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Download date	2024-08-16 20:47:40
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DEBATE COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS OF  
THE ETHICALITY OF EVIDENCE USE

by

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B.A., Emporia State University, 1976

Submitted to the Department of Speech and Drama and  
the Faculty of the Graduate School of the University  
of Kansas in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Arts

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Committee Members

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to express appreciation to the members of my thesis committee, Dr. Donn Parson, chairman, Dr. Wil Linkugel, and Dr. Tom Belsecker, for their assistance in the development and writing of my study. Special thanks go to my parents for their support through years of education, and especially to my mother, Mrs. R. G. Keeshan, for her patience in typing the final product.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION	
Background	1
Past Research	3
II. METHODOLOGY	
Creating the Questionnaire	12
Pretest	16
Administering the Questionnaire	17
Data Analysis	18
III. RESULTS	
Unweighted Means Analysis of Variance	20
Ordering the Means	22
Knowledge of the AFA Code of Ethics	28
Confidence Intervals	28
IV. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS	
Ethicality Dimension	32
Frequency Dimension	33
Value Dimension	34
Ambiguity Dimension	34
Implications of the Results	35
Considerations for Future Research	37

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A

Updated AFA Code for Debate Programs and Tournaments	40
Amendments to AFA Code	49

### APPENDIX B

Instructions	53
Questionnaire	54

### APPENDIX C

Bibliography	62
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## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 - Summary of Analysis of Variance for Ethicality	20
Table 2 - Summary of Analysis of Variance for Frequency	21
Table 3 - Summary of Analysis of Variance for Value	21
Table 4 - Summary of Analysis of Variance for Ambiguity	22
Table 5 - Ordering of College Ethicality Responses	24
Table 6 - Ordering of High School Ethicality Responses	24
Table 7 - Ordering of College Frequency Responses	25
Table 8 - Ordering of High School Frequency Responses	25
Table 9 - Ordering of College Value Responses	26
Table 10 - Ordering of High School Value Responses	26
Table 11 - Ordering of College Ambiguity Responses	27
Table 12 - Ordering of High School Ambiguity Responses	27
Table 13 - College Knowledge of the AFA Code of Ethics	28
Table 14 - Ethicality Confidence Levels	29
Table 15 - Frequency Confidence Intervals	30
Table 16 - Value Confidence Levels	30
Table 17 - Ambiguity Confidence Levels	31

Debate is a practice that has existed since ancient Greece and since its establishment as a formal interscholastic activity there have been guidelines regulating the process. Guidelines concerning procedures, including such issues as the speaking order, time limits, and the number of people on a team, have long existed. Other guidelines have been developed that deal with the content of the debate, including factors such as the topic and requirements for a prima facie case. Some of these guidelines have been formally established by debate organizations and others have been informally accepted. Ethical standards have also been involved with debate, both formally and informally, since its beginning. Just as the procedural and contextual aspects of debate have evolved over the years, ethical standards have changed as well. The purpose of this study is to identify practices in debate thought to be ethical or unethical by those currently involved.

### Background

Ethics have been a human concern since ancient times and the extension of that concern into the realm of debate is certainly nothing new. Almost all people involved with the activity seem to agree that ethical issues are important, but beyond one or two flagrant practices - such as fabrication of evidence - there seem to be no real guidelines for debaters at tournaments.

This concern for ethics is reflected in the American Forensics Association standards dealing with debate program and debate tournament standards for colleges and universities adopted in 1972 and revised in 1974

and 1977.<sup>1</sup> These standards cover matters involving eligibility for participating in tournaments, regulations for the operation of tournaments, responsibilities of judges, and responsibilities and limitations placed on debate coaches. The only requirements placed upon debaters' actions in rounds concern their use of evidence. Fabricated and/or distorted evidence is prohibited and the latest revision of the standards defines these terms. Complete documentation of evidence is required, including source, qualifications, publication, complete date, and page numbers. This requirement was designed to allow a check on fabricated and/or distorted evidence.

The AFA set up procedures for enforcement of these standards.<sup>2</sup> Any charges of violation are to be sent to the chairman of the Professional Relations Committee along with the proof of the charge. The Committee then notifies the President of the AFA who appoints three impartial members to an adjudicatory board to listen to both sides. It takes a two-thirds vote of the board to find the individual guilty and a unanimous vote to impose any sanctions. Sanctions for the various charges include letters of censure to officials at the offending school, publication of the censure in the Journal of the American Forensic Association and prohibition of the individual or team's participation in the National Debate Tournament. Complete explanation of the standards and sanctions can be found in Appendix A. This procedure has never been employed.

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<sup>1</sup>"Updated AFA Code for Debate Programs and Tournaments," Journal of the American Forensic Association, 11 Fall 1974, pp. 76-79. and

"Association Business," Journal of the American Forensic Association, 14 Winter 1978, pp. 172-173.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.



The latest revision of standards also includes procedures for the judges to follow when faced with violations of the code.<sup>3</sup> With distortion and/or fabrication of evidence, the judge is to give the offending team the loss and the offending speaker zero speaker points. The violation should also be reported to the tournament director and may affect the team's ability to advance in elimination rounds. These additional enforcement procedures and the definitions of fabricated and distorted evidence are to be submitted to the members of the AFA by mail ballot, but acceptance of them seems assured.

#### Past Research

The question arises as to whether these standards reflect the ethical values of the current debate community. The AFA is only one body that has set ethical standards. The various debate districts have also created their own ethical standards for the purposes of their district NDT qualifying tournaments. For example, the District Three Committee of the National Debate Tournament banned the trading of evidence during the tournament. A variety of feelings have been expressed in the debate community concerning ethical standards. A few studies have attempted to tap these feelings and determine the debate community's definitions of ethical practices. The studies have varied in formality, practices covered, and population sampled. The following section will examine some of the surveys representative of this area.

The 1977 National Debate Tournament Booklet of Judges<sup>4</sup> provided an

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>National Debate Tournament Booklet of Judges (Springfield, Mo: District III), 1977.

informal view of the ethical standards those judges set for evidence usage. The booklet is a compilation of statements prepared by judges attending the National Debate Tournament to explain their judging philosophy to the participants. A direct question concerning ethics in general, or ethics with evidence, was not asked, yet over a third of the judges included comments in this area. Most of them merely wanted to make it clear that proof of fabrication was basis for an automatic loss. Other judges warned debaters to use complete citations for them and a few warned that any challenges of fabrication must be backed up with proof or the challenger would be the loser.

This can in no way be considered a comprehensive survey of the debate community's view on ethics. It does not represent a total view of evidence ethics, but only deals with the fabrication and handling of questionable evidence. It does not constitute a good sampling of those in the field. At best it could represent only those judges attending nationals, but does not include all of those, since no direct question was asked. It does indicate that evidence ethics are a concern for this group, but provides no direct measure of them.

Another survey conducted on forensics touched upon ethics as well. John C. Reinard and John E. Crawford used the Delphi method to assess value judgments involving forensics in order to report to the National Developmental Conference on Forensics in 1974.<sup>5</sup> The Delphi method is a technique used to gain the wisdom of group judgment without the

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<sup>5</sup>John C. Reinard and John E. Crawford, "Project Delphi: Assessment of Value Judgments on Forensics," Forensics as Communication: The Argumentative Perspective, ed. James H. McBath (Skokie, Ill.: National Textbook Co., 1975), pp. 63-76.

disadvantages and complications of face-to-face confrontation. The process involved four rounds of questionnaires to the participants of the Assembly. The questions were revised each round and evaluated in the last two rounds. There were 114 statements for evaluation generated by the Task Force and eight of them concerned ethical practices.

