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A Community of Unequals: An Analysis of Dominant and Subdominant Culturally Linked Perceptions of Participation and Success within Intercollegiate Competitive Debate

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For decades, the forensics community has studied the participation and success rates for women and minorities within the arena of intercollegiate competitive debate. Figures for the Open Division remain disproportionately low given the level of successful participation by these groups within the Novice ranks. Women and minority competitors have expressed a perception of a positive bias within the judging pool towards competitors who reflect the dominant culture. They claim that this bias towards white male competitors degrades their ability to compete and engenders their lack of participation within the Open Division. The purpose of this study is to examine judges' perceptions of ability in eight key areas with regard to competitors' gender, race and debate division to measure bias within the dominant culture group that favors competitors who reflect similar dominant "in-group" identity and marginalizes the participation and success of competitors from subdominant "out-group" cultures. The study concludes that there is strong empirical evidence to support the presence of judging bias within the dominant culture.

In the Spring of 1995, a panel was presented at the National Pi Kappa Delta Development Conference entitled "Constructing the Deconstruction: Toward the Empowerment of Women and Minorities in Forensics." Both the panel and the resulting forum discussion were heavily attended by female and minority student competitors and coaches. However, the panel was poorly attended by the dominant cultural group within the forensics community -- that of the white male. Only two students, the respondent on the panel and the author found the time to participate. "Members of the panel and forum participants expressed concern over the lack of attendance by the very group they were hoping to communicate with. It was the consensus of the group that this apparent lack of concern for the multi-cultural issue was indicative of the problem" (Rogers, Constructing . . . Panel Resolutions, 100).

Many forensics professionals have argued against the marginalization of and for the deliberate inclusion of subdominant cultural groups (Crenshaw, 1993; Inch, 1994; Jensen, 1993,

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1994; Loge, 1991; Louge, 1987, 1991; Parson 1994; Rowland, 1993; Swanson 1994; Tuman, 1993; Vang, 1994). As a collective, we have endorsed the goal that "[A]s a community of forensics educators, we must dedicate ourselves to a pedagogy which provides significant educational opportunity without regard to the demographics of the participant" (Rogers, Interrogating the Myth, 21). Loge (1991) concludes "[I]f we are to educate all of our students to the best of our abilities, then the lack of cultural diversity in CEDA clearly is a problem -- one we ignore at our own peril" (83). Though none would argue against the goal of significant inclusiveness and its overall contribution to the pedagogy of a complete education, the participation and success rates for women and minorities within the ranks of CEDA debate remain relatively unchanged. The question is why?

In an attempt to examine that question and lay the foundation for this study, the author conducted interviews with a number of competitors, graduate assistants, coaches and directors of forensics. These informal interviews took place at tournaments and the participants were as representative of the demographic mix within the forensics community as the tournament entries would permit. During these "interviews," it was observed that participation rates for women and minorities had not significantly increased over past years. This "phenomenon" seemed persistent even though conscious efforts -- ranging from increased focus at developmental conferences and professional conventions, through the publication of a number of articles which specifically addressed the issue (Crenshaw, 1993; Inch, 1994; Jensen, 1993, 1994; Loge, 1991; Louge, 1987, 1991; Parson 1994; Rowland, 1993; Swanson 1994; Tuman, 1993; Vang, 1994), to the appointment of various study groups and investigative committees organized and supported by various national forensics offices -- continue to draw attention to the problem.

The question was then posed: why do you think that women and minorities are both less likely to participate and less likely to succeed in CEDA debate? The answers were enlightening. Members of the dominant cultural group within the forensics community -- that of white males -- most often expressed the opinion that the majority of women and minority competitors were deficient in the skills necessary for success within the Open Debate Division due to some cultural "flaw" linked to emotion, cognitive process and/or, specifically in the case of minorities, verbal ability. The fact that most of these respondents were representative of the judging pool at the subject tournaments was disturbing.

Subdominant cultural group members -- women and minorities -- expressed their perception that dominant cultural group members reflected a white male bias. As one respondent put it, "They look for and reward argumentation styles that mirror their perceptions of what good debate should be." A female graduate assistant, her frustration apparent, concluded, "They (men) just don't value what we have to say. If the argument isn't wearing pants, you might as well not make it."

When questioned with regard to this "bias scenario," members of the dominant cultural group responded with a resounding "Not True!" One director of forensics supported his position by saying, "Debate is debate. It is either good or it isn't. What I might think about the competitors has absolutely nothing to do with it."

After several weeks of interviews, it became obvious that both sides 1) held radically different perspectives with regard to the impact of gender and race on debate participation and success; and 2) were absolutely convinced that their perception was accurate. Is there a prevailing attitude among the dominant cultural group that favors competitors who reflect "in group" membership and marginalizes both the participation and success of members from subdominant cultures? The purpose of this study is to examine judges' perceptions of ability based upon gender, race and debate division to determine which side has the more accurate perception.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

An examination of the literature written specifically on the topic of forensic participation and success for women and minorities is reflective of the larger problem. There isn't a great deal of it and authorship in the area seems somewhat isolated to women and minorities. While this would seem logical given the current state of affairs, it does mirror at least the perception that debate participation for women and minorities is largely a subdominant concern. A cursory examination of the literature dedicated to the topic is summarized in the introduction.

