

JUDGING ATTITUDES AND PARADIGMATIC PREFERENCES IN CEDA DEBATE:  
A CUMULATIVE AND CONSTRUCT VALIDITY INVESTIGATION

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Certainly an important variable in the conduct of the CEDA activity is the critic-judge. These individuals are the final arbiters of the debate round, the primary audience the participants are persuading to their point of view.

A sizable amount of journal space has been devoted to describing, justifying and, in some cases, belittling paradigmatic frameworks through which to view policy debate rounds.<sup>1</sup> Surprisingly, though, minimal research exists that attempts to perform a similar function in CEDA, our systematic understanding of the CEDA critic is embryonic at best. Norton's early examination of critics' judging criteria is a useful starting point, but it fails to isolate key issues that theoretically or practically define or differentiate the paradigms.<sup>2</sup> Sweet's description and analysis of judging paradigms reveals interesting criteria for evaluating the worth of paradigms, but does not attempt to assess the actual practice of CEDA critics except by reference to Norton's work.<sup>3</sup> Buckley's useful study identifies predominant CEDA paradigms, components of judging standards, and critical decision-making factors. However, it does not link the latter two factors to the internal validity of the paradigm per se, nor attempt to determine judges' attitudes toward controversial procedural or theoretic issues generally or within the context of specific paradigmatic preferences - needs Buckley himself acknowledges in his call for future research.<sup>4</sup> Given the recognition that debate is an activity in which practice often precedes theory, and that critical scrutiny of that practice by judges serves as a litmus test of intersubjectivity for theoretic advances, the unearthing of critical stances and preferences may serve as a useful guide for coach and competitor alike.

Our motives for conducting this survey were varied. Initially, we wished to discover general responses of the CEDA community to a variety of theoretic and pragmatic issues. Next, we wished to ascertain dominant paradigmatic frameworks of CEDA critics. Third, we sought to uncover systematic differences between critics' responses to the questionnaire based on their paradigmatic preference. That is, critics from varying judging frameworks should respond differently to certain issues that mark fundamental theoretic and pragmatic differences in the paradigms themselves. In short, we hoped to derive a

preliminary estimate of the construct validity of the stated paradigms, a concern voiced in previous research of judging frameworks.<sup>3</sup>

#### Sample

Survey respondents were drawn from the judging pool at the University of Nevada-Reno Great Western Tournament held in April, 1985. This tournament was chosen for the size and geographic diversity of the judging pool. Surveys were distributed with Round I ballots and return to tournament headquarters or by mail. Thirty-five of eighty were returned for a response rate of 44%. The demographic breakdown of the samples is found in Table I. The paradigm descriptions are reproduced in Table II, followed by their frequency breakdown.

#### Questionnaire

The questionnaire contained demographic items and descriptions of the hypothesis-tester, argumentative skills, and tabula rasa paradigms, from which critics were asked to check their preference(s). An "other" category was also included for critics to offer alternative positions. The questionnaire consisted of twenty-nine, seven-space semantic differential-type statements (1 = strongly agree; 7 = strongly disagree). The statements concerned: (1) the nature of the resolution in value debate; (2) policy implications in CEDA; (3) example analysis; (4) nature of presumption in CEDA; (5) debating CEDA theory in debate rounds; (6) speed of delivery in rounds; (7) topicality; (8) extra-topicality; (9) use of debate coaches as evidence sources in the debate round; and (10) methods of defining terms in CEDA. The specific items are reproduced in Table III.

#### Results

As previously stated, the goals of the survey were to report responses from the CEDA community in general on a variety of thematic and pragmatic issues, and obtain a response breakdown to the survey items by critics of varying paradigmatic preferences. The section below reports both matters. Two items were excluded from analysis due to typographical errors and/or syntactic ambiguities that rendered the responses problematic (See Table III).

The construct validity of the varying paradigms was another concern of this investigation. The procedure employed to assess construct validity was a stepwise multiple discriminant analysis.<sup>4</sup> This statistic allows assessment of the degree to which critics' responses to questions reliably predict their membership in a particular paradigmatic category. The summary table (Table IV) provides the key discriminating statements in the order which they entered the equation, reports the standardized weightings on the two discriminant functions, and supplies the relevant information on the total discriminating

power of the predictor variables. Because three of the four subjects in the hypothesis-testing paradigms had missing values on the discriminating variables, the hypothesis-testing group was excluded from the analysis.

