, the status quo already assumes the benefits outweigh the costs. This wording of the resolution allows the affirmative to coast on a very strong presumption and forces the negative to assume the burden of proof. That's a tough challenge when the affirmative ALSO gets to present the initial case, define terms, and speak last. A well worded resolution would have been, "Resolved: the costs of tourism outweigh the benefits." Tournament hosts and event directors are well advised to review the IPDA topics to double check that the burden of proof is fairly placed in the resolutions. It can, of course, be argued that it's up to debaters to select the topic they are going to debate. True. But when there are only five choices and two strikes it doesn't give you a lot of room to maneuver, especially when one or more of the topics is badly biased against you.

[x] The final vote in this round was 2-1 in favor of the affirmative. And I'm fairly sure that if I could have read the ballot, or better yet the mind, of the judge who voted negative I would have found the criteria used in making this decision were traditional NDT/CEDA criteria.

[xi] Walter R. Fisher, "Narration as Human Communication Paradigm: The Case of Public Moral Argument," Communication Monographs, Vol. 51, 1984, pp. 1-22.

[xii] Alan Cirlin, "Narration, Persuasion, and Social/Cognitive Reality," a paper presented at the National Convention of the Communication Association of Japan, Yatsushiro, Japan, 1986.

[xiii] Most NDT/CEDA and even NPDA debate textbooks make little or no mention of delivery. And when they do, the things they have to say usually bear almost no relationship to what takes place in NDT/CEDA/NPDA debate rounds. Their advice is applicable to IPDA however and does bear some relationship to real world advocacy. However, if you simply must have a debate text discussion of effective delivery, I would modestly recommend Alan Cirlin, *An Introductory Handbook on the Theory and Practice of Debate*, 2nd. Ed., Pecan Grove Press: San Antonio, Texas 1989. It's not easy to find anymore so check with me if you need a copy. And beware of the CEDA emphasis in the text. It was written several years before NPDA and almost a decade before IPDA were launched as debate associations. At that time CEDA was, in most places, the 'only game in town' worth playing.

[xiv] I rather suspect that the severe time/space limits of advertising almost force practitioners into following a core position strategy. Television and Radio ads may be only seconds long. Print advertising is typically less than a page in length. Without a clear and limited message, how else are you to get your message across?