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***Editor's Note:** This article continues the series of articles on "Collective Memories" begun in 90, 2, 17-26 (Summer 2005). The impetus for this series comes from a panel hosted at the 2004 annual National Communication Association convention that was dedicated to the idea that our past does affect our present and future. This article is the second in the series. Nina-Jo Moore, Editor*

Remembering, Forgetting, and Memorializing Forensics' Past: Considering Forensics from a Collective Memory Theoretical Perspective

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***Abstract:** While forensics is well known as an activity devoted to the pursuit of excellence in public speaking, debate and literary performance, forensics also represents a community of scholars committed to intellectual scholarship and insightful practical and pedagogical research. These academic pursuits are further advanced when forensic scholarship is based on solid theoretical frameworks that offer analytical depth and enhance legitimacy in academic forums. This essay proposes collective memory as a research framework for forensic scholarship. Collective memory is a rich theoretical perspective, inviting considerations of such themes as the emergence and remembrance of forensic legends, roles of alumni, perspectives of successes and failures, rituals of commemorating the past, team traditions, and how history is communicated. The essay provides an overview of these by using a collective memory theoretical perspective.*

While forensics as an educational and competitive collegiate activity owes its namesake to the forensic rhetoric of its ancient Greek predecessors, forensics also acknowledges its intellectual roots in epideictic, or commemorative, speech. Forensics has a rich tradition of celebrating its past. Individual events' rules and attributes often parallel classical rhetoric and argumentation protocol, interpretation events embrace lessons from earlier elocutionary practices, and debate formats reflect centuries-old legal designs. Indeed, doing intercollegiate forensics is an ongoing commemoration of its past. Yet intercollegiate forensics' past serves as more than an historical refer-

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ence point; forensics' past guides and informs current practices, and perhaps most impacting, affects forensics' future. How the forensic community remembers its past, conceptualized in this essay as forensics' collective memory, denotes how the past is remembered, recalled, and revived. This essay proposes and then defines a collective memory theoretical foundation for research programs exploring these and other issues in forensic scholarship.

One would be hard pressed to find a forensic organization that commemorates the past more often and with more ceremony than Pi Kappa Delta (PKD). As "the oldest collegiate national forensic organization of its kinds in the United States" (Littlefield, 1996, p. 94), Pi Kappa Delta has rich historical roots and traditions of education, competition, and camaraderie. The national honorary recognizes and commemorates the past with a series of formal activities, including the bi-annual necrology service, the PKD Hall of Fame, and the ongoing work of the PKD historian. Recent years have seen resurgence in reaching out to chapter alumni, building bridges from the present to the past by fostering and recognizing alumni relationships. From its longstanding history to its ongoing recognition of and respect for the past, Pi Kappa Delta is an exemplary organization that not only acknowledges but also honors its history.

Collective memory, however, involves more than commemoration; it also involves how the past influences current practices and plans for the future. This can be explicit, like the driving force of tradition and precedence in tournament formats and event rules, or implicit, with memories forming unspoken criteria, inspiration, or even dissuasion. Forensics' collective memory is a complex negotiation of meaning, with implications for how forensics is viewed and done.

Recognizing the value and role of history, and more importantly memories of the past, this essay offers a research program that explores forensics from the theoretical launching point of collective memory. This essay begins with an overview of collective memory research, and then offers a smorgasbord of research ideas that build on this collective memory framework in the context of forensics. While the focus of this essay may highlight breadth over depth, the theoretical thread of collective memory uncovers the depth of analysis afforded by grounding forensic research on theoretical foundations.