The classification table (Table V) reports the degree to which the critics' responses successfully predicted membership in their stated paradigm. Although the number of critics in each paradigm vary, the probability of membership in each category was set at .33; for the subject to be correctly classified, substantial response differences to the items by paradigm preference should be noted.

Taken as a whole, the discriminant analysis reveals strong support for the construct validity of the stated paradigmatic preferences. That is, substantial and consistent differences in theoretic and practical issues emerged in the study, revealed by the high percentage of correct classifications (87.5%) and the extremely high effect size of the discriminant functions ( $\eta^2 = .829$ ).

The two discriminant functions are not unlike factors in a factor analysis — they reveal distinct dimensions of judgment. The first dimension reflects a pragmatic "debatability" function regarding the roles of the resolution, policy implications, and CEDA theory argumentation. As illustrated in Table III, *tabula rasa* judges strongly believe that debate over the role of the resolution is important, whereas argument skills and hypothesis-tester argument skills critics members are widely split on the issue, with mean values approaching neutral. The debatability of policy implications is divided in a similar fashion to the previous question. *Tabula rasa* judges strongly endorse discussion of policy questions in the round. However, argument skills and hypo/arg critics tend to remain neutral on the inclusion of policy questions in the debate round. In response to the question of debating CEDA theory in rounds, the *tabula rasa* critics rejected the notion that discussion of theoretic issues should be limited to journals and conventions. Hypo/arg and argument skills judges tend to agree more with this idea, preferring a greater focus on the substantive areas of the resolution.

The second dimension reflects varying theoretic perspectives on the resolution as a statement of probable truth and the legitimacy of policy implications in CEDA. As expected, hypo/arg critics endorsed the resolution as a statement of probable truth. *Tabula rasa* judges registered slight approval, while argument skills critics basically rejected the "probable truth" notion. On the question of the possibility of policy issues in value debate, hypo/arg critics strongly endorsed the discussion of policy issues, with fairly strong

support from the tabula rasa judges. Argument skills judges, as a group, are less favorable toward policy implications in value debate rounds.

### Discussion

Overall, we feel that the cumulative results of the survey are a representative sample of the CEDA community at large. The individual reader is left to interpret the cumulative results; however, we found some responses particularly interesting. Generally, CEDA critics find both the role/function of the resolution and the locus of presumption to be best determined by the debaters, rather than preassigned or predetermined. The debating of CEDA theory is seen as a legitimate utilization of time and effort in the debate round, with debate coaches and their published views seen as acceptable, if not preferred, sources of information on these matters. Topicality, for most critics, is an absolute voting issue. Finally, absolute rate of speech seems less a concern to most critics than clarity of speech. Generally, there appears very strong support for the construct validity of the paradigms, although small n sizes, particularly in the hypothesis-testing paradigm, necessitates some caution in overgeneralizing the findings. The seemingly high construct validity of the paradigms, however, does not indicate that, in a given debate round, the critic will adjudicate in a manner consistent with his or her preferred framework. One method of beginning to assess the predictive validity of the paradigms is to design debate situations that may reflect systematic differences in judgments based on paradigmatic preference (e.g., Cross and Matlon). Another method may be a content analysis of the ballots of critics of identified paradigmatic preferences to assess the degree to which reasons for decision and other salient comments reflect or represent their stated critical framework. These two projects reflect, we believe, natural and systematic extensions of the present survey, and may yield significant insight into the logical systems of critical judgments in CEDA debate.

ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>See, for example, "Special Forum: Debate Paradigms," Journal of American Forensic Association, 18 (1982), 133-160, and John D. Cross and Ronald J. Matlon, "An Analysis of Judging Philosophies in Academic Debate," Journal of American Forensic Association, 15 (1978), 110-123.

<sup>2</sup>Norton, Robert K., "Empirical Evidence on the Judging Criteria in use in the Cross-Examination Debate Association," The Forensic, 66 (1981), 10-14.

<sup>3</sup>Sweet, Tammy, "Debate Paradigms: An Analysis as They Apply to CEDA Debate," The Forensic, 68 (1983), 14-23.

