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# American Intercollegiate Debate: A General Survey with Emphasis on Past & Present Controversies, 1892-1968

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AMERICAN INTERCOLLEGIATE DEBATE:  
A GENERAL SURVEY WITH EMPHASIS ON PAST  
AND PRESENT CONTROVERSIES, 1892 - 1968

A Thesis 617

Presented to  
the Faculty of the Department of English  
Western Kentucky University  
Bowling Green, Kentucky

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts

by  
Carolyn P. Harrison  
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AND PRESENT CONTROVERSIES, 1892 - 1968

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## CHAPTER I

### Introduction

Since its inception, intercollegiate debate has not only survived storms of controversy and periods of great change but has grown and matured into a vital part of almost every speech department across the country. Today, tournaments are more numerous than ever; the debaters are more plentiful and just as enthusiastic (even if spectators are not). Even though intercollegiate debate has withstood the struggles of its beginning and the ensuing growing pains, maturity has not brought an end to the problems and controversies. Many present day controversies--such as the value of debate, the value of the tournaments, and the type of decision have raged since the early years; other problems such as debating on both sides of the topic have developed and been temporarily solved only to reappear later. In short, intercollegiate debate is still being debated after more than seventy years. In the face of this realization, has intercollegiate debate made any real progress? What has happened in those seventy years-- what have been the major disagreements and problems of

the past? Are they the same today? A survey of this past might suggest realistic and pragmatic solutions of some of the present problems. Some predictions on the direction of debate in the future should be evident concomitant with possible changes that will be necessary for debate to grow as an educational tool. In this study, only the history of intercollegiate debate in America will be dealt with; only the major changes and additions to the tournament,<sup>1</sup> the topic, the form, and the style will be examined from around 1892 until 1968. In almost every instance, this survey is traced through debate as it existed in the four year college.<sup>2</sup> This is, presumably, the place where the most important and significant debating was (and is) done in terms of viewing trends and patterns.

In order to accomplish the stated purpose, the rest of this paper is divided into four chapters: (1) a general history of intercollegiate debate including a look at the old literary societies which led up to

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<sup>1</sup>Both the contest and tournament will be dealt with, therefore, it is necessary to distinguish between them--a contest debate is a single meeting between two teams whereas a tournament is a predetermined number of contests between several teams from different schools who meet at one commonly agreed place to carry on a tournament until a champion is determined.

<sup>2</sup>Every attempt has been made to limit information to four-year colleges except when a form or change involving a prep school or junior college, or some other context, has been significant to the overview of intercollegiate debate.



the first debate, the first debate itself, the first thirty years of debate, and the last thirty years of debate; (2) the major changes in the tournament, the topic, the rules and forms, and the styles and strategies; (3) the outstanding controversies of the past and present, including possible predictions on the future of debate in American colleges; and (4) the conclusions that are evident from such a survey and the possible solutions to any present dilemmas. This study is based on textbooks and periodicals available from libraries; many articles and books have not been included because some were unavailable and others did not bear directly on the topic or were duplications and illustrations of areas already well covered.

Before any research for this paper was begun, a survey was made of studies that were similar or related to the one planned. Although works have been done in the historical-critical vein, these usually deal with particular events, people, or areas of debate rather than a general examination of the field as a whole with an attempt at evaluation. Such concerns were mainly approached in terms of a particular school of criticism or were adjuncts to an overall purpose of discussing rhetoric or persuasion and argumentation.<sup>3</sup> One historically oriented thesis discussed the history of debate,

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<sup>3</sup>For example, Otto Frank Bauer, "A Century of

but included all other elements of forensics such as oratory, extemporaneous speaking, student intermural activities.<sup>4</sup> Egbert Ray Nichols did a historical survey similar in scope and nature in The Quarterly Journal of Speech in 1936 and 1937; but, of course his articles cover only the first thirty-five or so years of debate.<sup>5</sup> In his history, Nichols surveyed past, then evaluated the status of debate in terms of

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Debating at Northwestern University, 1855-1955" (unpublished Master's thesis, Northwestern University, 1955); Robert Lavale Benjamin, "Definition: Its Nature and Function in Argumentative Discourse" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1951); Arthur C. Hastings, "A Reformulation of the Modes or Reasoning in Argumentation" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1962); Adelbert Edward Bradley, Jr., "John Ward's Theory of Rhetoric" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Florida State University, 1955); Malcolm S. Sillars, "A History of Intercollegiate Debate at the University of Redlands" (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Redlands, 1949); Fred Tewell, "A History of Intercollegiate Debate in the State Collegiate Institutions of Louisiana" (unpublished Master's thesis, Louisiana State University, 1949); Leroy Laase, "The History of Intercollegiate Oratory in the United States" (unpublished Master's thesis, Northwestern University, 1929); Royal F. Conklin, Jr., "A History and Analysis of Debate Tournaments in the United States" (unpublished Master's thesis, Baylor University, 1950); Walter N. Murrish, "An analysis of Intercollegiate and Interscholastic Debate Tournament Procedures" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Denver, 1954); and David A. Level, Jr., "The Objectives and Effects of Debate as Reported by Sponsors of Pi Kappa Delta" (unpublished Master's thesis, Purdue University, 1956).

<sup>4</sup>D. J. Nabors, Jr., "The Historical Development of Intercollegiate Forensic Activities, 1915-1956" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1957).

<sup>5</sup>Egbert Ray Nichols, "A Historical Sketch of Intercollegiate Debating," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXII (April, 1936), 213-220; XXII (December, 1936), 591-602; and XXIII (April, 1937), 259-278. Hereinafter cited as "Historical Sketch."



the past, and finally predicted some directions which could and would probably be taken. This paper will proceed in the same manner but will also highlight major problems of that first period and complete the history for the last thirty years, including the special problems of these three decades. Such a study should lead to some clarification of intercollegiate debate as it stands today and should indicate something of its future path.

## CHAPTER II

### A General History

In order to discover how and why debate began in America it is necessary to begin with the predecessor of intercollegiate debating--the literary society. The literary society was a part of American colleges many years before intercollegiate debating began. Thus it follows that the origin of the literary society is an important factor in shaping the origin of debating a little before the turn of the century. Harrison Boyd Summers places the fountainhead of formal contest debating at the Oxford Union in England at Oxford University; at every meeting questions were discussed that had been previously assigned to a certain group of speakers--half of the speakers took one side, the other half the opposite. Societies modeled after the Oxford Union began in America and Summers goes on to say: "Literary societies modeled after the Oxford Union were organized a few years later in most American colleges and universities, with formal debates the most important element in their weekly programs."<sup>1</sup> Oddly enough, literary societies did not begin out of the students' great respect or longing for rhetoric

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<sup>1</sup>Contest Debating: A Textbook for Beginners, The



and disputation. In his book Debating in the Colonial Chartered Colleges: An Historical Survey, 1642 to 1900, David Potter describes the typical life of a college student as very regimented with almost no freedom--no athletics, no dating, no dancing.<sup>2</sup> He elaborates:

Practically the only legitimate avenue of escape from the monotony of the prescribed existence open to the colonial undergraduate was the company of his fellow students. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that societies which featured jolly companionship, long and heated orations, and debates, dramatic productions, and comparatively large libraries containing contemporary as well as classic literature, come into being at most colleges from almost the very beginning.<sup>3</sup>

Potter carefully adds that many of the first clubs were religious in nature, but even as early as 1719, the Harvard Spy Club was giving "disputations" at their meetings.<sup>4</sup>

The general popularity and nature of literary societies can be seen from this statement by Potter:

Up to the middle of the nineteenth century, the record books indicate that the major literary and debating societies were functioning with unabated vigor, conducting strenuous parliamentary business sessions, assigning

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Reference Shelf, IX, No. 6 (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1934), 10. Hereinafter cited as Contest Debating. The Oxford Union which carried on disputations started long before American literary societies but the exact date cannot be determined from available sources. The Oxford Union Debating Society was not formally organized until 1823, but of course, American societies with disputations had begun before this.

<sup>2</sup>New York: New York Bureau of Publications, 1944, pp. 64-65. Hereinafter cited as Debating in Colonial Colleges.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 65-66.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 66.

and criticizing compositions, orations, and debates, competing with one another for members and academic honors, amassing large libraries, holding public exhibitions, jealously clinging to their independence from faculty interference and in general, behaving like little republics.<sup>5</sup>

The debates in the very early societies seemed to bear little relationship to debate as it is known today--very meager proof was used because of the small amount of library material available. Judging had no set pattern, but most societies provided for decisions either by the president or a special critic or board of critics. Dartmouth's United Fraternity had decisions as early as 1786. The usual basis for the decision was on the merits of the question until the early nineteenth century when argumentative ability was also considered--first at the Philosopic Society of Princeton in 1823.<sup>6</sup> Nichols comments on the styles that prevailed in the societies:

It [debate] was a desultory discussion in which opinion rather than evidence ruled, hasty inference rather than research was prominent, the subjects discussed were often inconsequential and arbitrary, and the art of rebuttal was comparatively unknown. Humor and satire, indulgence in personalities, rash generalizations, ad hominem appeal, and many of the things that still obtain in British debating were prevalent.<sup>7</sup>

It was general practice to have four or five speakers to a side, and many of these were law students. Eventually

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 70-71.

<sup>6</sup>David Potter, "The Literary Society," History of Speech Education in America: Background Studies, ed. by Karl R. Wallace and others (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1954), pp. 247-48.

<sup>7</sup>"Historical Sketch," XXII, p. 215.



they introduced some law practices into the debate--the burden of proof was given to the affirmative just as the plaintiff must prove the defendant guilty. This meant that the responsibility of proving the status quo or present situation needed to be changed rested solely on the affirmation--the negation then was only to refute these proofs given by the affirmative team. Proof or evidence was introduced and the use of authorities grew, based on the practice of utilizing witnesses and opinions of legal experts in court. Rebuttals, too, were allowed like opposing arguments of attorneys in courts. Finally, the rule that no new evidence may be introduced into the rebuttal was made applicable at the same time the court practices were introduced, but probably this was not a carry-over from law procedure.<sup>8</sup> The topics debated in societies were numerous, yet little different from those today. Helen Roach says this:

The debates in the societies were largely upon contemporary problems, and mirrored many of the current political and economic discussions. . . . Besides national issues, the topics debated also included international questions and problems involving contemporary developments in England and France. Questions of philosophy, morals, and education, and questions of a religious nature, were much less frequent. Slavery and Napoleon were two subjects persistently discussed.<sup>9</sup>

The literary society was a healthy and strong part of the

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<sup>8</sup>Summers, Contest Debating, pp. 10-11.

<sup>9</sup>"The Early Speaking Societies at Columbia College," American Association of University Professors Bulletin, 41 (Spring, 1955), 641.

college campus until mid-nineteenth century. Decay was evident even before the Civil War and by the 1860's and 1870's, the decay was complete.<sup>10</sup> Potter accredits the demise of these societies to several things:

Chiefly responsible for this decline were the changes in national ideals, intellectual interests, and educational purposes as manifested in the further liberalization and expansion of the curriculum, the rise of intercollegiate athletics, the decreased interest in oratory and forensics, and the spread of the social fraternities.<sup>11</sup>

Generally, the same external causes for the decline of the Southern societies are given by Frank B. Davis--societies of the South had to compete for the student's attention with social fraternities and other extra-curricular activities such as football, baseball. Other outside causes he mentions are the growth of transportation which allowed the students to leave the campus for amusement other than their own, the tendency in education to cultivate sciences rather than oratorical principles, and the emphasis on publications of the written word as opposed to the spoken word. Davis also attributes the decline to internal problems of the societies such as factions, politics, and strict attendance rules which had an opposite and detrimental effect.<sup>12</sup>

Although the literary societies as such died down,

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<sup>10</sup>Potter, Debating in Colonial Colleges, pp.89-91.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., pp. 122-23.