Collective Memory and Forensics: An Overview

A collective memory theoretical perspective gives view to what a group remembers, what a group forgets, and when a group brings these constructs of the past to the surface to "make sense" of the present. Bodnar (1992) conceptualizes collective memory as "a body of beliefs and ideas about the past that help a public or society understand both its past, present, and by implication its future" (p. 15). While collective memory has defined temporality, it is not limited to recollection. Unlike nostalgia, fond

remembrances of the past tinged with sadness at the loss (Davis, 1979; Hirsch & Spitzer, 2002; Holbrook & Schindler, 1991), collective memory is both a memory and a guide, as these recollections serve as lenses, or scripts, for ongoing and future action. As Edy (2001) offers, "How we talk about our past affects how we understand and respond to our present" (p. 54). The stories of the past can be resurrected after periods of dormancy (e.g., Schwartz, Zeeerubavel, & Barnett, 1986) or can linger in the periphery until current events trigger remembrance (e.g., Schudson, 1992). Collective memory, then, is more than looking back, but also encompasses interpreting the present and guiding the future.

Collective memory has been conceptualized in Edy's (2001) work as "a narrative about the past that is conveyed and negotiated in public spaces" (p. 55). It is an influential story, not only to preserve history but also to conceive the present. Importantly, this recollection—this story—is not an exact preservation of the past. Because of the subjective and personal nature of remembrances, what is recalled is inevitably distorted (Edy, 2001). Individual differences in recall, the limitations of words and narrative structure, and the changing landscape of the present affect manifestations of memory.

In its simplest form, collective memory is a story about the past. Importantly, the collective aspect denotes that the story is shared and negotiated by a group or a society. Collective memory, then, serves as a narrative reconstruction of where a collective has come from and often serves as a guide for where a collective is going. Additionally, the memory aspect suggests that this remembered past is malleable and fluid, but also incomplete. Collective memory is not an objective documentation of the past, but instead, a negotiated past where what is forgotten or downplayed is as influential as what is remembered or highlighted. Finally, while collective memory is an ongoing presence in a group or society, it emerges and reemerges at specific times. The trigger for collective memory can be dissatisfaction with the present, resulting in a byproduct of nostalgic memory, or times of sudden and unexpected change, as a group searches for a benchmark or standard of comparison.

The overarching argument of this essay is that collective memory serves as a useful theoretical perspective for analyzing, discussing, and evaluating intercollegiate forensics. In recent years there has been a resurgence of theoretical work in forensics sponsored by Pi Kappa Delta's participation in the National Communication Association's annual convention (e.g., Compton, 2000, 2002, 2003; Dyer, 2002; Huebner, 2003; Jensen, 2002, 2003; Kaylor, 2002, 2003; Prieb, 2003), answering continuing calls to conduct forensic research that expands beyond competition (e.g., Thomas, 1974; Worth, 2000). This essay pro-

poses another foray into utilizing a theoretical framework in the context of forensics by considering the role and impact of collective memory. Forensics is a fertile area for collective memory analysis. As previously argued, the activity itself is firmly rooted in history. Forensic scholars have noted the importance of tradition in speech and debate (e.g., Compton, 2001; Derryberry, 1997). The past plays a pivotal role in the way forensics is viewed and done, an idea echoed in Jensen's (1999) observation: "As we look ahead to the future of forensics, we must learn from our past" (p. 7).

Further, forensics' disciplinary home of communication often harkens back to its roots for inspiration, guidance, and celebration. Speech education and instruction are particularly prone to referencing the past, from early to contemporary publications, convention panels, and other commemorative events. Reid (1959) honored a notable speech teacher, the late John Ryan, in Speech Teacher. Here, Reid passes on exemplary techniques, lecture themes, and inspirational quotations, offering a figure from the past as an exemplar for speech instruction. White (1967) traced the use of models for speech instruction from ancient Greek instruction; a 1918 essay offered comparisons of Aristotle's and Cicero's treatments of style for aid in speech instruction ("A Comparison," 1918), and Berquist (1959) illustrated contributions of the ancient Greek sophist, Isocrates. There are also more current examples of speech education referencing the past. For example, Communication Education published a special issue in 2002, commemorating its fiftieth year of publication, that invited former editors and other notable scholars to write essays recounting how the journal had changed throughout the years. Phrases from the submissions are consistent with the NCA 2004 Convention Theme, "Moving Forward, Looking Back":