<sup>4</sup>Buckley, David C., "A Comparison of Judging Paradigms," in David Zarefsky, Malcolm O. Sillar's and Jack Rhodes, eds. Argumentation in Transition: Proceedings of the Third Summer Conference on Argumentation. Washington, D.C.: Speech Communication Association, 1983.

<sup>5</sup>Cross and Matlon.

<sup>6</sup>Tatsuoka, Maurice M. Selected Topics in Advanced Statistics: An Elementary Approach. Number 6. Discriminant Analysis: The Study of Group Differences. Champaign, IL: Institute for Personality and Ability Testing, 1970. Note: Initially, all variables were included in the discriminant analysis as potential discriminators, yielding 96% correct classifications and explaining 99% of the variability among the groups. However, such blanket inclusion with the current sample size violated the dictum that "the total sample size should be at least two . . . times the number of the variables used (Tatsuoka, 38). Accordingly, this analysis was used merely to select the variables that correlated, or "loaded" on the two most powerful discriminant functions (which eventually accounted for 82.9% of the group variability). This procedure yielded a total of ten potential discriminating variables, which was an acceptable number of variables given the sample size. Potential discriminating variables not entering the final equation were:

- (1) non-topicality is an important voting issue
- (2) extra-topicality is an important voting issue
- (3) non-topicality is decided by the arguments in the specific round
- (4) extra-topicality is decided by the arguments in the specific round
- (5) coaches are appropriate evidence sources

This does not mean that these variables were unimportant; rather, that the additional or unique discriminating power they added to the equation was slight, suggesting that they were highly correlated with variables already in the equation.

TABLE I  
Demographic Breakdown of Sample

CEDA DISTRICT	N	POSITION	N	YEARS JUDGED
Northeast	4	Forensic Director	21	$\bar{x} = 9.85$
Southeast	3	Asst. Director	1	
East Central	2	Graduate Student	9	$\bar{o} = 7.20$
North Central	2	Hired or Guest	1	
South Central	5		35	
Rocky Mountain	3			
Northwest	3			
Southwest	13			
	35			

TABLE II  
Paradigmatic Preferences of Sample

PARADIGMATIC PREFERENCES:

Please check the judging paradigm the most closely represents your view of the critic's guidelines in CEDA debate.

	N	Freq. Pct.
<b>HYPOTHESIS TESTING PARADIGM:</b> (From Cross & Matlon) "According to Zarefsky, a judge with this philosophy views his or her role as that of the intelligent citizen (similar to the role of the scientist) trying to determine the probable truth value of a proposition being debated. The question this judge must answer at the end of each debate is as follows: Should I commit myself to the proposition, or should I remain with that which is not the proposition?"	4	11.4
<b>EVALUATOR OF ARGUMENT SKILLS PARADIGM:</b> My decision is based on which team is superior in analysis, evidence, and delivery. The team that relies on a persuasive speaking style, augmented with sufficient evidence and proper analysis will probably receive my ballot.	8	22.9
<b>TABULA RASA PARADIGM:</b> (From Cross & Matlon) "This judge views him or herself as being totally open to any theory about how debates should be judged. The 'tabula rasa' judge allows the debater to decide the theoretical framework from which the debate will be evaluated. The judge listens to all arguments in the debate and decides the issues of evidence or analysis in each instance."	16	45.7
<b>HYPOTHESIS TESTER—ARGUMENT SKILLS</b> (both checked)	4	11.4
<b>HYPOTHESIS TESTER—TABULA RASA</b> (both checked)	1	2.9
<b>OTHER</b> (e.g., "game theory")	2	5.7
	35	100.0