<sup>12</sup>"The Literary Societies of Selected State Universities of the Lower South" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Louisiana State University, 1949), pp. 338-43 passim. Hereinafter cited as "The Societies of the South."



they could certainly not be counted out--as one source put it, the old societies were just not attuned to the modern college life. They had a place but needed some revival, and the revival took the form of debating. A reaction began against the "lax condition of literary societies" and, in fact, "against the lack of genuine interest in any form of public speaking" that went on for several years at all Eastern colleges.<sup>13</sup> Two more specific reasons for the revival of debate are cited: (1) "The repeated attacks which have been made on athletics have stimulated in college men a desire for ideals of a somewhat different character," and (2) It is an intellectual activity with "the best elements of sport" and enlists "the good-will of those who were most strenuous in their opposition to the prominence of athletics."<sup>14</sup> Certainly, the assumption might be made that the joy of an intellectual activity and pleasure of using verbal skills accounts for part of the reason. Whether or not these are the exact reasons why debate arose is indeterminable. The fact remains that sometime between 1870 and 1892, the first intercollegiate debate was held.

Just exactly who held the first intercollegiate debate or where it was held cannot be pinpointed. Otto F. Bauer in his article "The Harvard-Yale Myth" points

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<sup>13</sup>Ralph Curtis Ringwalt, "Intercollegiate Debating," Forum, XXII (January, 1897), 633.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

out that several writers have made the mistake of calling the Harvard and Yale debate in 1892 the first intercollegiate debate. To the contrary, he says that the determination of the first debate is usually whether the debate was sponsored by the university or by a society (which was an entity apart from the school), and to "determine which schools had the first university-sponsored intercollegiate debate is virtually impossible, because of the varying degrees of control exercised by each university in the early contests." Bauer adds that another basis for selecting the first debate is whether the event was a decision or non-decision contest. If this is the deciding factor, Bauer believes "The first decision debate seems to have occurred at Illinois College on May 5, 1881, between the Phi Alpha Society of Illinois and the Adelphi Society of Knox College, the victory going to Phi Alpha." However, Bauer shows that a debate on November 29, 1872 between the Adelpic Society of Northwestern University and the Athenaem Society of Chicago University might very well be called the "first modern intercollegiate debate," since it is almost identical with the Harvard-Yale debate in format and style.<sup>15</sup> Essentially, Bauer concludes that the Harvard-Yale affair was not the first modern intercollegiate contest but that the Northwestern-Chicago meeting was, in 1872.<sup>16</sup> As Bauer

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<sup>15</sup>The Register, II (Winter, 1963), 20.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 23.



mentions, David Potter called the Illinois-Knox College debate the first contest "to the best of my knowledge."<sup>17</sup> Still other authors discover the first debate in the affair between Rockford Female Seminary and Knox College in 1883 on the topic of "social benefits and evils of the lavish expenditure of wealth by the rich."<sup>18</sup> Even so, as Bauer and others admit, many consider the debate between Harvard and Yale the first because Ralph Curtis Ringwalt in his article in 1897 called it the "first of modern inter-collegiate debate."<sup>19</sup>

It is interesting to examine some of the details of this debate. The Harvard Union proposed to hold debates with other colleges, but this proposal was voted down for two years. Finally F. S. Dallinger, a member of the Harvard Union, set down the advantages of such a debate in a letter to Yale. Nothing was heard the first year the proposal was sent, but in the Autumn of the next school year Yale returned a challenge and it was accepted. The appropriate representatives met at Springfield and arranged for the first debate to take place at Cambridge on January 14, 1892. Yale had the affirmative on the question "Resolved, That a young man casting his first ballot in

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<sup>17</sup>"The Literary Society," p. 245.

<sup>18</sup>Both of these sources: Henry Lee Ewbank and J. Jeffery Auer, Discussion and Debate: Tools of a Democracy (2d. ed.; New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1951), p. 383; Ruth Elizabeth Stites, "Eighty Years of Forensics at Rockford," The Gavel, 16 (January, 1934), 27.

<sup>19</sup>"Intercollegiate Debating," p. 634.

1892 should vote for the nominees of the Democratic party." Ex-governor William E. Russell of Massachusetts was the presiding officer; there were no judges and no decision, but "the audience was large, representative and enthusiastic, and the debating creditable."<sup>20</sup>

It is unimportant which was really the first, the point is that seventy odd years of growth followed those first debates. A brief general history of those years is necessary in order to give a framework in which to examine in detail the major changes and controversies.

Much interest arose for debate in the years shortly after 1892. In March, 1893 the Whig and Cliosophic literary society of Princeton challenged Yale to a debate. Stanford and California had their first debate in 1894. Penn and Cornell began in the school year of 1894-1895-- others like the University of Chicago, Boston University, Wesleyan University, Bates College, Williams College and Dartmouth began debating in 1895 and 1896.<sup>21</sup> One of the first held in the South was between the University of Georgia and the University of North Carolina in 1897. Although debates at Georgia were sponsored by a society in the first years of the century, by 1914 the Debate Council of the school was handling them, thus making them truly

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., pp. 633-34.

<sup>21</sup>"A Historical Sketch, " XXII, 216.



intercollegiate debates.<sup>22</sup> Between 1892 and 1902, two main tendencies appeared: (1) the organization of debate leagues and (2) the establishment of yearly single debate rivalries. The first triangular arrangement, between Princeton, Yale, and Harvard, began in 1894 when Princeton suggested the three schools join together once a year in single debates. The triangular leagues that developed later did not operate exactly as this one did. They had more than one meeting annually. The first quadrangle league was formed by Michigan, Chicago, Minnesota, and Northwestern University in 1897. These schools debated in pairs in January of each year and held their final debates in April. This association lasted eight years, and was followed by a triangular league between Michigan, Chicago, and Northwestern, the first triangular formation to have debates simultaneously. This type of triangular league was the most popular.<sup>23</sup> During the same period, debate spread down into the prep schools (two-year colleges) and high schools.<sup>24</sup> Essentially though, the activity in this first period at the turn of the century remained very modest--most colleges

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<sup>22</sup>Frank B. Davis, "Debating in Literary Societies of Southern Universities," The Southern Speech Journal, XV (December, 1949), 98. Hereinafter cited as "Debating in Southern Universities."

<sup>23</sup>Nichols, "Historical Sketch," XXII, 216-17.

<sup>24</sup>Ringwalt disapproves of this in his article "Intercollegiate Debating," saying that these students are not ready for debating, thus the coaches do all the work--Nichols in "Historical Sketch" says this remark does not hold true for later conditions.

did not have intercollegiate debate, and those that did limited the activity to one to five debates annually.<sup>25</sup>

In these few short years from the revival of the society, debating came into its own. What is owed to the literary society for the beginning of modern debate? Potter says that "during the period of their greatest influence, the societies initiated many relatively new forms of debate and set up the framework for academic debating as we know it today."<sup>26</sup> He goes on to say that "to the literary societies must go the major credit for nurturing and loyally supporting active intercollegiate debate programs." Not only did the societies plan and finance debates, they prepared speakers, hired private instructors, and appointed special research teams to aid the debaters.<sup>27</sup> Davis adds that the literary society was "one of the grandfathers of our present day speech departments" and the initiator of "many debate practices and procedures that are followed to the present time."<sup>28</sup> Thus, there is much indebtedness owed to the societies; and even though debate sprang from these groups, it soon overshadowed its parent and grew much beyond any expectations.

Other evidence of increasing growth and interest

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<sup>25</sup>Nichols, "Historical Sketch," XXIII, 259.

<sup>26</sup>"The Literary Society," p. 257.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 264.

<sup>28</sup>"Debating in Southern Universities," p. 99.



during these early years is the publication that began. The first debate book was published in 1895: The Principles of Argumentation by George Pierce Baker.<sup>29</sup> Baker was a professor at Harvard and one of the first to teach formal debate courses for credit (even though it was listed officially as an English course). The first ten years of the twentieth century saw a snowballing of debate textbooks and literature concerning debate. Because Baker was so successful with his book, many others followed his example. William Trufant Foster published Argumentation and Debating in 1908.<sup>30</sup> In 1909 the first volume of Intercollegiate Debates, edited by Paul M. Pearson, contained a summary of the arguments of several teams, one complete debate, and an article from The Outlook.<sup>31</sup> Also, school publications rallied to support debate and generate interest by giving long spaces in their papers to the announcement of debates and results of the contests.<sup>32</sup> The first debate aids (not textbooks) that appeared at this same time were Craig's Pros and Cons and Baker's Specimens of Argumentation.<sup>33</sup> When in 1914 and 1915 Speech teachers broke with the National English Council, they added to

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<sup>29</sup>Boston: Ginn and Company.

<sup>30</sup>Chicago: Houghton Mifflin Company.

<sup>31</sup>Nichols, "Historical Sketch," XXII, 594-95.

<sup>32</sup>Potter, Debating in Colonial Colleges, pp. 101-02.

<sup>33</sup>Nichols, "Historical Sketch," XXII, 594.

the publication by starting their own journal entitled the Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking (now The Quarterly Journal of Speech) for the purpose of discussing and promoting speech activities.<sup>34</sup> The next few years, to 1923, saw more growth and expansion. More colleges took up debate and the activity generated. World War I retarded activity to an extent but afterward the speed quickly resumed. During the War, women did much to sustain debating--these years are "characterized by the rising interest in debate on the part of women students." For many years after the beginning of women in debate, it was a practice to have separate contests for women rather than mixing them at tournaments or on teams. One ill effect that the War had was the cessation of the publication of Intercollegiate Debates, but it resumed after the War years.<sup>35</sup> This period also saw the beginning of the debate trip, a natural outgrowth of the interstate triangular leagues so popular in this era. All that was needed was to arrange more than one debate during these trips. The University of Denver was the initiator. They traveled to Kansas to meet Ottawa University on April 16, 1913, and then went on to Missouri and met William Jewell College on April 18. After the trip idea began, there was a great desire for more debates in every school, but two problems faced the debaters and coaches: financial resources and permission for absences

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<sup>34</sup>Nichols, "Historical Sketch," XXIII, 266-67.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., pp. 259-60.



from classes. Finally this was solved: "The spread of the student activity fund idea and the interest of the public in interstate and intersectional contests reduced the financial difficulty considerably." After funds were found, the faculty became more agreeable to allowing excuses.<sup>36</sup> In fact, the obstacles to debate trips were breached so well that "from 1916 on, the debate trip became a popular and common feature in intercollegiate debating."<sup>37</sup>

Another important event during the years before 1920 was the first transcontinental trip taken by Columbia University debaters who traveled from New York to Los Angeles, stopping on the way to meet several teams across the United States. Why was this important? As Nichols says: "The Columbia University trip was heralded far and wide and may be said to have been the impetus which established the long debate trip as a permanent feature in American College debating."<sup>38</sup> As discussed earlier, the War years did have some influence on debate, but mainly they encouraged ingenuity and spread several practices that helped popularize debate. One incident was in 1917, and again it was a debate trip. Nichols explains:

One other trip had significance for its influence on the later history of debate through its effect on Pi Kappa Delta. The University of Redlands, one of the smaller colleges in Southern California, had established

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 260.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 261.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

a chapter of Pi Kappa Delta. The coach and debaters were interested in the possibility of having a National Convention of that order somewhere in the Middle West, where most of the chapters were located. The Washburn College Chapter was induced to invite the convention to its campus at Topeka, Kansas, and Professor E. R. Nichols, then National President of the order, sent out the call for the conclave. The debaters and their instructor then set out to raise the funds to get themselves to Kansas, and after many plans and schemes were tried, finally succeeded. Arriving in Topeka, they were looked upon as a three days' wonder by the delegates from the colleges near at hand, for this delegation had debated its way from the Coast, and the Coast was a long way from Topeka. The trip was really momentous, because Pi Kappa Delta until this time was a paper organization, and this convention moulded it into permanent and substantial organization and started it upon a career of service to debate. . . . This example encouraged other small colleges to attempt trips, and soon interstate debating was the established thing. . . . The colleges of both coasts toured into the Middle West and the colleges of the Middle West traveled to the two coasts.<sup>39</sup>

These same good years before 1920 saw another less favorable turn of events for intercollegiate debating: because of its great popularity, its rapid growth, and the many publications discussing it, debate suddenly came under criticism both from the public and educational world. Such things as the type of subject chosen, the coaching, the efficiency of contests, the excessive desire to win, and the value of debate as a social or educational tool came under fire.<sup>40</sup> These particular controversies are discussed in detail later, but it is sufficient to note here that debate had become prominent enough to offer problems worthy of nationwide comment. Shortly after, in the 1920's, the first

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid., pp. 261-62.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., pp. 263-67 passim.



tournament was held at Southwestern College in Winfield, Kansas.<sup>41</sup> In 1926 at Fort Collins and Greeley, Colorado, Pi Kappa Delta National Convention was the first to make use of the tournament system.<sup>42</sup>

Occurring also in this rapidly changing era of early twentieth century debate was the formation of forensic honor societies. The first, Delta Sigma Rho, was founded on April 13, 1906 in Chicago, Illinois. It seems that the founders had in mind a society which would be equal to the Phi Beta Kappa of liberal arts colleges, but in forensics, and, according to Annabel D. Hagood in her discussion "Forensic Honor Societies," they were "dedicated to encouraging 'effective and sincere public speaking.'" At this 1906 meeting, Thomas C. Trueblood, a well-known name in the speech field, was elected chairman.<sup>43</sup> Tau Kappa Alpha was founded next on May 13, 1908. The first meeting was held in the Governor's office in the State House of Indiana. Lieutenant Governor Hugh Miller was elected president.<sup>44</sup> One of its founders, Oswald Ryan,

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<sup>41</sup>There is disagreement on the exact date. Nabors, "The Societies of the South," p. 62, says it was in the Spring of 1923, and Raymond Yeager, "Part II: The First Fifty Years," The Forensic: Golden Anniversary Issue, 48 (March, 1963), 15, says that the first tournament was in 1922.