> "Anniversaries of all kinds provide wonderful opportunities for contemplation and rededication" (Sprague, 2002, p. 337);
>
> "And right now I have to say that during the first half of the old century, starting in 1914 with the Founding Fathers, we used 'speech' as the term defining our field' (Reid, 2002, p. 333);
>
> "[This] was a chance to remind readers of some of the people in the past who contributed to the journal and thus helped to advance the state of communication education nationally" (Brown, 2002, p. 364);
>
> "In our culture, such milestones invite us to take stock of the past, assess the present, and anticipate the future" (Friedrich, 2002, p. 372);
>
> "A 50th birthday is a glorious occasion to reflect...What did we do? What counted? It also offers a chance to contemplate our future: How do we want to spend the time that remains? What should our legacy be?" (Daly, 2002, p. 376)

These comments demonstrate perspectives that incorporate the past, present and future into a broad overview of speech education scholarship. Pertinent to this current essay, the phrases also illustrate a discipline that is conducive to a collective memory perspective. That forensics shares these themes comes as no surprise.

After surveying the theoretical framework of collective memory, and arguing for its application to intercollegiate forensics, the remainder of this essay offers a series of research ideas that warrant further investigation and consideration. The purpose of this proposed research program is two-fold. First, these ideas suggest further contemplation and consideration of how remembered past influences the present. Second, and more importantly, these research agendas are intended to motivate more forensic scholarship using the theoretical lens of collective memory.

Forensics' Legends: How the Leaders of the Past Affect the Present

Authors writing in the nonfiction biography genre have long realized that stories of famous and influential persons sell. David McCullough's 2001 Pulitzer Prize-winning biography, John Adams, is a notable example of a best-selling work that recaps and commemorates, through a narrative framework, the life of an American founder. Recent policy and educational forums addressing American history have encouraged using narratives of American leaders to educate and inspire America's youth (Manzo, 2003), a move advanced by McCullough to help a generation he considers "historically illiterate" (in "The danger of historical amnesia," 2003). Clearly, one way to make history come alive, and command interest of an otherwise disinterested public, is to tell a good story.

Forensics also has its legends and giants. Scott Jensen, in presenting the Loren Reid Service Award to forensic educator and coach, Bob Derryberry, commented: "Every field, every cause, every movement needs giants...those people who embody the drive, professionalism, skill and integrity that makes them successes" (as cited in Jensen, 1999, p. 4). "At least for me," Jensen (1999) writes, "it is these forensics heroes that inspire me to continue my involvement in an activity that I love" (p. 7).

Forensic scholars have encouraged telling stories to communicate the past (Compton, 2004; Embree, 2001). Forensic scholarship should continue to explore how forensic legends are communicated to the forensic community through the use of narratives. Is a sufficient job of referencing and honoring the giants of the discipline done, or is this connection to the past weak and shortsighted? Compton's (2000) investigation of forensic team members' narratives found competitors often have only abstract and vague notions about forensic legends, usually based more on general affect than on detail and specifics.

While Compton noted that this abstractness could serve as useful inspiration, he speculated that specificity would make the narratives of forensics' past more easily communicated to new members of a program. Simply, a narrative based primarily on affect is harder to pass on than a narrative rich with concrete detail. Indeed, Compton indicated that many forensic competitors could not even recall the names of notable competitors and coaches of the past. At the most basic level, Compton argued, narratives of forensics' past must communicate specific names of former competitors and coaches in order to preserve this vital aspect of forensic past.

In this same vein, scholarship of forensic collective memory could explore who is best suited to tell stories about forensic legends. Do stories of forensic legends resonate more when they are told by coaches or by other competitors? What roles do national and regional forensic organizations and convention divisions play in telling stories of forensic legends? The sources of these stories likely make notable impacts on how forensic legends are communicated.