The first two statements were in the section of the Delphi attempting to determine goals of forensics. Both statements dealt with the idea that a strong ethical code should be enforced. The first referred to evidence, persuasion and speech writing and the second just with evidence. By the fourth round, a majority agreed with both statements and they agreed more strongly with that referring to evidence.<sup>6</sup> The rest of the statements fell in the area dealing with practices. After certifying that a strong code of ethics should be enforced, neutrality was recorded by the fourth round on the issue of enforcing the AFA code of ethics. There were three issues dealing with qualification and complete citation of sources. There was mild agreement that sources should be qualified and complete citations should be presented. The last two statements dealt with the idea of having absolute rules for judging and having coaches monitor the ethics of debaters more closely. The results showed neutral to mild agreement for judging rules and absolute agreement for coach monitoring of student ethics.

These results from this survey showed that there appears to be a concern with ethical practices, particularly with evidence, but the survey failed to clearly define the ethical standards applicable.

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 79.

The participants wanted something to be done, but did not favor enforcement of the AFA code of ethics as that action. They seemed to place the burden on the coach, which does not appear to vary greatly from current practices. The survey only involved twenty-two participants and consisted largely of debate coaches. This cannot be assumed to be a representative sampling of the debate field as a whole as to what constitutes unethical practices.

A study, done in 1964 by Donald W. Klopff and James C. McCroskey,<sup>7</sup> sought to identify what college and high school debaters and coaches thought were ethical and unethical practices. The survey dealt with thirty-two practices and found some diversity of opinion between those involved in college debate and those in high school debate. Both groups of students agreed that fabrication of evidence and the taking of evidence out of context are clearly unethical. At the same time, the survey showed that failing to identify the sources of evidence was regarded as ethical, but a poor debate tactic.

This survey centered on the behavior of debaters in rounds and did not include all the questions concerning evidence which have been raised recently. In addition to this, the attitudes it measured existed fourteen years ago. Even the concepts dealt with need to be re-evaluated by those currently involved in the activity to establish present day standards, but newer practices such as paraphrasing evidence should also be evaluated. The strong point of this survey was that it tried to get

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<sup>7</sup>Donald W. Klopff and James C. McCroskey, The Elements of Debate (New York: Arco Publishing Co., Inc., 1969), pp. 139-142.

a sample of both debaters and coaches involved in debate at both the college and high school levels.

Another survey was conducted by Carl E. Larson for his masters thesis at Kansas University in 1962.<sup>8</sup> He created a set of ten scenarios depicting various debate practices in rounds. Five of these dealt with evidence usage: two represented manufactured evidence, one illustrated taking evidence out of context, one referred to misrepresenting the significance of the evidence offered and the fifth consisted of misrepresenting the qualifications of the source. Each scenario was evaluated on ten semantic differential scales. Six of them evaluated ethics. Two examined the relative use of these practices. One determined the value of the practice aside from ethical issues and one served as a check on the clarity of the question.

These questionnaires were completed by thirty debaters. They were selected from a random survey of colleges with debate programs and the thirty chosen included fifteen debaters from each of two schools. The results showed that all five of the practices described above were considered unethical.

The design of this study had several strong points. The use of illustrative scenarios to define questionable practices was good. It provided a clear example so that more consistent definitions were used by the subjects. The semantic differential scales allowed greater interpretability of levels of ethicality. It was an attempt to clearly

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<sup>8</sup>Carl E. Larson, "Ethical Considerations in the Attitudes and practices of College Debaters" (Unpublished M.A. thesis, Kansas Univ., Lawrence, Ks., 1962).

evaluate ethical standards at that time.

There are also several problems with this study. First, it was conducted sixteen years ago and cannot be used to evaluate the ethical standards of those currently in debate. Secondly, the sample evaluated was a very limited one. It surveyed two colleges' debate squads and their responses cannot be legitimately claimed as being representative of all college debaters, and certainly overlooks high school debaters. Finally, the issues described in the scenarios did not cover the full range of evidential issues facing the debate community today.

One very recent survey was conducted by David A. Thomas.<sup>9</sup> His questionnaire was passed out to all the debaters and judges attending the 1977 National Debate Tournament. It was completed by 77.3 percent of the judges and 63.7 percent of the debaters. The survey evaluated two practices: fabrication of evidence and gross distortion of evidence. Each subject was requested to select one of seven actions that should be enacted in response to each of the two practices. The possible responses included actions ranging from merely having the judge discredit any extra meaning in the evidence to prohibiting the individual from competing in the National Debate Tournament. The in between selections included having the offending team lose the evidence, lose the issue, lose the round or be publicly censured. The final option offered the respondent the chance to explain why none of the above responses were acceptable.

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<sup>9</sup>David A. Thomas, "Evidence Usage: A Survey of Attitudes at the 1977 National Debate Tournament," (A paper presented to the Annual Convention of the Speech Communication Association, Wash. D.C., Dec. 1-4, 1977).

The results of the survey indicated that there were no overall consensus as to what action should be taken for either practice. Thomas reported: "The most popular penalty for both forms of ethical violation was an automatic loss of the debate. The figures show 39 percent of the respondents would automatically vote against a team using grossly distorted evidence, and 50 percent of the respondents would automatically vote against a team using fabricated evidence."<sup>10</sup> In both cases the sanctions found in the AFA code of ethics were supported by only a few of the subjects. As Thomas reported "Censure of the school was selected by less than five percent of the participants as the proper action to take against a grossly distorted evidence.....Less than twenty percent of the participants would revoke the NDT eligibility of a debater who used fabricated evidence....."<sup>11</sup>

This survey highlighted the variability of the debate community's opinions concerning ethics. It was limited by focusing on sanctions for unethical evidence use rather than defining the ethical standards involved. It was also restricted by dealing with only two evidential issues and by assuming that both were regarded as unethical as defined in the AFA Code. It surveyed only those debaters and judges attending the National Debate Tournament. It did not try to include high school viewpoints, nor did it attempt to be representative of a broad spectrum of college debaters.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

The past research conducted in this field emphasized the concern involved with ethical issues in debate. Examination of the work done in this area points toward the need for further study. Any research conducted should try to gather a representative view of the current debate community. This involves questioning participants at both the high school and college levels with as much variety as possible. The study should also cover as broad a range of issues involving evidence use as possible, including factors which have become more important lately. The survey reported here is an attempt to meet those criteria and clarify the ethical standards of the current debate community. The following hypotheses will allow the testing necessary to meet these goals:

(1) There will be a significant difference between the high school and college responses for the ethicality dimension.

(2) There will be a significant difference between the high school and college responses for the frequency dimension.

(3) There will be a significant difference between the high school and college responses for the value dimension.

(4) There will be a significant difference between the high school and college responses for the ambiguity dimension.

(5) There will be significant differences found between the practices described in the ten scenarios for the ethicality dimension.

(6) There will be significant differences found between the practices described in the ten scenarios for the frequency dimension.