One recurrent theme is the articulation of the subdominant groups' feelings of disenfranchisement from the debate community; particularly, within the Open Debate Division. Consider the statistics offered five years ago by Loge (1991) and Louge (1987, 1991) for minority involvement in CEDA debate. Both authors approximated up to forty percent involvement at the Novice level of competition. However, participation dropped to somewhere around ten percent for women and minorities as they became eligible for competition within the Open ranks. Have we made any progress? As part of this study, careful records were kept with regard to women and minority involvement in the seventeen tournaments discussed in the methodology section. The results are not encouraging:

Table 1
Participation Rates for Women & Minorities

	Novice Division	Open Division
Regional Competitive Draw (12)		
Women and/or minority involvement	43%	18%
Top 5 speakers	20%	10%
Elim round participation	51%	20%
Advanced beyond 1st out round	40%	14%
National Competitive Draw (5)		
Women and/or minority involvement	39%	14%
Top 5 speakers	17%	06%
Elim round participation	40%	12%
Advanced beyond 1st out round	26%	09%

Notes:
1 Table represents entries in Team CEDA only.
2 Aggregate figures of total possible in category (n=12 tournaments).
e.g. For those twelve tournaments with a regionally competitive draw, 43% of the competitors within the Novice Division were female and/or of minority status. Women and minorities represented 51% of the competitors advancing to the elimination rounds. Of those teams advancing beyond the first elim round, 40% of the competitors were female and/or of minority status. 20% were ranked within the Top 5 Speakers.

While the numbers for Novice participation are fairly representative of the demographics for the cultural groups represented, the numbers become almost negligible when the competitors are eligible for "promotion" into the Open Division. What is it about the nature of the activity that discourages successful female and minority competitors within the Novice ranks from entering competition at the Open level? A second consideration, reflected through Table 1, explains why seemingly successful, female and minority Novice competitors are less competitive when they enter competition in the Open Division. Is there a systemic barrier within the Open Division that makes women and minorities suddenly less competitive?

Of course this relatively small sampling should not be used to make sweeping generalizations with regard to trends of subdominant group participation nationwide; however, it is significant to note that in this case, there was a fifty to seventy-five percent drop in

subdominant group member participation and success when they became eligible to compete in the Open Division. How can we, as a forensics community account for this dramatic loss? More importantly, the logical reverse of this phenomenon would be an increase in success for white males as they move up into the Open Division. Have we, therefore, established an axiom(?): as white males become more competitive in debate women and minorities become less so.

Is it pessimism or realism that motivates this perception of a forensics community that increasingly reserves success for the dominant cultural group, and therefore, excludes, or at the very least discourages, the vast majority of participants who are not representative of that dominant culture group? In response to a question posed by Loge (1991), a student respondent wrote, "a persistent pattern of gender, racially, and ethnically dissimilar individuals as the only successful participants in an activity makes it hard for minority and nontraditional students to relate to . . . the activity" (83). Vang (1994) is even more emphatic in expressing this perception when she asks, "[I]s forensics an elite activity reserved for a dominant cultural group who are not interested in any adaptations and who wish only to understand, employ and teach their cultural approach to advocacy" (120)?

The forensics community advances the claim that debate improves the ability to think critically (Colbert, 1987; Huseman, Ware, & Guner, 1972); promotes better decisions (Freeley, 1993); enhances skills of analysis, problem solving and organizational proficiency (Wilbanks & Church, 1991); improves open-mindedness and objectivity (Sanders, 1984); and improves evaluation and decision-making skills (Pfau, Thomas & Ulrich, 1987). However, one only accrues the benefits through participation. Real or not, if subdominant cultural groups perceive of their contributions to the activity as unwanted, unwelcome and/or unsuccessful as they attempt to increase both their experience and commitment level, how can the forensic community expect significant levels of participation? Crenshaw (1993), Tuman (1993), Loge (1991), Louge (1987, 1991) and Rogers (1995a, 1995b) all advance the need for additional study.

Creshaw (1993) posits "[P]articipation issues should play a prominent role in our discussions of debate culture" (94). Jensen (1994) makes a compelling argument for inclusiveness when he writes, "[T]he ethic of diversity is essential if the forensics laboratory experience is to be worthwhile and legitimate" (109). If we recognize this need, what is the barrier?