Additionally, future scholarship about forensics' collective memory should explore the selection criteria—whether formal or informal—for who constitutes a forensic legend. In some manifestations of forensic legends, the process is systematic (e.g., the selection of PKD Hall of Fame inductees), whereas in others, who emerges as a forensics legend is negotiated in conversations (e.g., alumni telling stories to current team members). The creation process of forensic legends constitutes fertile ground for forensics' collective memory scholarship.

This type of scholarship should also explore the potential risks to the remembrances of legends. Nelson (2002) outlines criticism of a slate of historical biography authors, pointing out charges of inaccuracies and overstatements. Nelson (2002) attributes many of the fallacies of historical biography to authors assuming that they must take an "I-was-there" persona when telling their subjects' stories. This emphasis is consistent with collective memory research. Zellizer (1998) acknowledges that first-hand accounts resonate with people, since witnesses are given credence. Observing the trend of commemorating and celebrating America's founders, Brand (2003) warns that people should emulate their founders' courage and resolve, but not let their mythical heroic proportions "make pygmies of ourselves" (p. 108). If the legends are too supernatural—too awesome—instead of inspiring, they are overwhelming. Does forensics run this risk? If so, how can benefits of passing on narratives of forensic legends be preserved, while at the same time, potential harms diminished?

Additionally, the community should ask not only who emerges as forensic legends in their collective memory, but also who does not. Have some forensic leaders disappeared from the narratives of the past? Is the forensic community missing a chance to feature and spotlight role models that would be particularly inspiring to currently underrepresented groups? Frederick and Greenstreet (1999) note the harmful effects of many women's gender-based experiences in forensics that discourage their participation, and Stepp and Gardner (2001) recently offered an analysis of demographics in intercollegiate debate, often finding lower participation of women and minorities in the debate community. Other research suggests dissatisfaction with how the forensic community promotes diversity (e.g., Bartanen, 1996). Stepp and Gardner (2001) argue that one way to combat inequality in forensic participation is to make sure the forensic community talks about role models, and especially those role models who represent demographics currently underrepresented in forensics. Are some forensic legends remaining unnoticed in communicated collective memory? If so, how can these forensic legends emerge as guiding role models?

There is a tenuous balance in commemorating and communicating legends. Forensics has a rich history of legends, those who have shaped and directed inter-collegiate forensics. How a collective tells its stories, and how a group balances the importance of commemorating with accurately documenting, affects not only how a collective views its past, but also its future.

The Living Past: Role and Impact of Forensic Alumni on Forensics' Collective Memory

Few components of a forensic program embody forensic memory more directly than forensic alumni. In recent years, Pi Kappa Delta has renewed its interest in keeping contact and involvement with alumni chapters (see Keefe, 1994, 1995a, 1995b), preserving the link from the present to the past while gleaning practical (e.g., judging at tournaments, forensic coaching, recruitment) and philosophical benefits (e.g., embodied tradition and heritage). This development reflects a larger trend evident at the university level of improving contacts and relationships with alumni (Mulugetta, Nash, & Murphy, 1999). Universities increasingly promote the value of an interconnected network of graduates—representing various careers, geographical regions, and connections.

Several members of the forensic community have offered practical proposals for strengthening alumni relationships. Dyer (2003) proposes several suggestions for how forensic programs can utilize and build relationships with alumni, including maintaining alumni databases, supporting alumni chapters, and maintaining connections for both practical (e.g., financial, judging) and philosophical benefits. Stepp's (1996) essay makes the case for strengthening alumni bonds, detailing the practical benefits of incorporating alumni into forensic programs. Stepp reminds the reader that "alumni...should be encouraged to give something back to their former speech program; they should be honored with traditions, stories, [and] respect as graduates of a distinguished program" (1996, p. 2). Embree (2001) argues that alumni personify the long-lasting legacies fostered by many forensic programs and should be continually introduced to current competitors.