<sup>42</sup>Yeager, "Part II: The First Fifty Years," p. 15.

<sup>43</sup>Argumentation and Debate: Principles and Practices, ed. by James H. McBath (Rev. ed.; Chicago: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc., 1963), p. 34.

<sup>44</sup>Oswald Ryan, "The Origin of Tau Kappa Alpha," The Speaker, XXV (March, 1941), 3.

a debater at Butler College, stated that the founding idea of Tau Kappa Alpha was a "Phi Beta Kappa for orators as well as scholars" and "to use its [Tau Kappa Alpha] historic medium of debate and exhortation to search out the truth that makes men free."<sup>45</sup> Although no exact date is given for the founding of Pi Kappa Delta, it began around 1912 or 1913.<sup>46</sup> This organization was founded principally for smaller colleges, and two men were mainly responsible: John A. Shields, student at Ottawa University, and E. R. Nichols, a professor of English and major contributor to the speech and debate development. A different purpose was established for this society in that two of its founders were Masons, and a type of "Masonic" system was adopted whereby "degrees of achievement and orders of membership were set up for the members." Academic achievement or scholarship was not stressed or required for membership.<sup>47</sup> Even though other honor societies have been established, these three were the most successful in acquiring chapters and members. On March 4, 1963, the three became two when the announcement was made of the merging of Delta Sigma Rho and Tau Kappa Alpha. This "new" honor society is now called Delta Sigma Rho-Tau Kappa Alpha.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup>Hagood, "Forensic Honor Societies," p. 35.

<sup>46</sup>According to The Forensic: Golden Anniversary Issue in the Yeager article, "Part II: The First Fifty Years," the official date is set at May 29, 1913 although formation was carried on throughout 1912-1913 (pp. 15-16).

<sup>47</sup>Hagood, "Forensic Honor Societies," pp. 35-36.



Today the purposes of the societies remain much the same as the original ones. During the years, each has begun publication of a magazine for its members: The Forensic, Pi Kappa Delta; The Gavel, Delta Sigma Rho; and The Speaker, Tau Kappa Alpha.<sup>49</sup> (After the merger, one magazine was published called The Speaker and Gavel.) In summary, Hagood outlines what the fraternities have contributed:

These forensic societies have shared a common purpose-- the recognition of excellence in public speaking. Their original purposes and present requirements for membership characterize Delta Sigma Rho, Tau Kappa Alpha. . . . Pi Kappa Delta. . . . stipulated /no/academic achievement as a prerequisite to membership.

These organizations have contributed significantly to the field of speech and to the education of the students they have served. They have aided in the crystallization of standards in forensic programs, afforded the opportunity for national forensic competition, and encouraged and recognized excellence in public speaking. Through fraternity journals and programs they have maintained alumni interest and cultivated a public appreciation of forensic activities. In many ways, the pattern of forensics in the twentieth century has been determined by the leadership provided by the forensic societies.<sup>50</sup>

It is obvious that these years are rich in terms of significance to debate. The list does not stop here. On June 16, 1921, Bates College and the Oxford Union met at Oxford to debate the question: "This House approves the American Policy of non-intervention in European affairs."

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<sup>48</sup>Argumentation and Debate: Principles and Practices, p. vi.

<sup>49</sup>Hagood, "Forensic Honor Societies," p. 40.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., p. 47.

This was the first international debate and started international meets on a regular basis. The decision of this first contest was made by the audience, which voted on the subject--not on the skill of the debaters. Naturally, since most of the audience was British, the Oxford team won. Only one type of trip was left to be originated--a trip around the world. This was accomplished by the University of Oregon in 1927 when its debaters went around the world, debating in Hawaii, Australia, India, and England.<sup>51</sup>

Intercollegiate debate continued to grow and expand into the years of the Thirties, but the problems also grew. These years were marked not so much with innovations as with controversies--especially over the decision or non-decision contest. By 1934 many contests omitted the decision.<sup>52</sup> This same period, discussed later, saw much unrest and reform in both practices and format. One new thing did occur in the 1931-1932 season when it was noticeable that radio debating had become frequent and popular.<sup>53</sup> When Nichols wrote his "Historical Sketch" of debate in 1936 and 1937, he felt that debate had weathered its storms and that much of the road ahead would be smooth for he believed that debate had reached its maturity. He thought that in the future, debate in its maturity could become even greater and more valuable as an educational tool. To him, all the

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<sup>51</sup>Nichols, "Historical Sketch," XXIII, 263.

<sup>52</sup>Summers, Contest Debating, p. 10.

<sup>53</sup>Intercollegiate Debates, ed. by Egbert R. Nichols, XIII (New York: Noble and Noble, 1932), vi.



major problems had been met and solved or at least overcome. They had not.

Throughout the Forties, debate did prosper. The early years saw the adoption of a national resolution and the first television debate. In May, 1940, the first televised debate took place in the RCA Building for the National Broadcasting Company in New York City; Raymond Underwood and Jack McKenna debated for Bucknell, and David Kagon and Charles Schneer debated for Columbia. The debate on the dust bowl problem lasted less than a half hour; Lowell Thomas gave the short introductory address. The debaters took full advantage of the medium by using visual aids such as diagrams, movies, and illustrations--The Speaker comments on the importance of this event:

It was observed only by the privileged minority of people with television receivers in their homes, yet in an unassuming way this epic contest illustrated the educational possibilities of television and opened up a new field of intercollegiate forensics.<sup>54</sup>

Of course, both radio and television debates became regular procedure during the next twenty years. Moreover, in 1962 a program of college debating "Championship Debate" ran for seventeen weeks, surprisingly on a commercial station. However, some adjustments in normal debate format were made for these showings--the speeches shortened and the topics varied (the national topic was not used). From evidence available these debates were successful--at least in relation

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<sup>54</sup>"The First Television Debate: Bucknell vs. Columbia," The Speaker, XXIV (May, 1940), p. 3.

to other educational programs presented on commercial television.<sup>55</sup> According to a report by James H. McBath, a program of "Championship Debate 1964) consisting of a series of seven programs was shown on the National Educational Television Network. It was produced by the National Educational Television at the WTTV studios in Chicago. The exact size of the viewing audience was not determined. McBath ended his report by requesting correspondence to the network to show support for the program--as in commercial television, educational programs depend on the reaction of the audience. This does not imply that the program was not successful but that more response would be beneficial in continuing such programs in the future.<sup>56</sup>

Throughout the Forties, Fifties, and Sixties, debate has thrived. The national fraternities have grown, the national conventions of each have drawn more and more debaters. One example of the growth can be seen from a study by John Douglas Cole called "Western Collegiate Debate Survey" between the years 1940 to 1949. He found that there was definitely an upward trend in the ratio of debaters to students. Not only that, the budget allotments were up, and debate was the major attraction at college tournaments--twenty-five percent ahead of extemporaneous speaking

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<sup>55</sup>James H. McBath, "Debating on Television," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, L (April, 1964), pp. 146-52.

<sup>56</sup>"Television Debate: A Progress Report," Journal of the American Forensic Association, I (September, 1964), 109-12 passim.



or discussion. In the ninety-five colleges surveyed, the average four year college sends a debate squad more than five times a year with an average squad of sixteen debaters. Of these same schools, ninety percent that offered debate gave credit for it and sixty-two of the ninety-five offered debate training.<sup>57</sup> A later survey of Nichols M. Cripe of "budgets and other aspects of debating" was done in 1963 and 1964. Two hundred and thirteen schools in forty-five states participated. He found, in comparison to a study he had done five years previously, that eighty-eight percent of the budgets were over a \$1000 as compared to fifty-eight percent over a \$1000 in 1959.<sup>58</sup> Nineteen schools reported forty or more debaters on their squads, but sixty-seven schools had twelve to eighteen debaters. Sixty-eight percent of the schools sent debaters to ten or more tournaments a year.<sup>59</sup> A survey in 1966 and 1967 by George R. Armstrong revealed increased growth again. Fifty-seven (highest number in this category) of the two hundred eighty-four schools answering had from \$2000 to \$2999 for budget, and nine schools had budgets from \$10,000 to \$15,000. The average school attended 17.2 tournaments and

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<sup>57</sup>This summary was found in Western Speech: Journal of the Western Speech Association, 15 (October, 1951, 55-56, and was taken from a Master's thesis done at the University of Redlands, April, 1951.

<sup>58</sup>"A Survey of Debate Programs in "246 American Colleges and Universities," The Speech Teacher, VIII (March, 1959), 157-60.

<sup>59</sup>"Intercollegiate Forensic Budget Survey, 1963, 64," Journal of the American Forensic Association, I (May, 1964), 53.

thirty-two squads attended two or more debates a week.<sup>60</sup> Armstrong went on to make comparisons to Cripe's initial study, using only one region for the correlation:

The average budget in 1958-59 for fifty-six schools was \$1157; in 1963-64 the average gain was \$501 making the average budget \$1658 for fifty-two schools; however, in a period of three years the average budget nearly doubled, now being \$4228 for sixty-six schools.<sup>61</sup>

This comparison also found the average number of debaters to be sixteen in 1958-1959 with an increase of one in 1963-64--in 1966-67, the average for a squad was nineteen. Attendance at tournaments averaged twelve in 1963-1964 and fifteen in 1966-1967. Interestingly, the number of schools having large squads of forty or more has decreased but is offset by the fact that other categories of squad size increased significantly. So the number of debaters is still increasing even if the size of the squad is not.<sup>62</sup> Debating without question is big in the Sixties.

In view of this general survey of the origin, the birth, and the growth of American intercollegiate debate, the quantitative and chronological scope is easily seen. But the question still remains whether any genuine progress has been made. What specific changes have occurred and have the changes made any real difference? Although debate

<sup>60</sup>"Intercollegiate Forensic Budget Survey, 1966-67," Journal of the American Forensic Association, IV (Fall, 1967), 87.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., p. 95.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid.



has obviously grown and prospered, should it have grown more? Should it be more popular? A detailed look at the changes that have been made and a study of problems will reveal some of the answers.

## CHAPTER III

### Major Changes

Today, the intercollegiate debate forms seem standardized and the casual observer would take the normal contest form of two debaters a team, two constructive speeches, and two rebuttals for granted without a thought of whether this form was any different than in the past. Even though debate has taken separate formats apart from the orthodox contest form--cross-examination, direct-clash, forum, and others--these are relative new types that came about in the Twenties and Thirties during the period of great upheaval. Almost every debater today takes for granted the practice of debating the national topic throughout the season in front of one judge (no more than five at the most) in tournaments held at almost every college across the United States. The present debate system seems cut and dried to most debaters and even coaches act as if these practices and procedures have always been foregone conclusions. In today's system, audiences for debates have disappeared--non-decision contests are practically unheard of. Topics are always of the same general nature year after year. To assume that debate has always functioned in this seemingly well-oiled manner, is certainly fallacious. Actually, continual change has marked debate since the literary



societies began and even as far back as the old Oxford Union. These changes have occurred in four fundamental areas--the topic, the tournament, the rules, and the philosophy. Of the four areas, the topic is the only one that can be considered a part of debate or disputation no matter what other factors varied. The topic is of absolute necessity for any type of argumentation to occur. Therefore, more detailed examination can and should be devoted to this vital area. The development of the tournament, the rules, and the philosophy are directly tied to the origin of intercollegiate debate. The topic existed before.