There are a number of communication theories which might explain why the dominant cultural group becomes more successful over time while the subdominant cultural groups become less so. Every collegiate team's backfiles are full of cultural imperialism blocks. However, one theory that might be particularly useful was advanced by Irving Janis (1972, 1982). "Janis characterized groupthink as a closed process, where individuals are insulated from outside information, develop similar ways of thinking, focus on only a few options, disregard

contradictory information, ignore potential obstacles, and promote an illusion of unanimity" (Spangle & Knapp, 1996, 140). Janis argues that a group's deep involvement with and commitment to a cohesive in-group can produce a "good old boy" system that reinforces conformity. He refers to this tendency as groupthink. He sums up this tendency as he writes, "The more amiability and esprit de corps among members of a policy-making in-group, the greater is the danger that independent critical thinking will be replaced by groupthink, which is likely to result in irrational and dehumanizing actions directed against out-groups" (quoted in Griffin, 265).

While this theory was originally applied to small group communication and decision-making, it has become irresistible to make comparisons to the "good old boy" system that many believe often dominates the intercollegiate debate community. Janis advances, among others, three conditions necessary for groupthink to occur: 1) Out-group stereotypes - reflected in comments like "women and minorities are just too emotional. They can't control their emotions when they are placed under the stresses of a "hot," open round. Of course, this negative out-group stereotyping isn't restricted to women and minorities. Other groups like NDT, NPDA, APDA, NEDA and programs who devote their energies to the pursuit of excellence in individual events are often singled out for abuse; 2) Collective rationalism - a failure to question beliefs that we know or suspect are wrong because they flow counter to the group's beliefs; and 3) Direct pressure on dissenters - one has only to broach this subject on the CEDA-L or among a gathering of coaches at a tournament to attract all forms of verbal aggression which ranges from 'the problem doesn't exist' to 'who really cares anyway?'.

Another possible explanation might be found in the works of Cheris Kramarae (1981). Muted Group Theory maintains that language is literally a man-made construction that reflects male dominance and discounts female participation. When women try to overcome this inequality, the masculine control of communication -- in this case, the debate round -- places them at a tremendous disadvantage. Women are thus a muted group.

Female debaters complain that they are treated as overly emotional, apologetic, wishy-washy and/or "talked down to" by male competitors during the round, and male judges after the round or on the ballot. When they object to this treatment, they are told to "lighten up," or "not to be so bitchy." African Americans are often told not to be so "preachy," or to tell quite so many stories, or to work on their diction and grammar. While articulate speech and "good" grammar are certainly excellent communication goals, can we really justify a ballot on these grounds while ignoring the core of the argumentation offered within the round? "In effect," one discouraged minority competitor confided to the author, "we are being told to debate like white people do. Sometimes, there is a lot wrong with the way I talk, but there is nothing wrong with my brain." According to Kramerae (1981), this type of male dominance is just one of the many

ways that women and minorities are rendered inarticulate in our society. In these examples, the dominant cultural group within CEDA may serve as gatekeepers of the communication act redefining its intent, purpose and the rules for success; and thus, reinforce the concepts of Janis' groupthink process. In effect, the majority of the coaching/judging pool attempt to reinforce the dominant male model of debate by attending to and treating as significant only what fellow members of the dominant cultural group say or do.

One could debate the plausibility of alternative theories endlessly; however, one underpinning assumption would seem to be an "attitude of closed mindedness" on the part of the dominant cultural group to allow for the participation and success of members of the subdominant cultural group. It would seem that as the stakes and potential rewards for success are increased through promotion to the Open Division, the expectations -- even tolerance -- for women and minority competitors decrease. This "perception" is nothing new. It has been articulated by women and minorities within the forensics community for at least the past two decades.

The stumbling block to acceptance would seem to be that no one has attempted to provide empirical data to support or reject the perception of dominant cultural bias. Just as a first year competitor often leaps over the problem thesis and proceeds to formulate the plan because the need seems so obvious, the forensic community has failed to firmly establish that a bias exists. It would seem logical that for any proposed plan to be solvent, it would have to address the specific needs of the community based upon a thorough understanding of the problems the members face.

Three formal questions are advanced:

RQ1: Do debate critics of the dominant culture within forensics exhibit a positive bias towards competitors who claim similar group membership and a negative bias towards competitors of subdominant cultural groups?

RQ2: Is there a significant difference in behavioral bias for debate critics of subdominant group membership when compared to critics from the dominant cultural group? and;

RQ3: Is there a significant positive correlation between cultural identity and the perception of a competitor's level of competition and success?

METHODOLOGY

Subjects

The scope and focus of this research was to collect data from a sample reflective of the judging pool; in this case, specific to competitive intercollegiate debate. Statistical analysis

includes a search for correlations between the judges' perceptions of competitors' abilities in eight specific behavioral areas, based upon past performances within debate rounds and the competitors' sex, race and debate division. In order to qualify for inclusion, the subjects had to either 1) be involved in judging responsibilities at the tournament in question; or 2) have participated in judging responsibilities at intercollegiate tournaments within the past year.