Looking at forensic alumni through the lens of collective memory yields even more insight into alumni impacts. For example, one direction forensic collective memory scholarship could further investigate is how alumni relationships impact the collective memory of the activity. How are alumni described or introduced to current teams? How does alumni contact with present team members influence the recognition and understanding of the program's past?

There are more nuanced questions found in alumni relationships viewed through a theoretical framework of collective memory. For example, Schuman and Scott's (1989) study confirms conventional wisdom—generations remember the past differently. This creates an interesting twist on collective memory. While forensics remains a consistent thread among current and previous competitors, the changing nature of the activity (from explicit rule changes to implicit expectations) results in each generation having different views and understandings of forensics. While Schuman and Scott's investigation used a standard conceptualization of generation, a generation in forensics is much shorter. Anyone who takes a relatively brief break from forensics and then returns realizes how quickly things change. How do these differences in remembering and understanding the activity of forensics impact how alumni and current members negotiate the meaning of forensics in their interactions and communication? As Derryberry (1995) observed, "Forensic program alumni returning for reunions or speech tournaments sometimes find difficulty in keeping pace with changing forensic practices and procedures" (p. 1). Do these "generation gaps" influence forensic collective memory, and if so, how is an "accurate" conception of forensics maintained in the face of conflicting ideas/remembrances?

Alumni connections are valuable, and the forensic community should continue to foster and build these relationships. At the same time, forensic scholarship should continue to flesh out the nuances of alumni relationships, exploring how this embodied representation of the past affects the present. A collective memory framework offers a useful tool in this endeavor.

Learning from Successes and Failures

It is easier to recognize the functions of past successes as motivators, inspirations, and benchmarks. These memories are commonly recalled for the positive affect they evoke. Forensics' collective memory research must continue to explore how these remembrances of past successes inspire and motivate, but when and why would a collective choose to recall "bad" memories? Schwartz, Zeerubavel, and Barnett (1986) argue that there are functions of these remembrances, too. How do forensic coaches, competitors, and teams negotiate these memories? Edy (2001) maintains that collective memory scholarship must continue to investigate not only why and what is remembered, but also why and what is forgotten.

For example, Burnett, Brand and Meister's (2001) essay (calling for a check on competitiveness outweighing educational value) begins with accounts of recent "failures," including ineligible students competing at the 1988 American Forensic Association National Individual Event Tournament and a national award-winning student being stripped of his awards because of confirmed plagiarism violations. Wayson (1989) provided a case study of a student's informative speech that committed academic ethical violations. Compton's (2000) analysis of team member narratives recounted several examples of present competitors learning from the mistakes of past competitors. These failures and mistakes are also part of forensics' collective memory, functioning as guides. How do failures in forensics interact with successes to define guidelines and expectations? How are these failures communicated to current team members without affecting the health of the activity? On a micro-level, how do individual failures impact collective memory? Every program has competitors and coaches who make mistakes, some that receive publicity and attention from the forensic community. How are these errors incorporated into collective memory?

While it may often be more comfortable to look back at successes and their role in collective memory, looking at failures and mistakes adds important insight to understanding the culture of forensics. For a complete picture of how collective memory functions in the realm of forensics, forensics' collective memory scholarship must look beyond the success stories to address the impacts of failures and mistakes.

When Forensic Competitors and Coaches Get "Stuck" in the Past

Tradition possesses both progressive and destructive forces. It leads to progress when memories of the past inspire and inform the practices of the present, but what happens when a collective looks back and this retrospection stalls progress? Tradition, when it propagates ineffective customs, can cause competitors and coaches to be mired in perpetuating cycles of errors. From a broad perspective, tradition, at the most basic level, is often a continuation of status quo. When current practices are productive and healthy, this continuation benefits a group. Dean (1992) argues that forensic teams' climates stifle creativity when "the way things are done" discourages innovation and novelty. Collective memory, by serving as a guide, can also be restrictive.