Throughout debate history, many American and English topics have been economic, political, governmental, educational, or sociological. Very few, even in the literary societies dealt with collegiate problems, moral problems, or ridiculous (humorous) resolutions. In fact, Christopher Hollis writing in a history of the Oxford Union, says that this group for the most part of its history banned theological motions even though some topics seemed religious. It was not until 1950 that this ban was removed.<sup>1</sup>

When the literary societies began in America, questions for discussion followed a similar pattern. Mainly religious and political topics were outlawed, and sometimes atheistic and deistic questions were illegal. Most questions were confined to philosophical, political, and

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<sup>1</sup>The Oxford Union (London: Evans Brothers Limited, 1965), pp. 222-23.

literary subjects.<sup>2</sup> However, some topics of the Harvard Union around 1720 show the disputations were on topics of students' concern--campus life and questions of morality:

Whether Society's of Xtians are Oblig'd to pray together Morn & Eve?

Whether the Souls of Brutes are Immortal?

Whether the humane Souls are Equal?

Whether the world will be annihilated or only refined?

Whether it be Fornication to lye with ones Sweetheart (after Contraction) before marriage?

Whether there be any Standard of Truth?

When may a Man be said to Lye?<sup>3</sup>

But, Potter in discussing the literary society topics of colonial colleges points out how little they actually differed from topics today:

Should a student of argumentation pick up the minute books of any of the many literary and debating societies which existed in the colonial chartered colleges during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, he would probably conclude that the topics listed for debate in the literary sessions were of the same nature as those contested in the contemporary classroom and commencement forensics or, if in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, in the intercollegiate debates. Actually, with few exceptions, such a conclusion is valid.<sup>4</sup>

He goes on to say that when the literary society functioned without faculty interference, it sometimes debated topics which particularly concerned or interested the members.

<sup>2</sup>Potter, Debating in Colonial Colleges, p. 75, n. 54.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 77-78.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 77.



Such as:

Are Prize Debates beneficial to the interest of our societies?

Whether a Student in this University ought to confine his attention chiefly to the study of his profession in Life.

Should negroes be admitted to Yale College?<sup>5</sup>

Summers gives some topics of societies which demonstrate the little use of evidence that must have been practiced: "Which is the more useful, wood or iron?" and "Resolved, that Lincoln was a greater man than Washington."<sup>6</sup> Further examples of mid-nineteenth century society topics are given by Ewbank and Auer:

That the sign of the times predict a downfall of American liberty.

That the greatest good of the North requires a dissolution of the American Union.

That S.A. Douglas is more worthy of a seat in the United States Senate than the Honorable A. Lincoln.

That the signs of the times indicate a dissolution of the Union.

Sometimes the ridiculous was debated, but sources indicate this type was not the rule. Two examples show how amusing the debates must have been: "Should bachelors be taxed for the support of old maids" and "Supposing a man pull a rope tied to a pig's snout whether the man or the rope

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 78, n. 60.

<sup>6</sup>Contest Debating, p. 10.

<sup>7</sup>Discussion and Debate, pp. 382-83.

would pull the pig?"<sup>8</sup> Toward the end of the Civil War and the end of the heyday of the literary society, there arose interest in questions of national affairs:

Resolved, that the United States ought to assume the protectorate over the Panama Canal.

Resolved, that the National Government should extend pecuniary aid to the public school systems of the various states.

Resolved, that the present mode of choosing our President should be changed.

Resolved, that there should be a universal divorce law throughout the United States.

Resolved, that trade unions are beneficial to the working man.

Has Russia a just claim to Constantinople?

Resolved that the American Indians have been subjected to gross injustices.

Resolved, that church property be taxed.

Resolved, that the present method of electing the President by Electoral Board should be changed.<sup>9</sup>

By the time debate started its revival in the 1890's, the questions were almost always in the governmental, political, sociological, and economic fields. Nichols explains why:

The college debaters wanted something practical, interesting, and worthwhile as an education project. They expected to learn something by their study of the debate subject, and were not merely airing their opinions or entertaining a social gathering at the literary society halls.<sup>10</sup>

Potter comments that in spite of the national and international

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<sup>8</sup>Potter, Debating in Colonial Colleges, p. 78, n. 60.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., pp. 87-89 passim.

<sup>10</sup>"Historical Sketch," XXII, 217.



flavor of questions at this time, the editors of the Harvard Crimson felt differently. Early in 1892, they took this stand:

That a mistake has been made in not securing a subject for the second debate with Yale of more direct collegiate interest. If these debates are to have any life interest and significance they must be kept out of the well-worn ruts, and given a distinctive character as college affairs.<sup>11</sup>

The pendancy toward serious, sober questions in the few years between 1892 and 1900 can be seen from this list:

Resolved: That Immigration to the United States be restricted.

Resolved: That the power of railroad corporations should not be further limited by national legislation.

Resolved: That the United States should annex the Hawaiian Islands.

Resolved: That a formal alliance between the United States and Great Britain for protection and advancement of their common interests, is advisable.<sup>12</sup>

Potter sums up the pattern of the topics of the nineteenth century as ethical, moral, and religious in the beginning of the century with economic, social, educational, and political subjects dominating the end of the century. The literary and academic questions were replaced with topics centering on the problems of the day.<sup>13</sup>

Little deviation has occurred in the nature of topics since 1900 up to the present day. Governmental, economic,

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<sup>11</sup>Debating in Colonial Colleges, pp. 105-06, n. 48.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., pp. 104-05.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 122.

political, and sociological subjects continued to dominate. A few samples from the years 1910 and 1911 give an idea of what was being debated then:

Resolved: That all cities that have a population of over 25,000 should adopt a commission form of government.

Resolved: That the Direct Primary should be used in nominating all candidates for elective offices in the state.

Resolved: That the Parliamentary form of government is better adapted to the needs of a progressive and democratic nation than the Presidential form.<sup>14</sup>

A slight departure from the norm appeared in questions from the 1925 through 1929 seasons, but these were definitely the exception, not the rule:

Resolved: That education is the curse of the age.

Resolved: That the policy of centralizing power in the Federal Government is desirable.

Resolved: That the emergence of women from the home is a depressing failure of modern life.

Resolved: That the practice of installment buying be drastically curtailed.<sup>15</sup>

The only major change of this century that has come about in debate topics was the adoption of a national proposition. Normal procedure for selecting topics in the first few years in intercollegiate debate was for the host school to submit a list of propositions to the visiting school. The visiting school was allowed its choice in the matter of topic and side. Many times, the questions were worded deceptively

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<sup>14</sup>Chosen at random from volumes of Intercollegiate Debates and University Debaters Annual.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.



in order to put the accepting school at a disadvantage before they realized it. Later when debate fraternities started, they took the responsibility for selecting questions. No effort was made for a single proposition, and these bargaining sessions became so long as to become exhausting and burdensome.<sup>16</sup> Pi Kappa Delta, the senior college fraternity was the innovator of the national debate resolution. When this group began the practice of a national convention, the need for a single question was suggested; in 1921 a referendum was accepted by the members and the following question selected: "Resolved, that the principle of the closed shop is justifiable." Although this was the official question, members were not forced to accept it. Many did--and in succeeding years, each annual proposition was accepted more and more--even by schools that were not affiliated with Pi Kappa Delta teams, they would have to use their proposition. By the Thirties, the Pi Kappa Delta question was in general use from one seaboard to the other. Finally, after several years and many meetings, a committee composed of two members each from Tau Kappa Alpha, Delta Sigma Rho, Pi Kappa Delta, Phi Rho Pi (the junior college fraternity), "and a ninth member to represent unaffiliated school," selected a national question for the 1942-1943 season. The question read: "Resolved: That the United Nations should

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<sup>16</sup>James H. McBath and Joseph Aurbach, "Origins of the National Debate Resolution," Journal of the American Forensic Association, IV (Fall, 1967), 96.

establish a permanent federal union with power to tax and regulate commerce, to settle international disputes and to enforce such settlements, to maintain a police force, and to provide for the admission of other nations which accept the principles of the Union." Today, the committee membership has been reduced from nine to six--one each from the original organizations and one from the American Forensic Association (added in 1954). These members meet annually at the expense of the participating organizations and permit final announcement by the chairman in order to promote efficiency and accuracy in the national announcement." McBath and Aurbach in writing their history of the national question concluded by saying:

Competitive speech tournaments and cross-country tours were innovations which gave impetus to the idea of a common debate question. In turn, emergence of a national debate proposition has been instrumental in the development of nation-wide intercollegiate forensic activity in this country. As early as 1924 forensic leaders acknowledged that extensive debate programs were facilitated by the convenience of a single, popular proposition.<sup>17</sup>

After the adoption of this national resolution, the questions selected fell more and more into one invariable category. Rarely does a school debate any other proposition other than the national one, and the following list shows the pattern of national topics completely entrenched in national and international affairs:

(1947-1948) Resolved: That the federal government should require arbitration of labor disputes in all basic American industries.

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., pp. 96-102 passim.



(1950-1951) Resolved: That the federal government should adopt a permanent program of wage and price control.

(1951-1952) Resolved: That the Congress of the United States should enact a Compulsory Fair Employment Practices Law.

(1954-1955) Resolved: That the United States extend diplomatic recognition to the communistic government of China.

(1956-1957) Resolved: That the United States should discontinue direct economic aid to foreign countries.

(1959-1960) Resolved: That the Congress should be given the power to reverse decisions of the Supreme Court.

(1963-1964) Resolved: The federal government should guarantee an opportunity for higher education to all qualified high school graduates.

(1967-1968) Resolved: That the federal government should guarantee a minimum annual income to all citizens.<sup>18</sup>

Only when the television debate series came in the Sixties was any change apparent in the questions debated. The topics chosen for these events seem to belie the fact that national propositions are less interesting to the customary audiences than questions of current interest and concern. Questions selected for television sound somewhat more provocative:

Resolved: That there should be a uniform national divorce law.

Resolved: That gambling should be legalized in all states.

Resolved: That our free press has too much freedom.

Resolved: That Congress should be given power to reverse decisions of the Supreme Court.

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<sup>18</sup>Chosen at random from volumes of Debate Handbook (Normal, Ill.: Mid West Debate Bureau) and J. Weston Walch, Handbook (Portland, Me.: J. Weston Walch).

Resolved: That prayer should be permitted in public schools.<sup>19</sup>

Changes in the topic, although significant, have not been as sweeping as the transformation that has ensued in the area of rules, philosophy, and introduction of the tournament system. A gradual movement can be seen from the rules, styles, and practices used in the old literary societies to those used today. As debate grew in popularity and shed the literary society, the new forms demanded changes and inventions. At the inception of intercollegiate debate, when the literary societies were still in charge of the debate contests, members of the team for the scheduled debate were selected by tryout from inner-society debaters. Since only a few were chosen and only one or two debates were held annually, competition was fierce to become a member of the team.<sup>20</sup> When these contests began, the size of the team was increased to three men instead of two men to give more students a chance to participate and to increase the number of speeches which was thought to be a better technique. However, the length of the speeches was cut from fifteen to twelve minutes for constructive speeches with an additional speech of five minutes for each debate called a rebuttal. Usually there was no decision, but "the machinery of the [sic] contest was perfected so that

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<sup>19</sup>McBath, "Television Debate: A Progress Report," p. 111.