A purposeful and deliberately inclusive sample was collected at seventeen tournaments. Eighty-four surveys were collected at twelve tournaments with a primarily regional competitive draw and five tournaments with a nationally competitive draw. Fifteen of those tournaments fell within the South Central and South East CEDA Regions. In order to address concerns over a regional bias, additional data was collected through a mailout directed towards the CEDA membership. Surveys were sent to 197 member programs across the United States. Two follow-up reminders were sent out via the internet at intervals of two weeks. The return rate was disappointing. Twenty-nine surveys were returned (14.7%). Of these, eleven were from the SE or SC CEDA regions.

While this may not reduce concerns toward the over generalization of results to the national forensics community (70.8% SC or SE region, n=80 surveys; 29.2% national, n=33 surveys) it is interesting to note the return rate for non face-to-face requests: 14 males (< 07% of those possible), 12 females (> 80% of those possible), and 3 ethnic minorities (> 75% of those possible) returned surveys. Two observations seem obvious: 1) the return rate reflects the dominance of white males within the judging pool; and 2) the lack of participation by white males within the sample, reflected by a less than seven percent return rate, may be indicative of a perception on their part that this is not a serious issue.

Total n for the survey is 113 (80 males; 24 females; and 9 ethnic minorities). The majority of female and minority participants were on the graduate assistant/assistant coach level. In addition to the relevant items discussed below, respondents were asked to provide relevant demographic information in five areas: 1) sex; 2) ethnic identification; 3) current professional level (e.g. Director of Forensics, Assistant Coach, Graduate Assistant) 4) highest degree held; and 5) years of coaching/judging experience.[1]

[1] For informational purposes, the totals for the areas: Sex (Area 1) and ethnic identification (Area 2) breakdowns are given in the text. Area 3, current professional level: Director of Forensics - Males (n=41), Females/Ethnic Minorities (9), Assistant Coach/Faculty - Males (13), Females/Ethnic Minorities (5), Graduate Assistant - Males (20), Females/Ethnic Minorities (25). Area 4, highest degree held: Ph.D./J.D. (n=13), ABD (7), MA/MS/MFA (32), BA working on Masters (61); and Area 5) years of coaching/judging experience: aggregate mean = 3.6 years.

Instrument

An eighty item survey was developed to tap judges' perceptions towards successful behaviors within debate rounds and five groups: males, females, ethnic minorities, open and novice debaters. Judging perceptions were surveyed in eight behavioral topoi using a 5 point Likert scale (1=strongly agree; 2=agree; 3=neither agree nor disagree; 4=disagree; 5=strongly disagree). Each topoi was represented by two questions specific to the target demographic subgrouping (total of 16 questions for each subgrouping x 5 subgroups ='s 80 items).

To address issues of consistency between individual participant's perceptions, statements were both positively and negatively worded and presented in random order. No problems in consistency were noted or reported. For ease of interpretation and clarity, scores on the negatively worded statements were inverted and added to the raw scores of the positively worded statements which yielded 8 dedicated pairs for each subgrouping. The scores were then revalued (strongly agree = +2; agree = +1; neither agree nor disagree = 0; disagree = -1; strongly disagree = -2). Thus, the higher the positive score, the greater the positive perception reflected between the positive behavior and the competitor subgroup. Negative scores would reflect a perception of negative behavior and the subgroup.

The eight behavioral topoi were:

1. The ability of the target group to organize their thoughts under pressure;
2. The tendency of the target group to take arguments personally and become offended;
3. The ability of the target group to track arguments correctly;
4. The tendency for the target group to become easily rattled during CX and respond aggressively;
5. The tendency to both use more evidence and use it more effectively;
6. The tendency to argue generalities rather than specifics;
7. The ability to control one's emotions under pressure;
8. The ability to argue logically.

The criteria for selection of the eight behavioral topoi were formulated through the frequency of their emergence as either 1) their identification among judging pools as areas critical to a debater's success regardless of demographic membership (critics from both the dominant and subdominant cultures were included) and 2) ballot content analysis. No claim is made that these eight topoi represent an exhaustive list. However, they are representative of those behaviors which are most often cited by judges as critical to a debater's success.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Statistical Analysis

After collection, compilation and recoding of the data set, the first level of statistical analysis was to address the questions of internal consistency and validity. The underpinning assumption of this research was that the demographic groupings (male, female, minority, open and novice) would emerge as independent factors each accounting for their own unique piece of the variance. Obviously, if they did not emerge as independent factors, the conclusion could be made that critics perceive no differences between groupings based upon observable demographic differences and/or knowledge of debate division; and therefore, the research questions could be answered with a resounding NO! This first level of analysis was conducted in two steps:

Step 1) The data set was subjected to a principle components factor analysis to derive eigenvalues. Any factor with an eigenvalue of greater than one was retained as an independent factor by the MINEIGEN program. The amount of variance explained by each factor can be estimated by a relative comparison of the eigenvalues in Table 1. In this case, all of the eigenvalues are relatively high (EV > 1.0). The MINEIGEN method retains all factors above the inclusion criteria and then attempts a five-factor solution using principle components analysis. In this case, all five "groupings" were retained as independent factors each accounting for a portion of the variance and would seem to confirm that a five-factor structure is most descriptive of the data set. The eigenvalues and proportion of variance by factor are reported below:

Table 2
Eigenvalues and Proportion of Variance for Factors

	Factor 1 Males	Factor 2 Females	Factor 3 Minorities	Factor 4 Open	Factor 5 Novice
Eigenvalues	4.776	4.981	3.438	2.817	2.509
Proportion	0.381	0.349	0.199	0.125	0.113
Cumulative	0.561	0.656	0.797	0.853	0.947

5 independent factors retained (EV > 1.0)
Proportion reflects variance accounted for by that factor solution.

Step 2) After eigenvalues were derived, the five-factor solution was confirmed by using orthogonal factor analysis with varimax rotation and then subjecting those factors to ordinary

least squares confirmatory factor analysis as described in the work of Hunter and Cohen (1969). Again, all five factors were retained as independent variables. Each factor or demographic subgrouping emerged as independently accounting for variance within the data set. In summary, the first level of analysis would seem to confirm that the critics within the data set perceived observable differences between the target populations based upon the demographic subgroupings.

The second level of analysis was conducted to address concerns that some of the eight behavioral topoi might be expressed in interdependent relationships. Is there a marked difference, for example, between perceptions of thinking logically and the ability to organize; or, controlling one's emotions and taking arguments personally?

To answer this concern, the data set was subjected to a principle components factor analysis using oblique rotations with the behavioral topoi advanced as the factors. An attempt to force a five-factor solution through the computer program was advanced. An analysis of Table 3 strongly confirms a two-factor structure expressing interdependence among two independent sets of survey items (set 1 - statements 1, 3, 5, 6, and 8 expressed interdependence; and set 2 - statements 2, 4 and 7 expressed interdependence).[2] Set 1 was renamed "Logic." Set 2 was renamed "Emotion." In other words, for the critics who made up this data set, there was a strong perception that statements within the *Logic* topoi expressed strongly similar behaviors. Additionally, statements within the *Emotion* topoi also expressed strongly similar behaviors. It is interesting to note that the pattern of the factor loadings would also seem to indicate that the behavioral topoi *Logic* and *Emotion* were perceived by the critics as expressing dissimilar behaviors. The final rotated factor pattern is reported in Table 3.

[2]As a final control measure, the data was subjected to further factor analysis using promax rotation, procrustean transformation, and the maximum likelihood method. No significant differences were found.

Table 3
Principle Components Factor Analysis for Behavioral Topoi

	Rotated Factor Pattern				
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
Behavioral Topoi:					
1. Ability to Organize	+0.891	-0.313	-0.101	+0.009	+0.011
2. Take Arguments Personally	-0.182	+0.613	+0.087	-0.035	-0.046
3. Ability to Track Arguments	+0.773	-0.235	-0.113	+0.091	-0.011
4. Respond to CX Aggressively	-0.216	+0.501	+0.270	-0.109	+0.231
5. Ability to Use Evidence	+0.818	-0.226	-0.313	-0.116	+0.014
6. General or Specific Arguments	+0.711	-0.334	+0.120	+0.112	-0.132
7. Ability to Control Emotions	-0.327	+0.717	-0.209	-0.090	+0.137
8. Ability to Use Logic	+0.733	-0.271	+0.129	+0.169	+0.007

All factor loadings above .35 are considered significant and meet the inclusion criteria and are expressed in bold type.

In summary, the first two levels of statistical analysis directed towards issues of internal consistency and validity confirmed that critics within the survey population held differing perceptions of competitors' behaviors within the topoi of *Logic* and *Emotion* based upon observable demographic subgroupings. It is important to understand that the confirmation of these observations was an a priori issue. Competitors from the subdominant cultural group (women and ethnic minorities) have advanced the assertion that there is a judging bias both among and towards the dominant culture. However, *if* the demographic subgroupings had not emerged as independent factors, the only viable conclusion would be that critics, regardless of cultural membership, perceive no differences between debaters based upon gender, race or debate division; and therefore, the research questions -- and the assertions of the subdominant competitors -- could not be supported. In this case, independence of variables was strongly confirmed. That confirmation of perceived behavioral differences based upon observable demographic characteristics demonstrated a compelling need for a more thorough investigation of the assertions of the cultural minorities via the research questions.

Since it can be advanced, from the first two levels of analysis, that the survey population perceives behavioral differences among debaters in the *Logic* and *Emotion* topoi linked to observable demographic characteristics, then the logical extensions of the research would be; 1) are those differences linked to the cultural identity of the critic(?); and, more

importantly, 2) If that link can be established, are those differences statistically significant? Even if one could document the presence of cultural bias, if it is not statistically significant, then it would be difficult to support the sweeping impacts on competitive debate claimed by subdominant cultures.