(7) There will be significant differences found between the practices described in the ten scenarios for the value dimension.



(8) There will be significant differences found between the practices described in the ten scenarios for the ambiguity dimension.

The method for evaluating these hypotheses will be discussed in the next chapter.

## II.

## METHODOLOGY

Creating the Questionnaire

The first step in measuring the ethical standards of the debate community was to create the proper questionnaire. The general format used by Carl E. Larson in his thesis was adopted for this study. Scenarios depicting different debate practices were presented and the subjects evaluated the described practices on ten different semantic differential scales.

The practices selected for evaluation were drawn from actions prohibited in the AFA code of ethics and other debate organizations, as well as issues appearing in debate rounds affecting evidence usage. Those selected were: (A) fabrication of evidence, (B) fabrication of evidence with known facts, (C) taking evidence out of context, (D) distorting the meaning of evidence, (E) trading evidence with other schools, (F) using fabricated evidence researched by another person, (G) paraphrasing evidence, (H) failure to read complete source citations, (I) changing the date of evidence and (J) challenging the validity of evidence without proof. The scenarios used to illustrate these practices are presented below.

(A) In the middle of a round, Debater A writes up evidence that he knows he must have to win the debate without knowing if the facts in it are true or not.

(B) Debater B knows that he will be facing a case he has no research on. He has overheard other debaters talking of evidence they use to beat it, but he does not know the source of it. He writes up the evidence that he knows exists, but does not have and attributes it to a

name and date.

(C) Debater C researches an article that reaches the conclusion that guns should be banned. The author cites a common argument opposing such legislation and then proceeds to explain why the argument is false. Debater C only cuts out the argument opposing gun control and attributes it to the author of the article.

(D) Debater D selects an ambiguous statement from an article opposing mandatory seat belts and interprets it to mean that the author supports mandatory seat belts.

(E) Debater E has no evidence on a case he is about to meet. He runs to his friends from another school and borrows their evidence against the case which that team has used to beat the case twice before.

(F) Debater F uses evidence from his file researched by another member of his squad. It was proven to him that the evidence is false. Debater F explains that the evidence was researched by another person and he does not know anything about it.

(G) Debater G wants to get as much information as possible into his first affirmative, so he paraphrases all of the evidence to fit the time limits without changing the basic meaning of the evidence.

(H) Debater H wants to get as much into his speeches as possible so he only gives the author's name and a date when he uses evidence.

(I) In a round, Debater I thinks that he will win an important argument if he can update the negative team. He reads his evidence and changes the date by two years so it updates the negative by a year.

(J) Debater J is sure his opponents have fabricated some evidence in the round, but he cannot prove it in the round. He challenges the

evidence anyway and claims it is totally made up.

After creating the examples of evidence usage, a method for evaluating them needed to be selected. The semantic differential was chosen as the measuring instrument. The semantic differential used here consisted of ten sets of bipolar adjectives with a seven point scale between them. It was developed by Charles E. Osgood, George J. Suci, and Percy H. Tannenbaum, and they defined it as ". . . a means of assessing connotative meaning of a concept for a given subject or group of subjects. The connotative meaning of a concept includes all of its suggestive or implicit significance, as distinct from its denotative meaning. . ."12

Research conducted by these men and others has led to the conclusion this instrument is a versatile and reliable one. It is an objective instrument in that each subject applies his or her own meaning to it; the researcher is dependent on the subject's interpretation. Research conducted by Osgood and his associates has established the instrument as a reliable and valid instrument that can be used across a variety of situations.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>J. Merrill Carlsmith, Phoebe C. Ellsworth, and Elliot Aronson, Methods of Research in Social Psychology (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1976), p. 187.

<sup>13</sup>Support for the validity and reliability of the semantic differential can be found in the following sources:

Charles E. Osgood, George J. Suci, and Percy H. Tannenbaum, The Measurement of Meaning (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1957), p. 77, 126, 141-142.

Martin Fishbein and Bertram H. Raven, "The AB Scales: An Operational Definition of Belief and Attitude," in Readings in Attitude Theory and Measurement, ed. Martin Fishbein (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1967), p. 183.

Martin Fishbein, "A Consideration of Belief, and Their Role in Attitude Measurement," in Readings in Attitude Theory and Measurement, ed. Martin Fishbein (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1967), p. 258.

The scales chosen for this study include three designed to evaluate the ethicality of the practice described: fair-unfair, honest-dishonest, and ethical-unethical. Two were used to determine the frequency of the occurrence of the practice: usual-unusual and frequent-infrequent. Two more scales were employed to evaluate the value of the practice: useful-useless and wise-foolish. Another scale was used to determine the clarity of the scenario: ambiguous-unambiguous. An additional two scales were added as extraneous scales to provide some cover for the purpose of the study: strong-weak and complex-simple.

The scales used in this study include some that have been tested by Osgood and his associates and others used by Larson in his thesis. The honest-dishonest, fair-unfair, wise-foolish and usual-unusual scales were used by both Osgood and Larson. The useful-useless, infrequent-frequent, strong-weak and simple-complex scales were selected from Osgood and his friend's work. The remaining two scales, ethical-unethical and ambiguous-unambiguous, were added to fulfill the intent of the study. This selection process allowed use of pretested scales both on a general level with Osgood and a more specific level with Larson's thesis.

In order to prevent any kind of experimental error resulting from the tendency of a subject to check just one side of the scale, the scales were mixed differently under each scenario and all the "good" responses did not rest on the same side of the scale. This meant that the subjects had to read and evaluate each scale individually.

In addition to the information gathered for each scenario, there

were several questions asked at the end of the questionnaire. Each subject was asked about their knowledge of the AFA code of ethics, the procedure to follow for a violation and the possible sanctions for a violation. There were also two questions asking each subject to explain what procedure they think should be followed to determine whether a violation of ethical standards has occurred and what kind of sanctions they think should be imposed if an ethical violation is proven. Finally, demographic data were collected to find out how many years each respondent had debated and/or coached in high school and/or college. The sex and age of each respondent were also requested.

The final step in creating the questionnaire was to add an introduction page to explain to each subject how to fill out the questionnaire. A copy of the instruction page is found in Appendix B along with a copy of the questionnaire. After the questionnaire was completed, the next step was to pretest the form.

### Pretest

The intended subjects for the study were high school and college debaters so a pretest was done using debaters from both levels. The study was given to a group of high school debaters at the first summer debate institute at the University of Kansas. The staff members at the institute, consisting of college debaters and debate coaches, also completed the questionnaire.

The purpose of the pretest was to find any problems that would have been encountered by the actual subjects. By speaking with individuals in the sample population several potential problems were uncovered. One

problem for the high school students was that many did not know the meaning of "ambiguous" or "unambiguous." This was solved by defining them on the instruction page as "clear" and "unclear." Another problem occurred in one of the scenarios. It was seen to portray two separate actions that could have been evaluated, so it was modified before the final version was established. Finally, some of the high school students had never seen a semantic differential scale before and the instructions had to be expanded to explain more clearly how they were to be used. With these changes made, the questionnaire was ready to be run on the actual subjects.