<sup>20</sup>Nichols, "Historical Sketch," XXII, p. 220.



the decision came naturally, or was carried down from the practice of the literary societies."<sup>21</sup> Contrasting to today's method of selecting judges, the schools handled this much like the topics. A list was submitted by the entertaining college and the visiting college chose two judges; then the visiting college presented a list to the entertaining college and they selected the final judge. During the actual judging, different rules were in effect in different areas of the country. In the East, the judges were allowed to confer, but in the Mid-West they could not. Some judges allowed fifty percent for argumentation and fifty percent for delivery, while others gave sixty-fourty and some even seventy-five percent for argumentation and only twenty-five percent for delivery. Up until the triangular leagues developed, separate subjects were chosen each time a debate was held. After these leagues came into existence, the same subject was debated the first time the teams met, and when they met later for the finals, a different topic was debated.<sup>22</sup>

One thing particularizes these contests around the turn of the century--the audience. Actually to say the audience was enthusiastic is rather a mild statement. All the students of the schools looked forward to the meetings of rival schools. These events were looked upon as sport contests, and the students prepared all year for these contests

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 217.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 218.

similar to the way students look forward to the annual basketball game with a rival today. Eventually, this great desire to win on the part of the spectators and on the part of debaters led to the development of the coaching system. Initially the schools put public speaking teachers in charge of debate and contest of oratory (from this practice sprang the modern speech department).<sup>23</sup> For example, Harvard had an advisory committee for debate by 1896, Princeton had a faculty committee by 1899, and Rutgers had established faculty help by 1900.<sup>24</sup> Soon after 1900 most schools employed faculty help or alumni who directed and aided debaters. Not long after this practice became widespread, Harvard became concerned about the help being given to the students and outlawed the faculty committee--however, others did not follow suit.<sup>25</sup> George Pierce Baker of Harvard, however, did begin a class of Forensics and Debating, English 30, which helped train debaters in argumentation.<sup>26</sup>

The style of early debaters varied considerably. Yale men did not commit any speech to memory; Harvard men were not allowed to prepare or learn written speeches; Columbia debaters prepared written arguments and read over them until thoroughly familiar with them; and the Princeton students waited until the last few days before the tournament and then

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 219.

<sup>24</sup>Potter, Debating in Colonial Colleges, p. 102, n. 39.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 112.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 113, n. 67.



wrote and memorized their speeches. Princeton coaches felt that by leaving the speeches to the last minute, the debaters had the opportunity to completely examine all the arguments and therefore not fix in their minds any shallow or weak arguments too soon before the contests.<sup>27</sup> Rewards for the first debaters were not the extensive trips of today but money and metals. In the Yale and Harvard debate in 1895, Yale gave gold metals and Harvard gave \$75.00 to the best speaker in the preliminary contest to determine the team that would meet Yale.<sup>28</sup>

As debating moved into the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the style changed:

Gradually coaches left one man entirely free to use extemporaneous argument, then ultimately gave liberty to use the extempore style to all the team. They ultimately achieved the place where not even the first affirmative gave a committed speech.<sup>29</sup>

During the same time, in the first years of the century, the methods of judging changed. The critic judge plan was first tried in high school, then in college in Kansas during the 1914-1915 season. This plan advocated by Professor Lew Sarett, incorporated one judge a debate; this judge gave a few minutes of oral criticism to help make the experience more educational for the participants. Eventually, this plan became one of the main methods of decision and is used almost

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 111, n. 61.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 118.

<sup>29</sup>Nichols, "Historical Sketch," XXIII, 271.

exclusively today. Non-decision debates also appeared at this same time. Debate was beginning to receive tremendous criticism and decisionless debating was tried as one means of overcoming these attacks.<sup>30</sup> H. S. Woodward tried the method in Ohio in the 1914-1915 season and wrote up a full explanation and evaluation in the October, 1916 Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking (I, 229-33). Also as an attempted solution to the great criticism, the open-forum plan began around 1920.<sup>31</sup> The judge and decision are completely done away with in the open forum and a half-hour or so of audience discussion period is substituted.<sup>32</sup>

The debate tournament began in the Twenties but not exactly in the same manner as today. Then a preliminary tourney was held early in the season consisting of decision or non-decision contests or both. The championship tournament was held later in the season and was more like the tournaments of today. This too was started as an answer to the criticism and Nichols comments on this effort:

The most significant development in contest debating and the one most likely to perpetuate it in the face of all attack from debate theorists and critics and from non-decision practice is the debate tournament.<sup>33</sup>

Some changes were engendered by the introduction of the

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<sup>30</sup>Infra, p. 60.

<sup>31</sup>Nichols, "Historical Sketch," XXIII, 267.

<sup>32</sup>"The Decisionless Debate with the Open Forum," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, VII (June, 1921), 279-91. This article gives several coaches opinion of the open forum.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 272.



tournament system--the two-man team was adopted because of a need for time limits, but each was still allowed a ten minute constructive and five minute rebuttal. The audience disappeared and was replaced by one judge for preliminary rounds and multiple judges for later rounds.<sup>34</sup> Another new form of debating was introduced in 1924--the Oregon Plan or Cross-Examination debate. Professor J. Stanley Gray of the University of Oregon first experimented with this form. A period of questioning is allowed after the constructive speeches by each side in the Oregon Plan--presumably this cross-examination frees the debate from the rigidity of set speeches and generates a more interesting exchange.<sup>35</sup> As time passed in the Twenties, the number of contests with no decisions grew. Debate was going through a period of extreme criticism--one group felt that the non-decision system and style of English debaters seen in international debates was one of the things that made the British debaters so popular, and these same theorists felt that debating could fulfill its educational aims better by taking the emphasis off the desire to win. Most of those in debate circles did feel that the desire to win needed curbing. They easily saw the evils in choosing only the best speakers to debate, not to mention the inequity to the average speaker who needed the training debate could give them. Many thought

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 273.

<sup>35</sup>"The Oregon Plan of Debating," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XII (April, 1926), 175-80.

the non-decision type of debate was the solution because it demonstrated the willingness to lose and emphasized the training debate could give.<sup>36</sup> This period of self-evaluation also brought forth the shift-of-opinion ballot devised by Howard S. Woodward which evaluated the speaker at the end of each speech. The purpose of this form, again, was to make debate more of a learning experience for participants.<sup>37</sup>

A few short years after the origination of the tournament system, the novice tournament was begun in the 1931-1932 season in Los Angeles Junior College.<sup>38</sup> By 1934, Summers points out that up to fifteen to twenty years before all debates had decisions, in 1934, in many instances, decisions were omitted. Debate had practically come a full circle.<sup>39</sup> New forms continually appeared--the "direct-clash" plan was started by Professor E. H. Paget of the North Carolina Agriculture College in 1932. It was first demonstrated at the Pi Kappa Delta National Convention in Tulsa, Oklahoma in April of 1932. Each issue in the debate is taken one at a time and threshed out before going on to the next, and only one referee or judge presides.<sup>40</sup> The styles by the Thirties

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<sup>36</sup>Nichols, "Historical Sketch," XXIII, pp. 268-70.

<sup>37</sup>Emmet T. Long, "The Debate Judge and the Rhetorical Critic," Western Speech: Journal of the Western Speech Association, XVI (January, 1952), 23.

<sup>38</sup>Egbert Ray Nichols, ed., Intercollegiate Debates, XIII (New York: Noble and Noble, 1932), vii.

<sup>39</sup>Contest Debating, p. 10.

<sup>40</sup>Nichols, "Historical Sketch," XXIII, 271.



had also gone the other way. Nichols aptly describes the common attitude:

The committed speech and especially the "canned" rebuttal were held to be bad education, and more and more coaches came to see that they were bad and abandoned them. The ideal toward which all began to strive was a larger measure of extemporaneous speaking.<sup>41</sup>

Summers agrees when he states that "formal oratory style was replaced with a more conversational style. . ." and the aim of good debating has become the presentation of an intelligent discussion of the question, which will win the listener to a desired point of view."<sup>42</sup>

Summers comments that styles did differ from area to area in the country during the Thirties, but there was general standardization on a few points like the use of a chairman, his duties, and the practice of having two men on a team who were to give constructive and rebuttal speeches. Although two men had become the rule, there were exceptions: "at present, two speaker teams are the rule, although in some sections three speakers are used on a side."<sup>43</sup> The lack of funds caused by the Depression resulted in correspondence or tape recorded debates instead of trips. Nichols compliments this effort in the preface of Intercollegiate Debates for the 1935-1936 season.<sup>44</sup> When tournaments did occur, the normal

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid., pp. 267-68.

<sup>42</sup>Contest Debating, pp. 10-11.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., pp. 11-13, passim.

<sup>44</sup>XVII, p.vi.

system was for a team to drop out after two defeats.<sup>45</sup> Although women began debating before 1920, (only in pairs, mixed teams were practically unheard of), still in 1937, the tournament had a separate men's and women's varsity division. One such typical tournament had these divisions plus a junior college and lower division.<sup>46</sup> In the 1938-1939 season another new form was introduced to contest debating--again in order to overcome the objections to formal debate. Professor F. W. Orr, Head of Speech at the University of Washington originated the Problem-Solving Forum. The format called for the first speaker to analyze the question, the following speakers to present solutions, and the final speaker to evaluate.<sup>47</sup> Admittedly, discussion is not considered a part of debate today, but discussion was originally an offshoot of debate during the period of great criticism. Therefore, one major event occurred in 1939 that should be mentioned. The first annual National Discussion Conference of Tau Kappa Alpha was held in Chicago. Tau Kappa Alpha called this new form the "Forensic Experience Progression." It was described as:

A series of seven hours of speaking projects which combine extemporaneous speaking, discussion and debate in a functional sequence as applied to a proposition such as "To what extent should the United States follow a

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<sup>45</sup>Joseph Baccus, "Debaters Judge Each Other," Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXIII (February, 1937), 74.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 79.

<sup>47</sup>Edith M. Phelps, ed., University Debater's Annual (New York: H. W. Wilson Company, 1939), p. 315.



policy of isolation (economic and military) toward nations outside the Western Hemisphere engaged in armed international or civil conflict.<sup>48</sup>

Evidently by the Thirties the purpose and philosophy of intercollegiate debate became relatively settled. The upheaval and attacks that filled the previous years obviously provoked much thought and eventually caused some sort of general agreement: a justification of debate as a utilitarian and educational tool must be arrived at. Debate was defined in 1934 as "simply a discussion in which two or more speakers give opposing views on a subject to a group of listeners."<sup>49</sup> Carney C. Smith in 1937 believed that debate should teach sportsmanship--by this he meant honesty in debaters because debate was "an educational tool in training citizens." Smith continues:

We should remember that we in debate are training the future leaders of our country. In their respective communities and in the nation, they are sure to suffer many reverses. If we can train them to be true sportsmen and sportswomen, we shall not only make for a more harmonious community, but shall give them one of the prime requisites of a successful life.<sup>50</sup>

Requirements of good debating were set forth by Summers in his book Contest Debating (1934). This statement illustrates the philosophy of the Thirties that has remained almost unchanged today:

Good debating would satisfy all of the following

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<sup>48</sup>Elwood Murray, "The Discussion Progression," The Speaker, XXIV (November, 1939), 19.

<sup>49</sup>Summers, Contest Debating, p. 9.

<sup>50</sup>"Sportsmanship in Debating," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXIII (February, 1937), 83-86 passim.

requirements. First, each debater should show an intelligent understanding of the question, and knowledge of all of the important facts concerning it. Second, there should be evidence of careful planning. The argument presented should be organized into a unified constructive case, presenting the points of contentions which give the strongest reasons for accepting the desired point of view concerning the question. Third, both constructive speeches and rebuttals should be carefully organized so that each point stands out clearly and the case as a whole is easy to follow.

Fourth, every contention advanced should be amply supported with proof, sufficient to establish the point in the mind of an unprejudiced listener. Rebuttal arguments should be supported with proof materials, no less than those advanced in the constructive case. Fifth, every important constructive point advanced by the opposition, and every attack of consequence upon the main points in the debater's own case, should be considered in rebuttal. Refutation should be effective; every opposing argument attacked should be overthrown, or at least seriously weakened.

Sixth, ideas must be expressed in effective language. Good English is necessary in any sort of speech; but over and above the demands of good grammar and good English style, the debate argument should be presented in language which conveys the speaker's thought most clearly and effectively. And finally, the debater must be a good public speaker, talking directly to his listeners in an informal conversational style, but with earnestness and vigor of expression that compels attention and helps bring the audience to an acceptance of the ideas presented.<sup>51</sup>

The rapid expansion of the Thirties can be seen from Nabors who found less than a dozen tournaments listed for 1931 but ten times that many in 1940.<sup>52</sup> Changes after this period of great changes were relatively few. Debate seemed to have defended itself and settled into its long sought place in the college curriculum. One article does say that enthusiasm increased in the early Forties for the public forum, the

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<sup>51</sup>pp. 13-14.