To answer these questions, the data was divided into two sets. Set 1 consisted of all participants from the dominant cultural group (white males). Members of the subdominant cultural group (women and ethnic minorities) were grouped as Set 2. Once divided into *Dominant* and *Subdominant*, the scores across the topoi of *Logic* and *Emotion* were averaged and compared using paired t tests, which is similar to a one-sample t test on differences (H: d=o v Ha=O). The higher the number of comparisons made, the greater the risk of a Type I error. To protect the integrity of the process, Bonferroni's approach to multiple comparisons was used (.05 divided by 2 times the number of comparisons (113) = Prob > |T| = .0002). As a result, any comparison where $p < .0002$ was considered statistically significant. The results are reported in

Table 4
Response Comparisons for Statistical Significance

	Competitor Demographic Subgroupings:				
	Males	Females	Minorities	Open	Novice
Critics Cultural Identity					
Dominant					
Emotion	+1.413	-0.813	-1.315	+1.518	-1.147
Prob > |T|	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001
Logic	+1.481	-0.717	-1.491	+1.439	-1.383
Prob > |T|	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001
Subdominant					
Emotion	+1.411	+1.388	+1.071	+1.402	+0.678
Prob > |T|	all > 0.0002				
Logic	+1.311	+1.287	+1.172	+1.237	+0.564
Prob > |T|	all > 0.0002				

All values represent means. Positive values = positive regard. Negative values = negative perceptions.

While Table 4 does not report correlated relationships, but simply significant differences in the way critics from the dominant and subdominant cultural groups responded to the statements, the obvious dichotomy in perception is interesting. Dominant critics "see" significant differences. They reported positive perceptions of the subgrouping *Males* in both the *Logic* and *Emotion* behavioral topoi, while they expressed negative perceptions for *Females* and *Minorities* in both categories. In sum, there was a perception among dominant critics that competitors, who reflected in-group membership, thought logically and controlled their emotions, while those who reflected out-group membership were less able to do so. Interestingly enough, dominant critics also expressed similar perceptions for the *Open* and *Novice* subgroupings. For dominant critics, behavioral perceptions were divided into two groups: 1) *Male/Open* , and 2) *Female/Minority/Novice.*

Subdominant critics "see" similarities. Though slightly different from subgroup to subgroup, not a single comparison was statistically significant. Subdominant critics perceived of male debaters as being slightly more logical in their thinking and somewhat better at controlling their emotions than either female or minority debaters, but not significantly so. They also reported behavioral differences between open and novice debaters. An isolated comparison of the *Open* to *Novice* topoi yielded weak significance ($p < 0.0002$). For subdominant critics, a debater's ability to think logically and control their emotions was not a function of cultural identity, but was more likely a function of competitive level.

This perceptual difference between critic subgrouping is easier to understand in a graphic representation. To assemble Tables 5 and 6, the data set was separated into the subgroupings of Male and Female/Ethnic Minority Critics. The scores on negatively worded statements were given inverse values, added to the raw scores for the positively worded statements and then averaged across the eight behavioral topoi for each of the five demographic subgroupings. The sophistication of the graphing program was somewhat limiting; thus, placement of the averaged scores on the graph are not exact and do not account for subtle differences beyond two decimal places. Table 5 and 6 reflect the graphic representation of the perceptual differences between dominant and subdominant critics within the sample.

Table 5
Male Critic Perceptions of Participant Behavior

	Raw Score	Behavioral Topoi: Logic	Org	Emo	Track	Ev	G/S	Pers	CX	
Strongly Agree	5									
	4.5				O					M = Male
			O		M					O = Open
Agree	4	O	M	MO		O	O	MO	MO	
		M					M			
	3.5					M				POSITIVE PERCEPTIONS
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	3									
			FN		F	F	F			NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS
	2.5	F	E		N	N		F		
		EN		FN	E	E	N	N	N	
Disagree	2			E			E	E	F	N = Novice
										F = Female
	1.5								E	E = Ethnic Minority
Strongly Disagree	1									

Behavioral Topoi
- Logic = Ability to argue logically;
- Org = Ability to organize thoughts under pressure;
- Emo = Ability to control emotions under pressure;
- Track = Ability to track arguments;
- Ev = use more evidence and uses it effectively;
- G/S = argues specific issues rather than generalities;
- Pers = takes arguments personally and becomes offended;
- CX = easily rattled during CX and responds aggressively.