TABLE III  
Cumulative and Paradigmatic Responses to Survey Items

STATEMENT	MEAS	HYPO	ARG	RASA	H/ARG	H/RASA	OTHER	TOTAL
<b>I-A</b>								
The resolution functions as a "guide" for discussion, to set parameters, affirmative and negative ground, etc.	mean	3.00	2.71	3.13	2.67	2.00	1.50	2.84
	S.D.	1.83	1.80	2.10	1.53	0	.71	1.82
	N	4	7	15	3	1	2	32
<b>I-B</b>								
The resolution operates as a statement of probable truth, to be tested during the debate.	mean	3.0	4.67	3.07	2.33	2.00	5.50	3.42
	S.D.	1.41	1.37	1.22	1.15	0	2.12	1.52
	N	4	6	15	3	1	2	31
<b>I-C</b>								
The debaters should properly determine through argument the specific nature of the resolution.	mean	3.33	3.29	1.63	4.00	1.00	1.50	2.39
	S.D.	2.52	2.06	1.63	2.58	0	.71	2.02
	N	2	7	16	4	1	2	33
<b>II-A</b>								
Depending on the topic, I see a strong possibility of policy implications (with attendant policy questions, e.g., inherency, solvency, disadvantages, etc.) in a CEDA round.	mean	3.25	3.38	2.19	1.50	2.00	1.50	2.46
	S.D.	2.50	3.02	1.64	.58	0	.71	2.03
	N	4	8	16	4	1	2	35
<b>II-B</b>								
Value debate and policy debate are who separate forms. Policy implications don't belong in a CEDA round.	mean	6.50	3.67	6.00	3.33	6.00	6.50	5.39
	S.D.	.58	2.94	1.73	2.08	0	.71	2.16
	N	4	6	15	3	1	2	31
<b>II-C</b>								
The debaters should properly determine the legitimacy or illegitimacy of policy implications in a debate round.	mean	3.75	3.50	1.73	3.67	1.00	1.00	2.45
	S.D.	2.22	2.07	1.71	3.06	0	0	2.06
	N	4	6	15	3	1	2	31
<b>III-B</b>								
The affirmative must simply justify the examples it selects from the topical examples within the scope of the resolution; it has no burden to justify military support to non-democratic governments generally as in non-affirmative examples.	mean	3.5	3.88	3.53	3.25	1.00	4.00	3.53
	S.D.	2.38	2.30	1.85	2.63	0	0	1.99
	N	4	8	15	4	1	2	34
<b>IV-A</b>								
Presumption lies with the team defending the prevalent value system.	mean	4.00	3.43	3.75	1.33	0	3.50	3.47
	S.D.	1.83	2.76	1.73	.58	0	.71	1.95
	N	4	7	16	3	0	2	32
<b>IV-B</b>								
I will allow the arguments of the debate to determine who holds presumption.	mean	3.00	3.14	2.07	3.67	1.00	1.50	2.48
	S.D.	2.00	2.34	2.12	3.06	0	.71	2.14
	N	3	7	15	3	1	2	31

STATEMENT	MEAS	HYPO	ARG	RASA	H/ARG	H/RASA	OTHER	TOTAL
<b>IV-C</b>								
Depending on the topic, presumption may not be a salient issue in CEDA.	mean	2.75	4.00	3.67	3.00	6.00	3.00	3.56
	S.D.	.50	2.76	2.02	2.71	0	2.83	2.11
	N	4	6	15	4	1	2	32
<b>IV-D</b>								
Presumption rests against the resolution.	mean	3.33	6.00	3.87	6.00	1.00	4.50	4.40
	S.D.	2.31	2.00	2.07	1.73	0	.71	2.19
	N	3	6	15	3	1	2	30
<b>V-A</b>								
The CEDA round is an appropriate forum for the exploration of theoretical questions of paradigmatic and procedural topics.	mean	2.50	3.57	2.69	3.00	1.00	1.50	2.77
	S.D.	1.92	2.15	2.30	2.71	0	.71	2.15
	N	1	7	16	4	1	2	34
<b>V-B</b>								
The theoretical questions dealing with CEDA debate should be resolved in the journals and at conventions. CEDA debate should focus on substantive issues of the resolution, not debate theory.	mean	4.00	2.71	5.40	3.67	6.00	6.50	4.56
	S.D.	2.16	2.36	1.84	2.52	0	.71	2.24
	N	4	7	15	3	1	2	32
<b>V-C</b>								
Theoretical issues in CEDA debate should not be debated in the rounds due to time constraints of the round itself.	mean	4.75	4.00	5.07	4.33	6.00	6.50	4.87
	S.D.	2.22	2.53	2.31	3.06	0	.71	2.26
	N	4	6	15	3	1	2	31
<b>VI-A</b>								
Rate of delivery is an important concern of mine in my overall impression of the round. If a debater speaks at a fast rate of speed, I find him/her less persuasive.	mean	4.75	3.00	3.77	1.67	4.00	7.00	3.73
	S.D.	1.50	2.52	2.42	.58	0	0	2.33
	N	4	7	13	3	1	2	30
<b>VI-B</b>								
The rapid delivery in some CEDA rounds does not pose a problem to me. If the enunciation remains comprehensible, I have no objection.	mean	2.33	4.33	2.40	3.75	2.00	1.00	2.84
	S.D.	.58	2.95	2.06	2.50	0	0	2.24
	N	3	6	15	4	1	2	31
<b>VII-A</b>								
Non-topicality is a definite voting issue in the round. If the negative wins a non-topicality issue, they will win the round.	mean	1.75	2.13	2.73	1.75	1.00	1.50	2.24
	S.D.	1.50	2.23	1.28	.96	0	.71	1.52
	N	4	8	15	4	1	2	34
<b>VII-B</b>								
Non-topicality is not a significant issue in CEDA debate. The negative must carry other issues (criteria, value objections, etc.) to win the debate.	mean	5.75	5.50	4.79	6.00	6.00	6.50	5.22
	S.D.	1.89	2.51	1.67	1.73	0	.71	1.81
	N	4	6	14	3	1	2	90