<sup>52</sup>"The Societies of the South," p. 19.



town meeting, and group discussion but evidently not at the expense of debate.<sup>53</sup> Phelps in the University Debater's Annual echos this in 1944 by saying that the Oregon Plan, the forum, the informal discussion and radio debates were popular but old-fashioned contest debating remained strong.<sup>54</sup> After World War II, the renowned West Point Tournament was created as an "unofficial National Tournament"; then the late Forties gave rise to another period of invention and experiment--experiments in new methods of judging, contest forms, and variation of older events were resumed.<sup>55</sup> Unlike the other experimental period of the Thirties, no great effects were felt.

A survey today of the literature in the field--periodicals and textbooks dealing exclusively with debate--and other articles and comments on debate from other fields will reveal the fact that the position of contest debate is still insecure because continual suggestions for changes are made either in the form of new methods of debating such as the "comparative advantage,"<sup>56</sup> of judging, or of balloting. It would seem the period of refinement and improvement has arrived. Major changes have been lacking since the early

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<sup>53</sup>Geoffrey F. Morgan, "Why All This Debating," The Speaker, XXV (January, 1941), 9.

<sup>54</sup>p. 5.

<sup>55</sup>Nabors, "The Societies of the South," p. 9.

<sup>56</sup>L. Dean Fadely, "The Validity of the Comparative Advantages Case," Journal of the American Forensic Association, IV (Winter, 1967), 28-35.

Forties, and it is likely to continue to be so--not that all are satisfied with debate's role today. They are not. Evidence for this can be found in the persistent stream of suggestions for some "improvement" of one kind or another. Possibly, the period of rapid change has ceased because debate really has reached a plateau where it is fulfilling its best role, but maybe the cause is found in the fact that the controversies now lie only between the members of the field. Since debate has moved out of the realm of a popular sports contest with an audience to an exclusive exercise in jargon understood only by those familiar with its workings, it might be that debate has removed itself from public criticism. If this is correct, such a withdrawal does not necessarily guarantee the approval of the public and other educators or even the excellence of the academe. An examination of the past and present controversies will present further answers to the needs of intercollegiate debate today and the position of its future.



## CHAPTER IV

### Controversies

Almost from its beginning debate has been criticized by both those within the field and those outside of it. Down through the years practically all techniques, rules, and strategies have been attacked at one time or another. Out of these criticisms, some changes have occurred, new forms have been developed, and various practices have been discarded. Without doubt, debate has not been static--a few controversies, in fact, shook its very foundations. Others were mild and did not bring radical change, but all controversy and resultant change has contributed to debate as it is today. Have these changes always been for the best? Actually, even after years of turmoil it can not be assumed that even one of these problems in debate has been settled or rectified--possibly the same difficulties and drawbacks to intercollegiate debate still exist. A closer look at the major criticisms and controversies may determine if debate can be called a mature discipline; in other words, one that has seen its own deficiencies, corrected them, and then continually worked to improve its value in the educational structure.

Some of the earliest criticism appears in 1897 when Ringwalt found fault with the coaching system of which he disapproves. According to him faculty coaching was an evil

which lead debaters to be merely "mouthpieces" rather than individual thinkers and speakers. Ringwalt also felt that debate was being overdone by allowing freshman and even prep schools to have contests--this level of student was not mature enough intellectually to participate in such an endeavor. Disallowing this problem Ringwalt concludes by forecasting a bright future for debate.<sup>1</sup> The very nature of debate, a competitive game, has been the source of much criticism. George Pierce Baker in 1901 was the one to first suggest "the contest nature of intercollegiate debating, comparing it to a game." However, James Milton O'Neill explored and fully developed this concept through several essays and papers prior to 1920 which gave the "specific nature of contest debating" and the function of judges.<sup>2</sup> In essence, O'Neill established debate as it has existed up to the present. He waged and won many of the early battles when debate first became the subject of tremendous criticism. Many felt that debate should not take the competitive "game" form with a decision but should be either decisionless or have an audience decision (this was the time when audiences still existed for debates). Wisely O'Neill did not believe that decisionless debate cured any of the problems that

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<sup>1</sup>"Intercollegiate Debating," pp. 639-40.

<sup>2</sup>Giles Wilkeson Gray, "Some Teachers and the Transition to Twentieth-Century Speech Education," History of Speech Education in America: Background Studies, ed. by Karl R. Wallace and others (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1954), p. 440. Hereinafter cited as "Transition to Speech Education."



contest debate had.<sup>3</sup> Even this early discussion had arisen on the evils of contest debates--too much emphasis on winning which supposedly led to other ills such as memorized speeches, trick styles, arguments just to please the judges. In 1915, Woodward published an article on a "decisionless" experiment held in an Ohio tournament. Woodward concluded that decisionless debating cured these problems and gave the added advantages of the ability to have "unbalanced" questions (some subjects may not be fairly balanced between both negative and affirmative and thus be unsuitable for decision contests). In Woodward's opinion, this allowed more "real debating" to be done.<sup>4</sup> O'Neill answered these objections by rejecting the need for decisionless debating and stating the real need--competent judges in contest debating. Judges who judge on the basis of the quality of the debating done and not on personal prejudices or the merits of the question. Intercollegiate debating would then be a true culmination of instruction in debating."<sup>5</sup> O'Neill was convinced of the irreplaceable advantages of contest debating if only (what he considered) the minor problems could be worked out. O'Neill also settled the function of judges--an article by John Adams Taylor, "The Evolution of College Debating," (Public

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 441-42.

<sup>4</sup>"Debating Without Judges," Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking, I (October, 1915), 229-33.

<sup>5</sup>"Judges Again," Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking, I (October, 1915), 306.

Speaking Review, II [December, 1912<sup>7</sup>, 97-105) stated judges ought to decide "which side gets nearer the truth." In direct opposition, O'Neill said judges should ". . .express an expert opinion as to which side does the better debating." Basically O'Neill recognized the worth of truth finding, but felt the very essence of debate was involved here--debate and truth finding are two different things. A contest of debate should be judged on principles and skills of debate, not on the truth of the question in the mind of the judges. Furthermore, he urged the use of the critic judge: a judge who not only determined the decision on the basis of best debating but who would also give a short criticism after the debate in order to illustrate what type of debating all should strive for. At this time (before 1920) the "juryman's vote" and "legislator's vote (both essentially based the decision on the merit of the question) were quite popular, but today the critic judge is almost exclusively used. Not only is the influence of O'Neill obvious in debate today but also his theories and attitudes on the nature of debate currently predominate.<sup>6</sup> An article in 1915 by Frank H. Lane shows another controversy that existed--how much faculty help should be allowed. To summarize, Lane was of the opinion that contests seemed to be unfair, because of a "conflict of ideals" and the absence of precise standards as to how much the instructor may help. As a solution he suggested: (1) it should be a point of honor that students get no help in actual preparation of speeches or debates for

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<sup>6</sup>"Transition to Speech Education," pp. 440-41.



contests, (2) instructors be allowed to give all help possible, and (3) a change in contests--a general field should be chosen to study and the actual topic selected only at the contest. Lane felt this system would prevent the debater from getting help before hand on specific speeches yet still permitted all the help wanted in general preparation.<sup>7</sup>

Egbert Ray Nichols marked the period between 1913 and 1923 as a time of increasing criticism--more intense than ever before. This criticism arose from both the public and educational worlds. Some of the main criticisms from the public according to Nichols, were (1) an aversion to the type of subjects chosen, (2) the coaching system, (3) the practice of a debater taking both sides, and (4) the practice of debating evidence "rather than beliefs and opinions" (rather a startling criticism). Nichols related the public feelings on topics--the type of topic such as the old literary societies used was better because the student usually knew something about them without research. This belief completely denied the value of study and research for students. On this point, Nichols bluntly dismissed any such notion by saying: "such bickering about debate was so abstruse and pettyfogging that it deserves no attention whatsoever." In contrast, Nichols believed that the criticism of the coaching system was fair and made in an effort to improve debate.<sup>8</sup> The heaviest attack came on the issue of debating

<sup>7</sup>"Faculty Help in Intercollegiate Contests," Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking, I (April, 1915), 9-16.

<sup>8</sup>"Historical Sketch," XXIII, 263-64.

both sides and was initiated by Theodore Roosevelt in The Outlook (103, February 22, 1913). Shortly, William Jennings Bryant agreed with Roosevelt that debaters should only debate one side of a question.<sup>9</sup> Nichols logically and calmly explains why these prominent men were incorrect in their position:

Evidently both Roosevelt and Bryan were looking at the matter from the point of view of men who had settled their convictions on these public questions and felt that everyone else should do the same thing. The fact that a young student had no settled convictions, did not occur to them. They did not consider how he was to form them, and they did not see the educational value of studying both sides of the question before forming an opinion. They merely saw debate with a political enemy on the other side of the question, and were appalled that a young man could argue on either or both sides to the best of his knowledge and ability. We are not so appalled seeing that each of these men could get enthusiastic about a side which the other abhorred and abominated.<sup>10</sup>

Another area of public disension was begun by The Outlook which contained an article (132, September 13, 1922) defending the British attitude of debating as opposed to the American attitude--several articles written in protest followed.<sup>11</sup>

Protests against intercollegiate debate from the educational world took the same form as the public outbursts and added more new criticism:

1. . .the efficiency of contests, with attacks on the desire to win; 2the coaching system and crooked methods to secure decisions, 3the basis of judging debate, 4the various systems of judging; and 5 the very

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., pp. 265-66.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 266.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., pp. 264-65



foundations of debate--that is--whether it is founded on logic or on psychology, and whether it contributed to educational value and to social living.<sup>12</sup>

Nichols further pointed out that later in the period the educational world hotly discussed other issues such as critic judging, audience decision, and non-decision contests. Most of this criticism, Nichols concluded, was meant to be helpful but it paved the way for the "dissatisfaction and reform which characterizes the next decade."<sup>13</sup>

It is clear from this discussion that, from the first, debate was questioned in all its practices. Of course, at this time, intercollegiate debate was still in its formation stages and the changes were not so much radical diversion from established practices as precedent setting procedure for future controversy. The period of greatest and true change comes a short time later.

In fact, Nichols calls the time between 1923 and 1933 the era of unrest and reform. Of all the points of controversy, the decision caused the most division and criticism.<sup>14</sup> From this great unrest many new practices arose--the elimination of the canned rebuttal (a previously prepared speech rather than an extemporaneous one) and the emphasis on extemporaneous speaking throughout the debate. It was presumed that the desire to win was the source of many evils and thus

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 266.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 267.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

needed curbing; so many different things were suggested and tried: (1) ways to get better judging, (2) complete elimination of decisions, (3) minimization of importance of winning, (4) changes in manner and type of debating, and (5) contest methods which reduced the emphasis on winning.<sup>15</sup> Non-decision contests made tremendous headway between 1923 and 1926; actually, two camps formed--one for decision and one opposed. The reformers introduced new forms such as split team debate, group discussion, and congressional convention meets; while the opposition went to the other extreme in the Oregon style and the open forum style (discussed earlier).<sup>16</sup> Group discussion arose as a substitute for debate because it excluded the "fight" image and allowed a topic to be discussed from all angles--not from just two sides.<sup>17</sup>

The tournament system that began about the same time as the criticism proved to be the solution to much of the discord. As Nichols says, the tournament seems to have met most objections and "seems to have stemmed the tide against the contest, and is turning the stream back in the other direction."<sup>18</sup>

By 1934, Summers explains in his book, Contest Debating, that the value of debate "is beyond question"--it develops the individual and trains one for life in addition to

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., pp. 267-68.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 269.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 271.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 273.



teaching research techniques and developing reasoning.<sup>19</sup> Presumably, Nichols was echoing the times with the statement that debate had reached its maturity--Nichols believed debate had been through most of its growing pains and was ready to move forward by merely perfecting the techniques and changes that had survived the era of great reform. Other writers had different ideas. For example, in 1937 (the same year Nichols concluded his articles) Joseph Baccus pointed out that judges still received the most criticism in tournament debating. To alleviate this, he suggested that debaters judge each other in preliminary rounds of a tournament, and then have judges for the final rounds.<sup>20</sup> At the same time, Carney C. Smith was questioning the sportsmanship in debate and the emphasis on winning. He says:

I realize that many of these unsportsman-like tactics are the result of pressure brought by the administration of the school. The coaches in debate, like those in athletics, are told to win."