Table 6
Female/Ethnic Minority Critic Perceptions of Participant Behavior

	Raw Score	Behavioral Topoi Logic	Org	Emo	Track	Ev	G/S	Pers	CX	
Strongly Agree	5									
		O	O		M	F				
	4.5				FO	MO	MF	MF	O	M = Male
		F	M	O	E		EO	EO	MF	O = Open
Agree	4	M	FE	M		E			EN	
		E		EFN	N	N		N		
	3.5	N	N							POSITIVE
							N			PERCEPTIONS
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	3	----------								NEGATIVE
	2.5									
Disagree	2									N = Novice
										F = Female
	1.5									E = Ethnic Minority
Strongly Disagree	1									

Once it was determined that critics perceived differences in behavior and that those perceptions were significantly different from one another, the final step in the statistical process was to analyze those significant differences for the relative strength of the correlations. The scores for each subgrouping expressed by Male Critics were averaged across the *Logic* and *Emotion* Topoi. *Pearson's r* correlational formula was used to derive coefficients. The results reported in Table 7 demonstrate a strong positive correlation between male critics perceptions of male and open debaters and their ability to exhibit positive behaviors in both the *Logic* and *Emotion* Topoi. Conversely, male critics perceptions of female, minority and novice debaters demonstrate strong inverse correlations between their ability to exhibit positive behaviors and the *Logic* and *Emotion* Topoi.

Table 7
Correlation Coefficients for Male Critics

	Subgroupings Males	Women	Minorities	Open	Novice
Logic	+0.613	-0.132	-0.397	+0.513	-0.347
Emotion	+0.713	-0.417	-0.491	+0.719	-0.383

Pearson Correlation Coefficients /prob>|R| under Ho: Rho=0/N=80
positive scores reflect positive regard/expectations of behavior.

As a final comparison, the scores for each subgrouping expressed by Female/Ethnic Minority Critics were averaged across the *Logic* and *Emotion* Topoi. The results reported in Table 8 demonstrate moderately positive correlations between female/minority critics perceptions of all participant subgroupings and their ability to exhibit positive behaviors in both the *Logic* and *Emotion* Topoi. For female/minority critics the behavioral expectations/ perceptions of all debaters, regardless of demographic subgrouping, were positively correlated with positive regard.

Table 8
Correlation Coefficients for Female/Ethnic Minority Critics

	Subgroupings Males	Women	Minorities	Open	Novice
Logic	+0.317	+0.298	+0.247	+0.409	+0.276
Emotion	+0.341	+0.301	+0.276	+0.453	+0.202

Pearson Correlation Coefficients /prob>|R| under Ho: Rho=0/N=33
positive scores reflect positive regard/expectations of behavior.

CONCLUSIONS

The impacts of this research should be painfully obvious to even the most casual of observers. While some limitations in sample representativeness and size were noted and reasonable caution is advised when making generalizations to the forensics community at large, the analysis of the data set remains both rigorous and conclusive. The presence of male critic bias within intercollegiate competitive debate can no longer be ignored.

The first research question addressed the perception that critics representing the dominant culture within forensics exhibit a positive bias towards competitors who claim similar dominant group membership and a negative bias towards competitors of subdominant cultural groups. The data reported a strong positive bias on the part of white, male critics towards what they perceive of as positive behavior exhibited by white, male competitors. This bias is further supported by a strong correlation between male competitors' behavior and the positive behaviors associated with competition at the Open level. Conversely, male critics have a much more negative view of competitors who are female and/or reflect ethnic minority status. Further, they extend this negative view downward to Novice competitors. For male critics, male competitors exhibited the positive abilities and behaviors of Open debaters, while female and minority competitors reflected the negative abilities and behaviors of Novice debaters.

The implications for women and minority participants competing in the Open Division against white males with a white male critic signing the ballot are bleak, at best. This finding offers a strong insight into the lack of participation by women and minorities in the Open Division. It also might explain why very successful female and minority competitors suddenly become less so when they graduate to the Open ranks. Janis and other dominant culture theorists would have a field day.

The second research question investigated the possibility of any significant differences in behavioral bias for critics of subdominant group membership when compared to critics from the dominant cultural group. The differences in perceptions and expectations between critic subgroupings were profound. First, while women and minority critics "see" some differences between the abilities and behaviors of in-group and out-group competitors and between the Open and Novice division, those differences are not significant. Second, unlike their male peers, positive perception and/or regard are extended to debaters as a group regardless of cultural identity or level of competition. For female and minority critics, competitors are viewed with positive expectations and appear to be assessed on a more individual basis. Some caution is suggested in extending these findings to all female and minority critics within the pool at large due to the relatively small sample (n=33). However, while this number may appear small in terms of statistical significance, it is reflective of a much larger problem: the lack of women and

minorities within the coaching community. Given the relatively small number of women and minorities in the coaching ranks, the odds of drawing one as a judge are modest. This "situation" would seem to reinforce the impact of the male bias previously noted. If Team A, entered in the Open Division, is comprised of two white males, the odds are that they will draw a majority of white male critics. How many ballots are actually impacted is open to speculation; however, given both the presence and relative strength of that bias, it would seem obvious that Team A has better than even odds over Team B given female or minority status on Team B. Again, these findings might offer insight into the low participation and success rates for women and minorities in the Open Division.