The limiting impact of the past on forensics can be viewed from an organizational perspective. Maintaining consistent rules and descriptions of events helps protect the stability of national organizations, like Pi Kappa Delta; however, change at these fundamental levels, when necessary or productive, can become difficult. There is a battle with a longstanding "way of doing things," and organizations, like people, are resistant to change. As David Thomas noted 30 years ago, "Prerequisite to all thinking and planning for the future [of forensics] is a willingness to

change, to innovate, to attempt new ideas" (1974, p. 239). Forensics' collective memory scholarship should venture into these areas of organizational culture, examining how the past not only guides the culture, but at times can also limit it.

One of the functions of collective memory is to serve as a benchmark for the present. Schwartz (1982) reminds the readers "to remember is to place a part of the past in the service of conceptions and needs of the present" (p. 374). Consequently, one sign of the emergence of collective memory is when a collective finds itself saying, "This is/is not just like last year," an analogic reasoning process of comparison with the past. Many times, people look to the past for legitimacy of the present. For example, in their analysis of winning oratories at the Interstate Oratorical Competition from 1964-1985, Sellnow and Ziegelmuller (1988) argue that a winning oratory from the early 1970s would likely fail in the late 1980s.

A similar impact of forensics' past is seen when competitors have difficulty adjusting to the changes from high school forensics to collegiate forensics. As an editorial in the Quarterly Journal of Speech Education noted 80 years ago, what is learned, or not learned, in high school can lead to problems in college (Editorial, 1924). Collective memory offers a theoretical bridge to examine many of the challenges high school competitors face when transitioning to intercollegiate forensic programs.

The way things are done also form implicit expectations for current forensic practices. VerLinden (1997) and Cronn-Mills (1997) overview "unwritten rules" of public address and oral interpretation events, while VerLinden (1996) and Williams (1997) address implicit expectations of detailed source citations in public address events.

Do expectations of "the way things are done" affect change? Do members of the forensic community resist change when change does not concur with its collective memory of the way things are or were? Holm's (1995) essay on the norms that develop in interpretation events suggests that this is indeed the case. He argues that competitors and coaches get caught up in what wins, perpetuating stagnancy in literature selection (e.g., only choosing monologues in dramatic interpretation). Reynold's (1991) makes a similar case about norms that influence persuasive speaking. Nostalgia is a unique and potentially powerful form of collective memory (e.g., Compton, Daradanova, Edy, Mindt, & Moellinger, 2004), and its influence on forensics warrants exploration. At times, "this is not like last year" derails progress; at others, using the criteria of the past helps preserve valuable practices.

Forensics' collective memory scholarship should compare productive uses of the past as a benchmark with using the past as an obstacle to change. For example, Jensen (1997) frames his analysis of continuing fragmentation in the forensic community by referring to a similar observation from 1984 that was, at that time, "13 years in the past." In this way, Jensen argues that a problem of the past remained a problem of the present, using its history to underscore its importance. Clearly, history can be used to promote progress, and this can be contrasted with occurrences where history is used to impede development instead. Collective memory can involve both benchmarks and criteria.

End-of-Year Functions as Spaces for Collective Memory: What is Remembered, What is Commemorated

Commemoration events offer prime opportunities to observe concrete examples of collective memory (e.g., Bodnar, 1992, Edy, 2001). Commemoration events at the end of forensic seasons have become long-standing, important traditions for many forensic programs. These are opportunities to remember, to celebrate, and to look forward. These activities serve as concrete examples of NCA's 2004 convention theme, "Moving Forward, Looking Back." What are common characteristics of these events? How does collective memory influence the current year's program and/or the development of the banquet/event? Is the strength of these events the role of preserver of history, symbolic constructor of the year's achievements, motivator for the next year, or a combination of these purposes? Or, as Derryberry (1997) offers, do banquets function most effectively as a unifying function, bringing together a larger collective for the act of remembering? In describing the end-of-the-year banquet of the Southwest Baptist University program, Derryberry (1997) observes

> The annual forensic banquet...has its roots in the program's beginning...From its roots as an event for the team of less than ten persons, the banquet-program now hosts approximately 150 persons each spring...The banquet serves as an important unifying force of the program as it preserves past traditions and solicits support for future educational goals. (p. 14)

As commemorative events, banquets and other special programs celebrate past accomplishments and look forward to new challenges. Forensic collective memory scholarship should take a closer look at these commemorative events.