#### Administering the Questionnaire

The goal of the study was to include as broad a sample as possible of both high school and college debaters. The populations were selected with this goal in mind. The high school sample consisted of 624 debaters attending summer debate institutes at the University of Kansas, Harvard University, and Baylor University during 1977. The college sample was made up of 150 debaters attending the University of Kansas Fall 1977 Kidney Debate Tournament and the Emporia State University Fall 1977 Pflaum Debate Tournament. In all instances questionnaires were passed out to all participants. Virtually all of the Baylor and the University of Kansas high school subjects returned the questionnaires. Less than fifty percent of the subjects in the other sample groups returned theirs.

This population provided a broad base for evaluation of debate standards. High school students from across the country were found at the three debate institutes, and they represented broad levels of experience

from novices to those with three years of experience. The college sample at Emporia was representative of those who travel the national debate circuit and those with more experience. The University of Kansas sample consisted of more regional debaters and covered those with very little experience to those with a great deal. Thus the sample included various educational and experiential levels as well as a variety of geographic areas.

#### Data Analysis

The data were first divided into two groups: college results and high school results. This allowed comparisons between the two groups. The results for each scenario within each group were divided into four categories. The responses for the ethical-unethical, fair-unfair and honest-dishonest scales were combined to form the ethicality values. The usual-unusual and frequent-infrequent scale values were combined to form the frequency dimension. Wise-foolish and useful-useless values were combined to create the value score. The ambiguous-unambiguous scale was used to provide a check on the clarity of the questions.

After the data were broken into these groups, an analysis of variance was run. The procedures designed for an unweighted means analysis with unequal cell size described in B. J. Winer's Statistical Principles in Experimental Design<sup>14</sup> were used. This was run on four ten by two designs. The ten scenarios were included with the two educational

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<sup>14</sup>B. J. Winer, Statistical Principles in Experimental Design (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1971) pp. 445-449.



levels for each of the four groupings of scales explained above. This procedure merely indicated the presence of significant differences between the educational levels, the values for the ten scenarios and/or an interaction effect without specifically identifying where the differences existed.

If a significant difference was indicated by the test described above, then a second procedure was employed. The Newman-Keuls method was used to identify the specific significance between the values for the different scenarios. This made it possible to rank order the actions in order of ethicality and identify those that are statistically different from each other. The .05 level of significance was used.

The final statistical test was designed to allow analysis of the placement of the mean scores for each scenario. The variance of the population was computed for each scenario at each educational level. This allowed discussion of the level of perceived ethicality, frequency, value and ambiguity of the practices described in the scenarios. The results of these procedures will be presented in the next chapter.

## III.

## RESULTS

Unweighted Means Analysis of Variance

As indicated in the previous chapter, the results were divided into four groups, each with a ten by two design. This set of tables explains the results of the unweighted means analysis tests described in Chapter Two. These significance tests indicate the presence or absence of an effect occurring for the educational levels, the scenarios and/or an interaction between the two. Table one provides the results for the ethicality dimension. These results are based on the combined responses on three scales: ethical-unethical, fair-unfair, and honest-dishonest.

Table 1 - Summary of Analysis of Variance for Ethicality

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	
Scenarios	87,321.5717	9	9,702.3969	457.2978	p .05
Educational Level	.5627	1	.5624	.0265	
Interaction	2,026.9403	9	225.2156	10.6150	p .05
Within Cell	160,674.9109	7,573	21.2168		

The scenario F value is 456.2978 which exceeds the significance level of 1.88 so therefore the variance among scenarios is significant. The interaction F value of 10.6150 exceeds the significance level of 1.88 so there is a statistically significant amount of variance caused by the interaction of the two variables.

The next table will provide the unweighted means analysis of variance for the frequency dimension. The values used were drawn from the responses on the usual-unusual and frequent-infrequent scales.

Table 2 - Summary of Analysis of Variance for Frequency

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	
Scenarios	20,105.7873	9	2,233.9764	178.3001	p .05
Educational Levels	17.0930	1	17.0930	1.3642	
Interaction	1,432.3718	9	159.1524	12.7024	p .05
Within Cells	94,445.682	7,538	12.5293		

The scenario F value is 178.3001 which exceeds the significance level of 1.88 so the variance among the scenarios is significant. The interaction F value of 12.7024 exceeds the significance level of 1.88 so there is a significant amount of variance caused by the interaction of the two variables.

Table three provides the unweighted means analysis of variance results for the value dimension. The scores used here were drawn from the wise-foolish and useful-useless scales.

Table 3 - Summary of Analysis of Variance for Value

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	
Scenarios	19,713.4371	9	2,190.3819	187.9317	p .05
Educational Levels	264.7796	1	264.7796	22.7177	p .05
Interaction	1,095.5918	9	121.7324	10.4445	p .05
Within Cell	87,903.6213	7,542	11.6552		

The scenario F value of 187.9317 exceeds the significance level of 1.88 so the variance among the scenarios is significant. The educational level F value of 22.7177 exceeds the significance level of 3.84 so the variance between high school and college responses is significant. The interaction F value of 10.4445 exceeds the significance level of 1.88 so

there is a significant amount of variance caused by the interaction of the two variables.

Table four contains the unweighted means analysis of variance results for the ambiguity dimension. The responses used to create this dimension were those from the unambiguous-ambiguous scale.

Table 4 - Summary of Analysis of Variance for Ambiguity

<u>Source of Variation</u>	<u>SS</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	
Scenarios	280.9535	9	31.2171	6.8538	p .05
Educational Levels	4.0409	1	4.0409	.8872	
Interaction	234.0523	9	26.0058	5.7097	p .05
Within Cell	32,853.0581	7,213	4.5547		

The scenario F value of 6.8538 exceeds the significance level of 1.88 so the variance among the scenarios is significant. The interaction F value of 5.7097 exceeds the significance level of 1.88 so there is a significant amount of variance caused by the interaction of the two variables.

#### Ordering the Means

The results in Tables one through four did not identify the specific debate practices that were evaluated differently from one another. It merely indicated the presence or absence of significant differences within the main categories. When a significant difference was reported, it became necessary to find out where the significant differences were located. This section explains how the means can be ordered and identifies where the significant differences can be found for both high school and college responses in all four dimensions. Table five shows the results

of the Newman-Kuels procedure and identifies where the significant differences occur between scenarios for the ethicality ordering of college responses. Table six served the same function for the high school ethicality responses. Since there were seven scale responses possible for each scale used to create the ethicality dimension, the mean could lie between three and twenty-one. The lower the score, the more ethical the action is perceived to be.

The next two tables provide the orderings for the frequency dimension. The frequency means are the result of the combination of two scales: Usual-unusual and frequent-infrequent. Thus, the mean could fall between two and fourteen. The lower scores indicate the practice is viewed as occurring more infrequently than those with higher scores. The tables are on page twenty-five.

Tables nine and ten provide the same information for the value dimension. This dimension is composed of the responses on the wise-foolish and useful-useless scales. The lower scores for this table indicate the illustrated action is viewed as being a foolish or non-useful option. Those tables are on page twenty-six.

Tables eleven and twelve provide similar information for the ambiguity dimension. These means result from the scores on a single scale: ambiguous-unambiguous. The possible values range between one and seven. The lower scores would indicate more clarity in the interpreting of the question, and the higher values would suggest that the scenario was unclear. These tables are on page twenty-seven.