In some cases, Smith says coaches salaries depend on the number of wins the team has--thus the debaters are taught to win and become so caught up in winning that the real purposes and aims of debate are lost. Finally, Smith, observes that the losers, both debaters and coaches, cannot smile and are discourteous to the winning team, they even corner the

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., pp. 5-6.

<sup>20</sup>"Debaters Judge Each Other," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXIII (February, 1937), 74.

judges and talk about them and the decision. Smith felt this way: "among the poorest group of losers in inter-school activities are the debaters and their coaches."<sup>21</sup> An article of Raymond V. Shoberg in 1939 demonstrates that the controversy and criticism remained unquelled. To summarize, Shoberg reflected there was a need for audience type debate in order to aid debate in its value as an educational tool; there was over emphasis on tournament debate, and there was a need for judges who give critiques so a debater would know why he was losing or winning.<sup>22</sup>

The opening year of the Forties did not lessen the intensity of criticism--William Ray wrote "Democracy in Debating" which attached the practice of utilizing a few talented debaters to win tournaments at the expense of less skillful speakers who needed the practice and experience debate could give them. He contended that intercollegiate debate needed to be more democratic even if not so many tournaments were won. As a debate director himself at the University of Alabama, Ray had practiced what he preached, and his conclusions were that this type of program let all students who wanted a chance to debate to get that chance, fostered growth of debate, and had a "favorable effect on

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<sup>21</sup>"Sportsmanship in Debating," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXIII (February, 1937), 84-85.

<sup>22</sup>"The Tournament Critique," The Speaker, XXIII (January, 1939), 5-6.



debating in general."<sup>23</sup> Some old controversies, reoccurred in an article by Robert T. Oliver, "Debating for Fun!" According to Oliver, debate was not fun because: (1) the questions were too far from actual concerns of students and prospective audiences, (2) too few questions were debated each year (one national topic was about to become standard procedure), and (3) too much emphasis was placed on logical evidence rather than what would appeal to debaters and audiences. Oliver's solution was to set up a debate program as a supplement to the present, serious debate group for those interested in a clash of wits rather than the research and intricacies of the present system. He also suggested lighter topics; then quickly admitted this system would promote some bad debate habits, but it did have its advantages--cleverness, wit, and philosophical thought would be stimulated in terms the student could handle.<sup>24</sup> A biting piece of criticism was leveled at intercollegiate debate in 1941 by Geoffrey F. Morgan in an article "Why All This Debating?" Essentially, he surmised that too much time was being spent on debate training in college rather than public speaking which he considered more useful for real life. Says Morgan:

My own conviction is that students, as well as audiences, are getting a trifle tired of the whole debate set-up; the first speaker, the second speaker, the rebuttal, the presentation and the refutation and all the rest of it, especially since it does not fit into the scheme of

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<sup>23</sup>The Speaker, XXV (November, 1940), 10-11, 14.

<sup>24</sup>The Speaker, XXV (November, 1940), 4-5, 8.

everyday life, and does not prepare the student for the most popular and acceptable forms of public speaking in after years.<sup>25</sup>

Non-decision contests were still being suggested as evidenced by J.N. Smelser's article "Why Have a Decision" in 1941. This article refutes having any decision in debates for the same reasons decisions were always disliked: the decision is not important to the educational aspect of debate, it encourages tricks, and it becomes a sport rather than an intellectual endeavor.<sup>26</sup> A new criticism was found in "The Debater's Handbook Evil" by Paul Soper. He did not like debate handbooks for use in actual debates, nor did he like the outlines, rebuttal notes, or whole speeches fed back verbatim from these books. Soper's solution: coaches should combine to pledge not to buy or use those handbooks having objectionable features or publishers should be asked not to include them.<sup>27</sup>

A survey of the literature of the field during the Fifties confirms the continuing disagreement and discussion on debate and what it should be. In "Debate for Democracy," Gifford Blyton found four major problems in intercollegiate debate: (1) the present status of debate has for its chief aim winning tournaments, (2) debate coaches pay little attention to teaching problem-solving techniques rather than tricks (the bad part is that trick styles are allowed

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<sup>25</sup>The Speaker, XXV (January, 1941), 9.

<sup>26</sup>The Speaker, XXV (January, 1941), 5, 10.

<sup>27</sup>The Speaker, XXV (January, 1941), 4.



to win), (3) coaches stress speaking as an end rather than a means to problem-solving, and (4) "debate lacks a philosophical basis." Blyton considered these serious problems needing immediate action if debate was to survive, not to mention, prosper as an educational activity supported by the schools. His answer was: (1) let all students participate in debate in order to promote the real purpose of debate--teaching democracy, (2) use debate as a tool for teaching the "meaning of intelligent, responsible speech," and (3) utilize debate and debate programs to teach democracy and illuminate our culture.<sup>28</sup> An article in 1952 "The Debate Judge and the Rhetorical Critic" by Emmet T. Long brings back the well-worn judge controversy. Long felt a debate judge cannot judge as a critic because a critic uses for criteria principles of oratory and public address and the effect upon the audience. What Long believed a judge should do was to ignore the response of the audience or his personal convictions on the subject and decide solely on the "skills associated with logical proof." In conjunction with this idea, Long flatly refused to recognize debate as training for some areas of speech such as emotional and ethical proof, style, and delivery of effective speech, and he concluded by advising all debaters to realize limits to debate training and take training in other speech fields to round out their

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<sup>28</sup>Kentucky School Journal, 30 (October, 1951), 34-36.

speech education.<sup>29</sup> Dorothy Garrett Melzer's article "Suggestions for Improving Debate Judging" also discusses the judge controversy. Melzer makes it evident that a major problem of intercollegiate debate is competent judges and her answer is to have mechanical pairings and assignments for judges, uniform criteria for judging before the tournament begins, a complete record of tournament results given out at the completion of the tournament, and critiques guided or limited in some way so as to be more beneficial.<sup>30</sup>

Even in 1953, the wisdom of having tournaments and contests was still being questioned--Gale L. Richards criticized tournaments and proposed improvement by defining tournament objectives while "keeping them in careful accord with the speech training objectives of our speech departments." Richards also came out in favor of the critic judge as an answer to Long's tirade against judges. The problem, Richard purported, was not the type of judging but the type of tournament--the objectives of tournaments must be defined in order to fulfill speech needs. In other words, the crux of the problem is not the improvement of the mechanical operation of our tournaments, but in the determination of what we profess to accomplish in our tournaments.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>Western Speech: Journal of the Western Speech Association, XVI (January, 1952), 23.

<sup>30</sup>The Southern Speech Journal, XVIII (September, 1952), 51.

<sup>31</sup>"Whither Forensic Tournaments," Western Speech: Journal of the Western Speech Association, XVII (January, 1953), 29-31.



A statement signed "Directors of Several Midwest Schools" in The Quarterly Journal of Speech (1954) listed both the advantages and disadvantages of tournaments--some disadvantages listed were failure to develop all the rhetorical skills needed by a student and the absence of audiences to develop public speaking skills. Their proposal was to design tournaments which would give balance to all skills by including other activities besides debate and varying the kinds of debate.<sup>32</sup> Strangely enough, an article by Evelyn Kennesson deVoros published during 1954 brings back the old controversy concerning debating on both sides of the question. She stated the controversy still exists and presented a plan for satisfying both sides in the conflict--have debaters speak on both sides of the topic in the first half of the season in a kind of "practice" tournament situation and in the latter half of the season have "award" tournaments in which the debaters speak on the side of the question chosen after the "practice rounds."<sup>33</sup>

As late as 1959, the merits of tournament debating were still being tossed about. Kim Giffin flatly stated this fact at the outset of his article "Study of the Criteria Employed by Tournament Debate Judges":

It is a well accepted belief that practice in debating, including intercollegiate tournament debating, has certain educational values.

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<sup>32</sup> 40 (December, 1954), 435-39.

<sup>33</sup> "The Purpose of College Debate," Western Speech: Journal of the Western Speech Association, XVIII (May, 1954), 191-94.

However, competitive debating and debate tournaments, somewhat like topsy, have just "grewed." It seems that it is time that careful investigation be made of the academic merit of this activity.

In an attempt to investigate one phase of this problem, this project was designed to determine to what extent, if any, judgments in tournament debating are related to academic or educational values.<sup>34</sup>

The results of this study were positive in as much as most of the data proved the criteria advocated by judges in reflective moments was the same used by judges in the midst of a contest or tournament.<sup>35</sup> Essentially, the same traditional problems of intercollegiate debate are still around in the Sixties. A book published in 1960 by Arthur N. Kruger on debate told what the forensic program objectives ought to be:

To give as many students as possible an opportunity to participate and to promote opportunities for all who desire them. Of course, not all students will be able to make the varsity debate team or to represent the school in outside events. However, opportunities should be made so that even the inept or inexperienced student may profit.<sup>36</sup>

Obviously that same advice was heard years before. Another objective he listed "to make teaching and not winning. . . [our] primary objective" suggested that the strong emphasis on winning remained prevalent.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Speech Monographs, 26 (March, 1929), 69.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 71.

<sup>36</sup>Modern Debate: Its Logic and Strategy (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1960), p. 375.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 376.



Presumably, the need to justify the decision debate still existed in 1960 since Kruger's book made an effort to answer attacks through a defense of contest.<sup>38</sup> The uncertainty and disunity of what debate should or should not do is manifest from Kruger's mention of the lack of standardization in the debate ballot.<sup>39</sup> Hermann G. Stelzner again questioned the value of a debate tournament in terms of student's practice and understanding of rhetorical skills. To summarize his major conclusions, Stelzner felt that debate was truncated and limited in its value as a tool for teaching rhetorical skills necessary for actual life. Although it succeeded in some areas such as logical analysis and exposition, its failure to teach "the full body of rhetorical principles" remain unexplained.<sup>40</sup> It becomes increasingly clear that no real agreement has been established in the early Sixties.

In the mid-Sixties, the question of topics reappeared in a letter to the Editor in The Quarterly Journal of Speech by Donald L. Toreence. He complained the topics do not reflect controversies of current problems or interest and actually seem to avoid the real controversial questions of the time. He recommended one general topic area be chosen from which a specific resolution could be selected at each

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 361.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 372.

<sup>40</sup>"Tournament Debate: Emasculated Rhetoric," The Southern Speech Journal, 27 (Fall, 1961), 34-43.

tournament--the advantages to this proposal in his opinion were more educational value for the student and more freedom of choice on topics debated.<sup>41</sup> A statement in a study done by Donald Klopff, Diana Evans, and Sister Mary Linus DeLozier revealed the status of the judge controversy in 1965:

Researchers have investigated problems related to the judging of speech contests, including criteria used for evaluating debate, speaker rating scales, and personalities of judges. Little study has been undertaken on the ability of various groups of students, laymen, speech faculty members, and other faculty members to judge events in speech contests, although this has been a subject of controversy for fifty years.<sup>42</sup>

Even though these authors recognized the problem, their research proved to be inconclusive and only served as stop-gap measures until more research is done. So the controversy rages on. Another article in the same year by Michael M. Osborn called "A Blueprint for Diversity in Forensic Programs" again echoed the idea of a need for more than just debate in its present form in the college programs. Osborn commences with an explanation of this point:

In recent years, many writers have voiced dissatisfaction with intercollegiate debate, and have called for reform in forensic programs. One of the major complaints is that debate training has wandered from its traditional goal of education for real-life argumentative encounters.

To correct this tendency, these spokesmen most frequently recommend "diversity," a varying of the formats and situations in which academic debate occurs. Especially, they say we should revive the old and honored practice

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<sup>41</sup>51 (October, 1965), 333-34.