The third research question asked us to measure the presence of significant positive correlations between cultural identity and the perception of a competitor's level of competition and success. The findings were mixed. Male critics separated competitors into two groups: Male/Open and Female/Minority/Novice. A strong correlation between positive expectation/regard in both Logic and Emotion was reported for Males and Open Division debaters. The opposite was true for male critics expectations/regard for females, minority and Novice debaters. No significant correlations were reported for female and minority critics in terms of differences. Positive expectations were extended regardless of cultural identity.

The association between the critics' perceptions and subsequent success becomes clearer when we note that the eight behavioral topoi tested were derived from a list of those behaviors and/or abilities most needed by debaters for success as advanced by the coaching community surveyed. If male critics identify eight areas as essential to success in competitive debate, and regard members of the Male/Open culture as being strong (positive) in these areas, while they regard Female/Minority/Novice competitors as being weak (negative) in those same areas, the bias becomes predictively linked to outcomes within the Open Division of competitive debate. A prediction that is further solidified by the participation and success rates reported in Table 1.

In conclusion, women and minority competitors have expressed a perception of a positive bias within the judging pool towards competitors who reflect the dominant culture. Their claim, that this bias towards white male competitors degrades their ability to successfully compete and engenders their lack of participation within the Open Division, can no longer be ignored by responsible members of the forensics community. If we, as a community of professionals dedicated to the pedagogy of competitive debate, wish to reverse this systemic injustice, the first step is clear -- accept that it exists and dedicate ourselves to reversing the trend.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this study suggest four recommendations to begin the process of reversing systemic injustice:

1) Additional research must be conducted to assess the validity of the findings reported here on a community-wide basis. The extent -- and therefore impact -- of the bias is directly tied to our ability to generalize the findings to the larger population. This sample represents less than thirty-five percent of the active coaches in CEDA. With the merger of CEDA and NDT and the recent rise of other forms of competitive debate such as; NPDA, APDA, NFA LD, NEDA and ADA, additional research to identify critic bias is essential.

2) In a pragmatic sense, every effort must be made to encourage tournament directors to use critics from the subdominant cultural group in the Open Rounds. There seems to be a tendency to relegate women and minority judges to Novice and LD. Perhaps, this is because they are more often represented at the Graduate Assistant/Assistant Coach level than as DOFs and we are inadvertently "bowing" to greater experience. However, panels could be balanced to insure female and minority participation.

3) We must do more as a community than continue to appoint committees to study the problem. It is our responsibility to actively encourage women and minorities to make long-term career choices that insure their participation in forensics. Additionally, we must continue to encourage women and minorities to participate in the Open Divisions.

4) We must educate and police ourselves. Bias is ignorance. Ignorance subverts the very reason for our programs. To counter this, we must encourage organizations on a national level to provide panels and workshops on multicultural argumentation sensitivity. Often, women and minorities use different strategies to create, package and deliver persuasive discourse. Different should not, by definition, equate to a loss in the competitive debate forum.

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Policy Debate as Fiction: In Defense of Utopian Fiat

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The fact of the matter is that in talking about an artificial construct such as debate no language has a prior claim on validity. Indeed, the construct itself is to a very considerable degree actually created by the language. Debate is what we say it is; it is shaped and designated by us out of the terms and syntax of the idiom we are accustomed to apply to it. . . . No single language can exhaust its possibilities.
Douglas Ehninger (29-30)

For decades, intercollegiate debate has been driven by the metaphors used to describe and constrain the discursive and inventional practices of debaters. Despite experiments with social-scientific hypothesis testing (Zarefsky) and public forum (e.g., Weiss) metaphors, the dominant "generating metaphor" (Rowland 191) for understanding intercollegiate policy debate has emphasized the pragmatics of making public policy. Before the authors of this paper were born and to the present day, judges and debaters have been encouraged to treat debate as an exercise in crafting policy, with judges acting like a composite audience of those making decisions in the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal and/or state governments. By the 1970s, the development of the idea of "fiat" and counterplan theory (e.g., see Freeley, "Fiat"; Lichtman and Rohrer) led many members of the debate community to increasingly sophisticated analyses of affirmative plans and negative counterplans, with some community members imagining that what they did was a specialized version of the work done in university departments of public policy and management.

Obviously, the metaphors that have been central to the development of academic debate in recent years are not the only possible metaphors that might have influenced such development in the past or might guide such development in the future. If, using the well-known example of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, one conceived of argument as a kind of interpretive dance, "good" debate might look very different to the intercollegiate debate community, perhaps with the adversarial character of debate relegated to a secondary role or eliminated altogether. There is nothing wrong with metaphor as a guiding force in academic debate or in public discourse. Scholars like Lakoff and Johnson contend that we "live by" such metaphors, since we cannot

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