Table 5 - Ordering of College Ethicality Responses

H	E	J	G	F	D	C	B	I	A
8.5625	8.8542	10.0217	10.4897	12.3380	16.0282	17.0205	19.9597	20.0345	20.4933

---

Ethical = 1    Unethical = 7    Fair = 1    Unfair = 7    Honest = 1    Dishonest = 7

Table 6 - Ordering of High School Ethicality Responses

H	J	G	E	F	D	C	B	I	A
8.5497	9.0117	10.6841	11.6006	14.4711	15.2997	15.8010	18.5588	19.9432	20.0995

Table 7 - Ordering of College Frequency Responses

A	B	I	J	F	D	G	C	E	H
4.3467	5.3265	7.1056	7.7206	8.9861	9.9007	9.9379	9.9452	11.9172	12.2238

Infrequent = 1    Frequent = 7    Unusual = 1    Usual = 7

Table 8 - Ordering of High School Frequency Responses

A	J	B	F	I	D	G	C	E	H
5.5413	6.9541	7.0048	7.3826	8.5083	9.1419	9.4066	10.1878	11.0176	11.0535



Table 9 - Ordering of College Value Responses

B	A	C	I	D	F	J	G	H	E
4.6667	4.6871	5.0338	5.3147	5.8071	6.9130	7.1095	9.4255	10.2183	11.4792

---

Foolish = 1    Wise = 7    Useless = 1    Useful = 7

Table 10 - Ordering of High School Value Responses

A	F	I	B	D	J	C	G	H	E
5.2569	5.8217	6	6.1141	7.168	7.2377	7.3231	9.7368	9.8395	10.9346

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Table 11 - Ordering of College Ambiguity Responses

I	H	E	A	B	G	F	C	J	D
3.5401	3.6043	3.6277	3.8794	4.1214	4.1324	4.1799	4.3262	4.3459	5.0441

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Unambiguous = 1    Ambiguous = 7

Table 12 - Ordering of High School Ambiguity Responses

E	D	H	G	A	B	C	I	J	F
3.5870	3.7964	3.8468	4.0188	4.0659	4.0821	4.1139	4.1391	4.2440	4.3101

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Knowledge of the AFA Code of Ethics

The scores provided here show the results of the three questions concerning the AFA code of ethics. The first question asked the subject if he or she was aware of the content of the AFA code of ethics. The second one tried to find out how many knew what process to follow for a violation of the code. The third question centered on the subject's knowledge of the sanctions which could be evoked according to the AFA code of ethics. Only the college sample is included here since the AFA code only covers the college level.

Table 13 - College Knowledge of the AFA Code of Ethics

<u>Knowledge of:</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Content	63	77
Process	43	97
Sanctions	48	92

Confidence Intervals

The final test of the data establishes confidence intervals for the means of the population. This test allows determination of where the scores fall on each scale. The results for each dimension are provided in Tables fourteen through seventeen.

Table 14 - Ethicality Confidence Levels

<u>Scenario</u>	<u>College</u>	<u>High School</u>
A	Unethical	Unethical
B	Unethical	Unethical
C	Unethical	Unethical
D	Unethical	Unethical
E	Ethical	Neutral
F	Neutral	Unethical
G	Ethical	Ethical
H	Ethical	Ethical
I	Unethical	Unethical
J	Ethical	Ethical

Table 15 - Frequency Confidence Intervals

<u>Scenario</u>	<u>College</u>	<u>High School</u>
A	Infrequent	Infrequent
B	Infrequent	Infrequent
C	Frequent	Frequent
D	Frequent	Frequent
E	Frequent	Frequent
F	Frequent	Infrequent
G	Frequent	Frequent
H	Frequent	Frequent
I	Infrequent	Neutral
J	Infrequent	Infrequent

Table 16 - Value Confidence Levels

<u>Scenario</u>	<u>College</u>	<u>High School</u>
A	Foolish	Foolish
B	Foolish	Foolish
C	Foolish	Foolish
D	Foolish	Foolish
E	Wise	Wise
F	Foolish	Foolish
G	Wise	Wise
H	Wise	Wise
I	Foolish	Foolish
J	Foolish	Foolish

Table 17 - Ambiguity Confidence Levels

<u>Scenario</u>	<u>College</u>	<u>High School</u>
A	Neutral	Neutral
B	Neutral	Neutral
C	Ambiguous	Neutral
D	Ambiguous	Neutral
E	Ambiguous	Unambiguous
F	Neutral	Ambiguous
G	Neutral	Neutral
H	Unambiguous	Neutral
I	Unambiguous	Neutral
J	Ambiguous	Ambiguous

Analysis of the results provided in this chapter can lead to several interesting conclusions about evidence ethics. A discussion of these conclusions will occur in Chapter four.

## IV.

## DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The data presented in Chapter Three provide support for five of the eight hypotheses. The first four hypotheses predicted significant differences between college and high school responses in each of the four dimensions. Only the value dimension supported this hypothesis. The second four hypotheses predicted that significant differences would arise between the scenarios in each dimension and all four hypotheses were supported by the data. This chapter will begin the discussion of these results according to their respective dimensions.

Ethicality Dimension

There was agreement at both the high school and college levels that five of the practices were unethical. These include: (A) fabrication of evidence, (B) fabrication of evidence with known facts, (C) taking evidence out of context, (D) distorting the meaning of evidence, and (I) changing the date of evidence. These conclusions indicate agreement with the current AFA code standards concerning evidence practices that have been declared unethical.

Three more practices were considered to be ethical by both educational levels. These include: (G) paraphrasing evidence, (H) failure to read complete source citations, and (J) challenging the validity of evidence without proof. The first two are not prohibited by the AFA code of ethics. Individual rounds have centered on the issue of paraphrasing evidence, but this study shows no overall support for banning that practice. The third practice, (J), is specifically prohibited by the AFA

standards.

The final two practices differed slightly between the high school and the college samples. Practice (E), trading evidence with other schools, was considered ethical by the college sample and fell into the neutral area for the high school sample. This practice is not one that is banned by the AFA. The other practice was (F), using fabricated evidence researched by another person. This was considered unethical by the high school sample, but it fell into the neutral area for the college sample. The most recently adopted AFA standards have classified the use of all fabricated evidence as unethical even if the one who used it was not the person who researched it.

#### Frequency Dimension

Five of the practices were viewed as frequent occurrences by both levels surveyed. These include: (C) taking evidence out of context, (D) distorting the meaning of evidence, (E) trading evidence with other schools, (G) paraphrasing evidence, and (H) failure to read complete source citations. The latter three were all considered as ethical both by the AFA code and the bulk of the population sampled.

Three other practices were viewed as infrequent occurrences by both high school and college groups. These are: (A) fabrication of evidence, (B) fabrication of evidence with known facts, and (J) challenging the validity of evidence without proof. All three of the practices are considered unethical by the AFA code, but the third practice, (J) was not considered unethical by the subjects surveyed.

The final two practices indicated disagreement between the



educational levels. Practice (F), using fabricated evidence researched by another person, was considered a frequent occurrence at the college level, but the high school sample considered it an infrequent practice. This could reflect differing amounts of use of evidence researched by others at the two educational levels. The remaining practice was (I), changing the date of evidence. The college sample viewed it as an infrequent occurrence, but the high school sample classified it in the neutral range. Both of these practices are banned by the AFA and are not considered ethical by those surveyed.