National and regional forensic organizations often hold commemorative events as well. PKD, for example, hosts biennial national conventions, with the final event a banquet dinner for all competitors and coaches. In recent years, a photo-documentary of the tournament is presented here, commemorating the tournament experiences. What are the impacts of this banquet and of the photo-documentary?

Even the convention itself can be viewed through a collective memory lens as a space for collective memory. In an essay advocating attending professional meetings, Loren Reid recounts:

> When our discipline speaks at conventions, it says something like this: ...I am an inventive principle. I live among ideas; I work with instances, examples, reasons. I practice the art of thinking. I judge the future in part by what has already happened; I review the past, I contemplate the future... (1986, pp. 311-312)

Reid's rationale for attending professional meetings serves as a precursor to the 2004 NCA Convention Theme, "Moving Forward, Looking Back," and also parallels the idea of collective memory.

Documenting the Past: Films and other Records

While many modes of communicating collective memory lack permanence and, instead, are passed on via word of mouth, other means of collective memory are concrete. For example, at the 2003 national tournament, the PKD forensic community witnessed the debut of a documentary of the history of Pi Kappa Delta. This video traced the history of the honorary, and featured voices of both previous coaches and competitors.

As historian Rabinowitz (1993) explains, "documentary is usually a reconstruction—a reenactment of another time or place for a different audience" (p. 120). As a reconstruction, documentary writers and producers engage in the creative process. Consequently, "documentary film, in more obvious ways than does history, straddles the categories of fact and fiction, art and document, entertainment and knowledge" (Godmilow & Shapiro, 1997, p. 80). These interpreted versions of the past often heavily influence viewers—creating a visual picture of the past, replete with details and imagery.

Another concrete form of documenting the past is a squad newsletter. In describing the newsletter of Southwest Baptist University's forensic program, Derryberry (1997) observes:

> As a type of newsletter, bulletin board, and source of information about alumni and the changing world of forensics, the publication allows student team members to reach out to a wide range of supportive readers. While the journal depends upon faculty advice, it remains the student forensic voice seeking to preserve the program's traditions while also communicating with alumni, faculty, administration and community and goals and challenges of the program. (p. 13)

This record also documents current practices, team achievements, and current issues of forensics, serving as a concrete documentation of the present, and consequently, a program's past.

Clearly, such concrete means of documenting the past play pivotal roles in preserving collective memory. How do these methods compare to the more informal method of word of mouth narratives? Is one method superior to the other in terms of preserving specific detail? Are there different emotional responses to concrete documentations of the past when compared to narratives communicated orally? How do documentary writers and producers balance the need to preserve detail and objective information with the inescapable subjective nature of creative film? What are criteria for newsletter content, and how do newsletters frame forensic programs?

"Why Do They Call this Forensics?": Unexamined History of Speech and Debate

Forensics has a long history, but how much of this history do most competitors know? Are details important enough to include in an understanding of how forensics has developed, or do abstract themes have more impact? How do students learn of the activity's history? How do coaches?

Scholars have looked at forensics' past to draw parallels to forensics' present and future. Harte (1993) examined contemporary forensic practices for impact on the rhetorical canon of style, and Derryberry (1993) argued that one should not forget the lessons of the canon of invention, or developing ideas. Similarly, Tallmon (1996) offers a discussion on the topic and invites people to return to the ancient and modern roots of collegiate debate, heeding lessons offered by Aristotle, Richard Weaver and George Campbell, while Ryan (1996) suggests using lessons of epideictic discourse to teach persuasion. Foust (1999) begins her analysis of contemporary persuasive speech topics by comparing current practices to ancient Greece, and at one point argues, "It is time for the forensics community to return to its ancient roots..." (p. 14).