<sup>42</sup>"Comparative Studies of Students, Laymen, and Faculty Members as Judges of Speech Contests," The Speech Teacher, XIV (November, 1965), 314.



of audience debating.<sup>43</sup>

He went on to assert the reason such programs have never been initiated: no procedures or principles to guide such a program have ever been worked out. The rest of the article is devoted to his procedure for a program of that type.<sup>44</sup> Again in 1965 the conflict surrounding the value of debating both sides appeared. What Don Geiger does in "The Humanistic Direction of Debate" is to refute the attacks beginning with Mr. Roosevelt's initial one on the imprudent practice of debating both sides. Geiger brilliantly answers the objections and concluded with this:

If, in debate, one side or another must in the end prevail, that is because debate deals in decisions and decisions require choices. In making such necessary choices, we do well indeed to learn the great humanistic lesson that debate can teach: the intrinsic values of legitimate sides of an argument, as they cooperate in the mind of the expert debater to cast light of various lengths across the mazy patterns of human experience.<sup>45</sup>

A brief look at some of the most recent literature of the debate field will demonstrate that the controversy is far from over. John E. Gow's "Tournament Debating: A Time for Changes" (1967) bluntly pointed out the great amount of discussion concerning debate and what has been determined--from his view, nothing of real significance has been settled so he proposes another set of changes which

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<sup>43</sup>The Speech Teacher, XIV (March, 1965), 110.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., pp. 110-15.

<sup>45</sup>The Speech Teacher, XIV (March, 1965), 106.

presumably would rectify some of the ills at least.<sup>46</sup> Later in 1967 an article by Nicholas M. Cripe and Theodore J. Walwik questioned the selection of topics so far removed from student interest and involvement; they suggested a question centered on the coming election for President.<sup>47</sup> One relatively new disagreement has arisen regarding the comparative advantage case. This new form of case omits the need step and substitutes impelling and alluring "advantages" for adopting the new system over the status quo. Of course, as history has proven there are those who champion any new change and those who do not.<sup>48</sup>

In retrospect, it is not easy to determine from an examination of these major controversies whether intercollegiate debate has made much progress toward maturity. Some conflicts such as debating both sides and the educational value of debate have been fairly well accepted by most all those in the field; yet, some still question even these things. Other conflicts such as non-decision debates have generated many changes and new forms only to see the pendulum swing back the other direction. Still other problems have arisen about almost every procedure or technique of

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<sup>46</sup> Journal of the American Forensic Association, IV (Fall, 1967), 107-II.

<sup>47</sup> "Selecting the National Proposition: A Proposal," Journal of the American Forensic Association, IV (Winter, 1967), 10-12.

<sup>48</sup> See Arthur N. Kruger, "The Comparative Advantage Case: A Disadvantage," Journal of the American Forensic Association, III (September, 1966), 194-II and Fadely, "The Validity of the Comparative Advantages Case."



debate--small or large--and have caused almost no disagreement. Nichols may have been premature in his judgment that debate had reached its maturity when he wrote his articles in 1936 and 1937. He predicted then that debate had struggled through the worst times, and that all that was needed for the future was to perfect and smooth out the system as it existed after the great era of transformation. History does not bear witness to his assumptions. The controversies continued and changes were continually experimented with--some were adopted; some were discarded. On the whole, even in 1968, the periodicals and books of debate show that somebody is eternally dissatisfied with something about the debate system. From its history, it can be seen that debate has always been in a state of flux. Its position is insecure at any given time--it remains in a permanent position of defense. This question then comes to mind--why must such a discipline encompassing so much educational value from its use in the academic system consistently find its worth disputed? Certainly, the history of intercollegiate debate thus far does not reflect much assurance of its maturity.

## CHAPTER V

### Conclusion

Just where does intercollegiate debate stand today? Its history is surely rich and varied--from the very beginnings in the Oxford Union to the forensic programs of the present. Out of England's Oxford Union, the literary societies of America were born to fulfill a very real purpose; the students needed self-amusement and enjoyed the battle of an intellectual game. When various factors combined to cause the death of literary societies, it was only a short time until intercollegiate debate was initiated. Obviously, the joy of an intellectual game nor the love of competition did not die; in fact almost immediately intercollegiate debate rose to great popularity and spread across the United States. Because of its rapid growth, debate became the center of much attention; because of this attention, more and more people began to examine this popular endeavor in the education world. By 1920 on into the Thirties, tremendous criticism was leveled at debate activity and it underwent profound change. The era of the non-decision debate during the Twenties and Thirties was instituted mainly to eliminate the evils caused by too much emphasis on winning and the discord concerning judging



methods. New forms of debate were also introduced to combat the criticism of the orthodox debate system. Ultimately, decision debate came back into favor with the fairly universal practice of using the critic judge--some procedures and standards were modified but essentially the system adopted after this period of adjustment prevails today. Since 1940 debate has expanded in almost all colleges and has moved into the radio and television medias. Debate tournaments have been extended and diversified to include all forensic activities--in many instances as an attempt to increase the educational value of such events. Even though intercollegiate debate seemed to survive the first intense wave of criticism, it has continuously been subjected to discursive charges concerning almost every technique, procedure, or rule--even today, the educational value as a tool for teaching oratorical principles and its necessity in a democratic society have been questioned.

All this disension and questioning leads to doubt in the value of intercollegiate debate since the disagreement persists. The picture of intercollegiate debate, however, is not as black as it appears. Ringwalt, one of debate's earliest critics, clarifies his position on debate despite his criticisms:

That the value of this training can be seriously doubted is difficult to understand. The merits of the debate itself--the give and take, the sharpening of wits, the demand for cool heads and keen minds--have long been appreciated. Intercollegiate debate, since it calls for these qualities in simply a greater degree, is only the more admirable. At no other time in his college

course does a man have the opportunity to work up a question so thoroughly and consistently. Not only must a great mass of facts and material be collected by the debater, but he must react on them in an original way. The power of selection and judgment is constantly called into service. . . .Of still greater value is the sense of responsibility engendered. . . .The practice in speaking, too, is excellent. As a rule the ideas of the college student are not set much store by; but on this one occasion, before an intelligent audience, and before a distinguished body of judges, he is expected to give, and he will be listened to while he does give, his most mature ideas. This. . .gives the student a grasp, a power, a capacity, which he does not acquire otherwise.<sup>1</sup>

As others have said, many critics recognize the deep significance of debate training, and their censures were merely constructive criticism. Just as there have been exhortations of debate, there have been those who have praised it. Samuel D. McClelland in "The Function of Debating" points to debate as a necessity for democracy. Contrary to the belief of some, discussion (or any other form) cannot really replace debate but merely act as an adjunct to it.<sup>2</sup> His reasons are clear:

All the congresses of the world from the United Nations down, whatever preliminary work may be done in conferences and committees, bring the real issues at last to open debate. . . .the real test in a democratic world is the open clash of ideas over a clear issue,<sup>3</sup> sounding against the backboard of popular attention.

More empirical proof is provided by Henry L. Ewbank's article entitled "What's Right with Debate?" in which he cites men like Miles and Lippmann who have stated the worth of open debate to the operation of a democratic system. He

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<sup>1</sup>"Intercollegiate Debating," pp. 637-38.

<sup>2</sup>English Journal, 36 (February, 1947), 92-93.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 92.



goes on to give several surveys which show the higher critical thinking ability of debaters over non-debaters and concludes with a notation of the high number of successful prominent men who have been debaters. Presumably, debate has some significant role in training for leadership.<sup>4</sup>

These attacks can be viewed from other angles, too. As Douglas Ehringer says in "Debate as Method: Limitations and Values" some criticisms are unfair because debate has its limitations; but for its purpose, it does the best job of all other alternatives.<sup>5</sup> He elaborates:

Restricted to those uses for which it is fitted and practiced in the spirit of mutual inquiry which represents its finest tradition, debate as method, despite its inherent limitations, deserves to stand beside science on the one hand and logic and mathematics on the other as one of man's major tools for arriving at choices and decisions that are both reliable and human.<sup>6</sup>

Probably these limitations have been recognized to some extent, since more and more colleges are diversifying their debate programs to include other forensic activities rather than trying to place the whole burden on debate. This is only fair for debate could not possibly be expected to teach principles not basically encompassed by it--the problems many times were not with debate as it functioned, but with failures that debate could not and should not be held responsible because its very nature excluded them. In short, debate

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<sup>4</sup>The Quarterly Journal of Speech, 37 (April, 1951), 197-201 passim.

<sup>5</sup>The Speech Teacher, 15 (September, 1966), 180.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 185.

cannot teach what discussion teaches nor what public speaking teaches or many of the other speaking activities. It cannot be asked to serve all purposes at once; intercollegiate debate functions along side these activities and may even overlap in some areas of training, but some areas belong exclusively to debate just as some belong to other activities.

Certainly, a defense for debate can be made; nonetheless, the criticism still perseveres. Why? So many suggestions, changes, and answers have already been provided by those in the field, that any new light is difficult to shed. It is manifest that some problems exist in debate today--one of the main ones is the relatively small number of students who are able to glean benefits from debate. Whether the tournament system or the emphasis on winning is the cause is really unimportant--it is true that usually a small percentage of good debaters are sent to tournaments to compile the wins; but disposing of the tournament and other like remedies as non-decision debates do not cure the problem if they are not the cause. Inescapably, the cause lies with its promoters--the coaches, teachers, and directors who insist consciously or unconsciously on the importance of having a few great debaters who win and who maintain the aura of exclusiveness around debate. Not only should attempts be made to diversify the debate program so students will learn other oratorical skills, but also this should be done in order to give more students an opportunity to participate. As Ray has stated:



Opponents of decision debating heatedly state the evils but usually make no suggestions for improvement. A few of the more progressive, substitute the drab, incentiveless, no decision tournament, which as a cure is worse than the illness. How odd it seems that few of us have thought of providing a debate program open to all students who have the interest and willingness to debate.<sup>7</sup>

Debate has much to offer in the education scheme as most agree, at least to an extent, but the plain fact is that most students do not benefit from its advantages. What is worse, is the admission by almost every other field of the need for better communication skills in all students--not just debaters or speech students. Yet, those in the field persist in picturing debate as a highly competitive contest form for only the best minds and the best speakers--how far from the truth. Even debate in its standard form could be opened to all students if they were only encouraged to participate and really allowed to try the "intellectual" game. Any adverse image that debate has in many circles could be dispelled if only its value to the educational curriculum could be shown. Debate coaches and teachers must demonstrate a faith in its educational uses by teaching modified debate forms that can be adapted for use in other fields--after all, debate does not have to be two man or four man; it could just as well incorporate a whole class, such as a history class which could be divided into two teams. This way all could profit from the research experience and

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<sup>7</sup>"Democracy in Debating," p. 10.

probably most could gain some speaking experience. Beyond just demonstrating its uses, those involved with debate must think of talking in a different language. Ehringer wisely concluded in "Debating as Critical Deliberation" that those in debate are responsible for their own bad publicity. He recommends a revision in semantics:

The difference between thought and deliberation that are critical and thought and deliberation that are not; the importance of talking it out rather than fighting it out; the doctrine that debaters are actually co-workers in an earnest search for truth and justice; the fact that in its respect for evidence, in its dedication to the proposition that belief must be subjected to the searching tests of reason, debate is a close relative of scientific method, rather than its natural opposite--are not these the basic characteristics of the debate process about which we should seize every opportunity to talk? The choice clearly lies with us. If we as teachers of speech were increasingly to use this language and were to speak less frequently of debate in the language of "compulsion," "fight," "intentional reasoning," "propaganda," and the like, we could, I believe, materially contribute to taking it out of its present position of defense and apology.<sup>8</sup>

The problems of intercollegiate debate are not so great that they cannot be solved if only its defensive position could be rectified. The internal dissension on decisions, tournaments, switching sides, and all the other conflicts that remain are not as serious to the future of debate as the insecurity of those who should best know its potential. Withdrawing into a narrow and clannish world to disagree among each other on the well-worn faults of the debate

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<sup>8</sup>"Debating as a Critical Deliberation," The Southern Speech Journal, XXIV (Fall, 1958), 30.



procedures will only serve to destroy the future that could be truly helpful to all spheres of teaching. Evidence forecasts a good future for intercollegiate debate, but unless a more expansive direction is charted, its latent possibilities will undoubtedly be stymied.

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