#### Value Dimension

There was total agreement between the educational levels for the classification of all practices along this dimension. Only three of them were considered wise. These are: (E) trading evidence with other schools, (G) paraphrasing evidence, and (H) failure to read complete source citations. None of these practices were banned by the AFA, nor were they considered unethical by the subjects.

The remaining seven practices were all considered foolish. These are: (A) fabrication of evidence, (B) fabrication with known facts, (C) taking evidence out of context, (D) distorting the meaning of evidence, (F) using fabricated evidence, (I) changing the date of evidence, and (J) challenging the validity of evidence without proof. This group includes a mixture of ethical and unethical practices.

#### Ambiguity Dimension

There appeared to be little consistency in the responses for this

dimension. Three of the practices indicated agreement of neutrality between the educational levels. They were: (A) fabrication of evidence, (B) fabricating evidence with known facts, and (G) paraphrasing evidence. Practice (E), trading evidence with other schools, was considered to be unambiguous for both groups, and (J) challenging the validity of evidence without proof was viewed as ambiguous by both samples. The rest of the scenarios showed no consensus between educational levels, nor were the responses consistent as to whether they were ambiguous, neutral, or unambiguous. There appeared to be a lack of understanding for this dimension, and that makes any interpretation of it difficult.

#### Implications of the Results

A comparison of the results found in each dimension leads to some possible conclusions about the ethics of evidence usage of debaters. One of these conclusions supported by the results is that practices which are viewed to be unethical are not necessarily the same ones considered to be infrequent occurrences. Scenarios (C), taking evidence out of context, and (D), distorting the meaning of evidence, were considered to be unethical by both groups and yet these practices were perceived as being frequent occurrences. The practice described in scenario (I), changing the date of evidence, was considered extremely unethical. This practice was not viewed as occurring frequently, but it was not viewed as occurring infrequently either. Practice (F), using fabricated evidence researched by another person, was neutral for the college sample and unethical for the high school sample, yet this was not viewed as an infrequent or frequent occurrence.

The rest of the group corresponded in a more expected fashion. Scenarios (A), fabricating evidence, and (B), fabricating evidence with known facts, were viewed as highly unethical and fairly infrequent responses. The remaining four scenarios, (G), (J), (E) and (H), were all considered to be ethical and somewhat frequent occurrences. These responses would indicate that a problem of some unethical practices occurring fairly frequently is perceived by both high school and college level debaters.

Another conclusion supported by this data is that unethical practices do not necessarily have a low value for debaters. The practices illustrated in scenarios (A), (B) and (I) were viewed as being highly unethical by both groups. While they fell into the low value half of the scale, they were not very low in that half. The practices in scenarios (C) and (D) were also considered unethical, and yet they fell only slightly into the foolish region of the value scale. The rest of the scenarios fell into more acceptable patterns with the ethical practices having some value and the unethical one, (F), having a low value. This may mean that the reason some unethical practices occur more frequently than they should is because the debaters find them to be useful actions.

These results also show mixed responses as far as the AFA code of ethics is concerned. The code's ban on fabricated and/or distorted evidence was supported by both groups of respondents. Two more practices, the ban on challenging the validity of evidence without proof (J) and the unethicality of using fabricated evidence researched by another person (F), were not supported by the results. The practice described in

scenario (F) was neutral for the college sample and the action in scenario (J) fell into the ethical range for both groups.

These results may indicate that a re-evaluation of the AFA standards is in order. They may also mean that debate programs need to discuss the issues of ethicality more often with their students. The results of the questions asking the college debaters about their knowledge of the AFA code of ethics showed surprising ignorance. Less than half of them even knew the content of the ethical code. Only thirty-one percent of them knew what process to follow when a violation occurred, and only thirty-four percent were aware of the sanctions that could be enacted for an ethical violation. If the AFA code of ethics is supposed to guide debaters in their use of evidence, then some effort should be made to insure knowledge of this code of ethics reaches debaters. This may call for greater efforts by debate coaches to clarify the ethical standards. It may also call for seminars discussing ethical issues to be held at various debate tournaments across the country. It is clear that something should be done to make sure that knowledge of the ethical standards reaches all relevant debaters or the value of having an ethical code is greatly diminished.

#### Considerations for Future Research

Any future research attempting to clarify ethical standards could improve some of the techniques used here. The scales used for the value dimension, wise-foolish and useful-useless, should be re-evaluated. They may not have been viewed as similar scales by the subjects and they may not have implied a value question to the samples. A better selection of

scales could ensure a proper reading of the value dimension.

The ambiguity scale should be deleted or more clearly explained. Almost all of the responses fell within the neutral area of the scale, making any interpretation of that scale very difficult. It is not clear just exactly what the subjects meant by their responses, but it does not seem safe to conclude that the scenarios presented no problems for them. One possibility for further studies of this sort would be for them to pretest the clarity of the scenarios and then delete the ambiguity scale from the actual survey.

This study does open some questions for extended research. One relevant area of research could be designed to find out if education about the ethical standards changes individuals' views on ethics. It may be that educating debaters about the AFA code would revise their ethical standards, and research could find out if education is a worthwhile goal in this area.

Another area that could be explored involves the process for dealing with ethical violations. This study attempted to identify where the ethical standards of the debate community fell; further research could identify what should be done about violations of these standards according to the debate community. Thus, this study can be viewed as the first step in an investigative process concerning the ethics of evidence usage in debate.

APPENDIX A

Updated AFA Code for Debate Programs and Tournaments

Amendments to AFA Code

## APPENDIX A

Journal of the American Forensic Association

Volume XI (Fall 1974), p. 76-9

## OFFICERS' CORNER

## UPDATED AFA CODE FOR

## DEBATE PROGRAMS AND TOURNAMENTS

Since the most recently published Debate Program and Debate Tournament Standards for Colleges and Universities (Fall, 1972 JAF, Vol. IX, No. 2, pp. 347-49) several official changes have transpired and are incorporated here to provide members an updated copy. Official changes have transpired in the following portions of the document:

1. Procedures
2. PROCEDURES FOR ENFORCING THE STANDARDS IN GROUPS I AND II
3. STANDARDS: GROUP I (added 1a and 1b, amended 3)
4. STANDARDS: GROUP II (added 5)
5. STANDARDS: GROUP III (added 2d)

## AMERICAN FORENSIC ASSOCIATION

PROFESSIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE DEBATE PROGRAM AND  
DEBATE TOURNAMENT STANDARDS FOR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

(July 15, 1972)

Revised August 15, 1974

Procedures

The A.F.A. Professional Relations Committee shall receive allegations regarding violations of the American Forensic Association Debate Program and Tournament Standards for Colleges and Universities. The

committee will serve initially in an investigatory capacity. Upon receipt of a formal complaint, the committee shall contact in writing the person or persons accused of the violation, informing him of the nature of the complaint. The committee shall request information it deems necessary for its investigation and invite the accused party to respond to the charges. Any individual accused of a violation shall have at least 30 days to respond to allegations.

If a member of the committee is a party to the charges, that member is disqualified from participating in the deliberations of the committee.

If, after completing its investigation, a majority of the committee members voting determine that there is reason to believe that a serious violation of professional ethics has occurred, the chairman of the committee shall notify the accused individual(s) and the President of A.F.A. of that belief. The committee will then request that the President of the A.F.A. appoint within thirty (30) days an adjudicatory board. The adjudicatory board will be composed of three impartial members of the A.F.A.