Others have focused on more recent intellectual roots, including Hamm's (1993) analysis of competitiveness in relation to "the educational goals that were originally set forth by the forefathers of speech and debate competition" (p. 2), and Freeley's (1989) essay traces the origination of the American Forensic Association (AFA). Bodenhamer (1991) begins her overview of forensics as a community-builder by referencing the origins and original objectives of the Speech Association of America and the North Central Contest Committee. Friedley (1991) offers an overview of persuasive speaking, tracing changes from the 1970s to the late 1980s and positing predictions about its future, while Willis (1956) took a similar approach looking back to the first Interstate Oratorical Association in 1874. He observes:

> A comparison of the orations delivered during the last twenty-five years with those presented before the turn of the century reveals, as we might expect, that equally profound changes have

taken place in oratorical fashions. (p. 18).

Forensic educators have often looked to both the ancient and recent past of the activity for the sake of comparison.

These scholarly pursuits offer historical detail, drawing parallels between forensics' past and present. Grounding future research in collective memory with the activity's theoretical history will further unify such scholarly work and provide a theoretical thread linking the scholarship of the past to the present.

Learning the Past: Impacts of Collective Memory on New Team Members

While teams often have recruitment materials, scrapbooks of years' pasts, and plaques on the walls of Communication Departments, there are generally no guidebooks for learning a team's history. Records and documents only go so far, so how do new team members learn of a team's tradition? How is the past communicated? What are the coaches' and competitors' roles in helping new members understand a team's past? How does a team negotiate present, practical needs (e.g., getting new members to begin working on events and attending meetings) with more abstract understandings of tradition?

Fuller and Huebner (1993) make the case that team members can serve as effective recruiters, and Compton (2000) argues that current team members "teach" new members about a program by telling stories. Whether through the larger picture of team members recruiting or the more specific acts of telling stories to new team members, team members' collective memories have substantial impacts on the initiation of new team members into a program.

Macro Effects: Effects of Forensics on Larger Issues of Collective Memory

To this point, this essay has proposed examinations of collective memory effects on the act of viewing and doing forensics, but forensics also impacts collective memory on a broader scale, beyond the bounds of forensic communities. For example, consider how students' and coaches' decisions regarding speech topics, literature for interpretation, and debate cases influence what is remembered about the past. Platform speeches often influence how audiences view specific moments of the past, examining precursors to societal problems, for example. Common themes are found in interpretation events, such as the Holocaust. Prieb (2003) recently argued that seemingly trivial decisions involved in cutting literature for performance often have important effects on how the topics and themes are understood. Debate cases frequently hinge on framing the past in specific ways, with many rounds won or lost based on who successfully argues for their version of collective memory. Competitive forensics provides a concrete example of the adage, "The winners write the history."

How members of the forensic community recollect and use the past—in speeches, interpretation events, and debates—has implications beyond the forensic community. From speech topics to literature selections, debate cases to offered evidence, those who do forensics influences not only how the world of forensics is seen, but also how the world, in general, is seen.

Conclusion

The past, present and future are not foreign to forensic scholars. Some have looked back at the activity's ancient roots (e.g., Derryberry, 1993; Harte, 1993), others assess present trends, and still others ask those interested to peer into forensics' future (e.g., Garner, 1991; Hamm, 1993; Sellnow, 1991). By grounding these research topics in an overarching theoretical framework of collective memory, forensic scholarship shares a common thread and bolsters its legitimacy in the scholarly community. Forensics offers a fascinating, intricate laboratory for seeing communication theories in action. Research that explores this context not only benefits the forensic community, but also makes valuable contributions to the discipline of communication. Building on theoretical foundations like collective memory helps ensure that forensic scholarship will receive recognition beyond the activity—informing those interested about not only what is done in forensics, but also how the activity is understood as complex with many nuances, just as are all acts of communication.

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