Once formed, the adjudicatory board shall schedule a formal hearing as soon as possible. The Professional Relations Committee will submit to the adjudicatory board a complete list of charges and supporting evidence. The accused will have the right to submit appropriate material relating to the complaint.

On the date designated by the adjudicatory board for a hearing, a representative of the Professional Relations Committee and the accused will be invited to present oral argument. Action by the Board on a complaint shall be determined by the following procedure:



1. To find an individual guilty of charges requires a 2/3 vote of the members of the adjudicatory board.
2. To impose sanctions outlined in the Standards requires a unanimous vote of the adjudicatory board.

The adjudicatory board will notify the accused and the Professional Relations Committee of its decision and, where necessary, will take actions specified by the A.F.A. Standards for Debate Programs and Tournaments.

### Preface

Intercollegiate debate programs and tournaments should provide training in effective, intelligent, and responsible advocacy. The standards contained in this code are designed to maximize the contribution that the debate tournament, the debate judge, the debate participant, and the debate coach can make to the achievement of these goals by assuring an educational orientation to college and university debate programs. Because some standards in this code can and should be enforced by the American Forensic Association in the best interests of the forensic profession while others are best handled at the discretion of the involved individuals, the standards found in Group I and II will be subject to American Forensic Association sanctions while the standards in Group III will be recommended normative procedures.

### PROCEDURES FOR ENFORCING THE STANDARDS IN GROUPS I AND II

Complaints of violations should be sent to the chairman of the Professional Relations Committee. Such complaints shall specify the nature of the suspicion. All such complaints must be filed with the committee

within twelve months after the alleged violation occurred. The committee will maintain the anonymity of the source of the complaint and will assume an investigatory role as outlined in the general procedures.

Standards: Group I

VIOLATIONS OF THIS SECTION OF THE CODE WILL RESULT IN EITHER THE INDIVIDUAL OR THE TEAM BECOMING INELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE NATIONAL DEBATE TOURNAMENT FOR THE YEAR OF THE OFFENSE. IN ADDITION, ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES FOR GROUP II WILL APPLY TO GROUP I.

1) A tournament participant is to be a full-time undergraduate student who is in good standing at his respective institution, as defined by said institution.

- a. A tournament shall consist of four or more schools participating in four or more rounds of debate. A tournament shall be credited to a student when that student participates in more than three rounds of debate at a said tournament.
- b. For purposes of eligibility a debate season shall consist of two time blocks: a) August-December and b) January-June. A student is eligible for competition in eight (8) such time blocks. A student shall have used his eligibility in a time block if he participates in three or more tournaments during that block of time.

2) Any coach may request that the Professional Relations Committee bar a student who has transferred from an accredited four-year institution of higher learning as an entrant to the National Debate Tournament

for a period of 18 months from the date of transfer unless the student can demonstrate satisfactory personal reasons for the transfer to the Professional Relations Committee.

3) During a given academic year, a student may participate in no more than 120 preliminary rounds of tournament debate prior to the National Debate Tournament.

4) Debate teams are prohibited from using fabricated evidence.

Standards: Group II

VIOLATIONS OF THIS SECTION OF THE CODE WILL RESULT IN LETTERS OF CENSURE BEING SENT TO THE APPROPRIATE DEPARTMENT CHAIRMAN, THE APPROPRIATE UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATOR, AND THE DIRECTOR OF FORENSICS AT THE OFFENDING SCHOOL. A LIST OF CENSURED SCHOOLS ALONG WITH THE VIOLATIONS WILL APPEAR IN THE JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN FORENSIC ASSOCIATION.

1) The burden of acquiring evidence rightly belongs to the undergraduate debater. Special students (Graduate and Undergraduate) are not to be charged with responsibilities which carry them into active research.

2) Tournaments must not be run for the financial benefit of the host school. An anticipated profit of more than 10% of total registration fees is considered excessive.

3) The cost of liquor is to be borne by the host school or made an optional tournament cost. Open bars while the tournament is in progress are prohibited.

4) Tournaments must give no participant an advantage denied others.

a. If mathematically possible, round pairing in the preliminary

rounds are to adhere to the following:

1. No team can meet another team twice.
2. No judge can judge the same team twice.
3. No judge can hear a team his team will meet later in the tournament.
- b. If results are supposed to be kept secret, this rule is to be strictly observed by all who have access to tournament headquarters.
- c. Debate assignments must follow a set schematic. No team, for whatever reason, can be protected in power pairing situations from meeting appropriate competition.
- d. A small, elite group of judges cannot be selected to hear repeatedly the top debates at a tournament.

5) Participating schools in a tournament have a right to expect the costs of running the tournaments will be borne equally by all participating schools. Where special inducements, such as waiver of fees, free housing, etc., are extended to selected participating schools, the nature of those inducements and the criteria by which they are extended shall be indicated in all tournament invitations.

6) Any participant or judge is given permission to tape record any round in which he participates.

7) No debate team is to use evidence which has been grossly distorted. Teams must be able to supply complete documentation of their evidence upon request.

## PROCEDURES FOR ENFORCING THE STANDARDS IN GROUPS I AND II

Individuals should refrain from charging malpractice, in or out of the debate, in the absence of very convincing proof. However, when enough proof has been gathered, the complaint should be presented in writing to the Chairman of the American Forensic Association Professional Relations Committee. The Committee will then act on the charge that alleged violations of these standards have occurred.

## Standards: Group III

THE STANDARDS IN THIS SECTION OF THE CODE ARE SEEN BY THE AMERICAN FORENSIC ASSOCIATION AS NORMATIVE DEBATE PROCEDURES WHICH SHOULD BE FOLLOWED BY ALL RESPONSIBLE MEMBERS OF THE FORENSIC COMMUNITY.

- 1) Tournaments should be advertised accurately.
  - a. The level of competition expected should be specified. If the tournament has more than one division, eligibility requirements for each division should be defined clearly.
  - b. The complete tournament format should be described in tournaments.
  - c. The basis for awarding trophies and other awards should be specified clearly.
- 2) Tournaments should be administered efficiently.
  - a. If power matching is used, the power matched rounds should be spaced to minimize time for coaches and debaters. Strong consideration should be given to power matching only overnight and during meal breaks. If power matching must be done between rounds, it should not take more than one

hour.

- b. Duplicate awards should be given where errors in tabulation are discovered too late to be rectified at the tournament.
- c. Results for each team should be available as soon as possible after the completion of the tournament.
- d. Participants are entitled to receive information sufficient to allow them to reconstruct the round by round tournament schematic. Such information should include, as a minimum, round by round pairing and judging assignments, win-loss records of all teams by round and speaker points or quality points by round.

3) In general, the judge should accept certain tournament responsibilities.

- a. He should judge his quota of rounds.
- b. He should be available to judge at least one round after his team has been eliminated, if requested.
- c. He should specify in writing his requested. (sic)
- d. He should disqualify himself from rounds in which personal involvement or bias might effect his judgment.
- e. He should specify in writing his reasons for decisions and any other comments he wishes to offer in the space provided on the ballot.

4) No team clearly guilty of using evidence of doubtful credibility in a debate should be awarded a decision, regardless of other circumstances.

5) Debaters should document their evidence accurately and completely. Complete documentation should generally consist of author, credentials, publication, and year. This information in addition to page numbers should be available when requested by the judge or opponents.

6) The sale of old evidence files or prepackaged evidence in any form is contrary to the educational objectives of developing skills in original research.

7) Coaches and assistants must limit their active research to that necessary to enable them to (a) teach research techniques and (b) coach the topic and point to areas of research.

8) A director of debate should seek opportunities to place his debaters and speakers before audiences in the community to speak on relevant local, state, or national issues about which the students have adequate knowledge and commitment. No student should be coerced to speak in public in favor of a position which he personally opposes. The debate program also has a responsibility to the campus community to facilitate conflict resolution by means of providing a forum for dissent on questions critical to the campus community.

9) Finally, the debate coach should be a teacher concerned with his students' understanding of content materials for their speeches and in the use of rhetorical and logical methods. He should neither expose students to competition without adequate guidance nor overcoach students to the point of discouraging individual investigation and independent thinking.

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN FORENSIC ASSOCIATION

Volume XIV (Winter 1978), p. 172-3

Thomas moved that this business meeting recommend to the AFA membership that Whereas the integrity of evidence is the foundation of debating, and

Whereas there is a lack of uniformity of opinion among debators and forensics educations about proper actions to take in instances of violations of evidence rules, and

Whereas the procedures outlines in the "AFA Code for Debate Programs and Tournaments" have never been used to penalize violations of evidence rules, Be it resolved:

1. The AFA Code should be amended to clarify the standards for evidence usage in debates in interscholastic and intercollegiate tournaments. The practices of evidence distortion and evidence fabrication should be clearly defined. The standard found in Group I, 4) should be amended to add: "Evidence is factual data or opinion testimony offered as proof in support of a debator's contention, argument, or case. Fabrication of evidence refers to falsely representing a cited fact or statement of opinion as evidence when the material in question is not authentic. Fabricated evidence is so defined without reference to whether the debater who uses it was the person who fabricated it." The standard found in Group II, 7) should be amended to add: "Distortion of evidence refers to representing



the actual content or implied intent of evidence wrongly. Distortions include, but are not limited to, instances of incomplete documentation, omission of salient information from quotations and/or paraphrases, concealed interests or biases of sources, quotation out of context, and misinterpretations of evidence that significantly alter its meaning. Such instances are judged by comparison of the challenged evidence with the original source."

2. The AFA Code should be amended to provide more suitable enforcement procedures to be employed in instances of violation of evidence standards. The "Procedures for Enforcing the Standards in Groups I and II" should be amended to add:

In instances of evidence distortion and/or fabrication by debaters in a debate, additional options should be at the discretion of the judge. In instances of evidence distortion and/or fabrication, the judge should automatically award the decision in the debate to the opposing team, noting the violation of evidence rules as the reason for decision on the ballot. Also, in cases of evidence distortion and/or evidence fabrication, the judge should report the offending team to the director of the tournament for possible revocation of the offending team's eligibility to advance in the elimination rounds, depending on the gravity of the offense, taking mitigating circumstances into account." Motion passed as amended (see paragraphy below).

Ulrich moved to amend resolution #1 (above) by substituting for "of incomplete documentation" with "of inability to provide complete documentation (source, qualifications, location of the quotation, complete date and page numbers)" and by striking "concealed interests or biases of sources." Motion passed.

Ulrich moved to amend resolution #2 (above) by adding after "the opposing team" the phrase "and give the offending speaker zero speaker points" and by adding after "reason for decision" the phrase "and points." Motion passed.

Browning moved to amend resolution #2 by striking the final sentence. Motion failed.

Fryar moved to amend resolution #2 by substituting "shall" for "should" in the phrase "the judge should automatically award . . ." Motion passed.

APPENDIX B

Instructions

Questionnaire

## APPENDIX B

## Instructions

I am conducting research into perceptions concerning debate evidence and would appreciate your help. Your responses to the following questionnaire will be kept anonymous.

The first section consists of ten hypothetical occurrences during debate rounds. Each scenario will illustrate an action taken by a debater. You will be asked to evaluate the action taken by the debater on ten different scales. The examples below will explain how to use the scales.

If you feel that the action taken by the debater relates very closely to one end of the scale or the other, the X is placed here:

Unambiguous   X                                      Ambiguous  
 (Clear) or (Unclear)

Unambiguous                                      X   Ambiguous

If it relates closely to one end or the other, the X goes here:

Ambiguous        X                                 Unambiguous  
or

Ambiguous                                 X        Unambiguous

If it relates slightly to one end or the other, the X is placed here:

Unambiguous             X                            Ambiguous  
or

Unambiguous                       X                  Ambiguous

If you feel the action is equally related or unrelated to one end or the other, the X is placed here:



Frequent	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Infrequent
Unfair	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Fair
Ambiguous	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Unambiguous
Weak	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Strong
Unusual	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Usual
Honest	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Dishonest
Useful	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Useless

(C) Debater C researches an article that reaches the conclusion that guns should be banned. The author cites a common argument opposing such legislation and then proceeds to explain why the argument is false. Debater C only cuts out the argument opposing gun control and attributes it to the author of the article.

Foolish	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Wise
Useless	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Useful
Dishonest	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Honest
Unambiguous	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Ambiguous
Strong	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Weak
Complex	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Simple
Ethical	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Unethical
Infrequent	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Frequent
Usual	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Unusual
Fair	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Unfair

(D) Debater D selects an ambiguous statement from an article opposing mandatory seat belts and interprets it to mean that the author supports mandatory seat belts.

Unethical	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Ethical
Ambiguous	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Unambiguous
Unusual	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Usual
Simple	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Complex
Honest	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Dishonest
Useful	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Useless
Wise	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Foolish
Weak	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Strong
Unfair	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Fair
Frequent	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Infrequent

(E) Debater E has no evidence on a case he is about to meet. He runs to his friends from another school and borrows their evidence against the case which that team has used to beat the case twice before.

Complex	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Simple
Infrequent	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Frequent
Ethical	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Unethical
Useless	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Useful
Foolish	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Wise
Strong	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Weak
Usual	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Unusual
Fair	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Unfair
Unambiguous	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Ambiguous
Dishonest	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Honest

(F) Debater F uses evidence from his file researched by another member of his squad. It was proven to him that the evidence is false. Debater







(J) Debater J is sure his opponents have fabricated some evidence in the round, but he cannot prove it in the round. He challenges the evidence anyway and claims it is totally made up.

Useful	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Useless
Honest	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Dishonest
Unfair	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Fair
Weak	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Strong
Ambiguous	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Unambiguous
Unusual	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Usual
Unethical	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Ethical
Wise	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Foolish
Frequent	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Infrequent
Simple	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Complex

Please answer yes or no to the next three questions:

1. Are you aware of the content of the AFA code of ethics? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Are you aware of the process to follow for a violation? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Are you aware of the possible sanctions? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What process do you think should be followed to determine whether an individual or team is responsible for an unethical procedure?

5. What kind of sanctions or enforcement should be imposed if an individual or team is found guilty of an unethical practice?

How many years have you:

Debated in High School \_\_\_\_\_ Debated in College \_\_\_\_\_

Coached High School \_\_\_\_\_ Coached College \_\_\_\_\_

Sex \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your cooperation and help.

APPENDIX C

Bibliography

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