STATEMENT	MEAS	HYPO	ARG	RASA	H/ARG	H/RASA	OTHER	TOTAL
<b>VII-C</b>								
The arguments of the debaters will determine whether I will vote on non-topicality.	mean	1.50	2.33	1.64	2.00	2.00	1.00	1.77
	S.D.	1.00	1.75	1.65	1.00	0	0	1.43
	N	4	6	14	3	1	2	30
<b>VIII-A</b>								
Extra-topicality is a definite voting issue in the round. If the negative wins an extra-topicality issue, they will win the round.	mean	3.00	4.17	4.27	3.33	4.00	4.55	4.00
	S.D.	1.41	.98	1.39	.58	0	3.54	1.39
	N	4	6	15	3	1	2	31
<b>VIII-B</b>								
Extra-topicality is not a significant issue in a CEDA round. The negative must carry other issues (criteria, value objections, etc.) in the debate.	mean	5.00	2.43	4.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	3.90
	S.D.	1.93	.98	1.11	1.73	0	1.41	1.49
	N	4	7	14	3	1	2	31
<b>VIII-C</b>								
The arguments of the debaters will determine whether I will vote on extra-topicality.	mean	1.75	2.00	1.64	1.25	1.00	1.00	1.63
	S.D.	1.50	1.53	1.65	.50	0	0	1.39
	N	4	7	14	4	1	2	32
<b>IX-A</b>								
Debate coaches and their publications are appropriate sources of evidence in CEDA debate on theoretical and procedural issues.	mean	2.00	3.43	2.64	2.75	2.00	1.00	2.63
	S.D.	.82	2.57	1.69	2.87	0	0	1.93
	N	4	7	14	4	1	2	32
<b>IX-B</b>								
Debate coaches and their publications are not persuasive evidence in the CEDA debate round. Debaters can make the argument themselves.	mean	6.00	3.86	4.21	3.00	2.00	5.00	4.23
	S.D.	0	2.34	1.76	1.73	0	1.41	1.88
	N	4	7	14	3	1	2	31
<b>X-A</b>								
Definitions can be of a broad dictionary-based nature.	mean	3.25	3.00	2.79	4.00	1.00	1.50	2.87
	S.D.	2.72	2.00	1.67	2.65	0	.71	1.84
	N	4	7	14	3	1	2	31
<b>X-B</b>								
Definitions should be contextually derived from within the resolution.	mean	2.00	2.88	2.86	2.33	2.00	3.00	2.71
	S.D.	1.00	2.48	1.41	1.53	0	1.41	1.64
	N	3	8	14	3	1	2	31
<b>X-C</b>								
"Best definition" versus "Reasonable definition" should be an issue decided in the round.	mean	1.75	3.43	1.87	1.75	1.00	1.00	2.09
	S.D.	.50	1.81	1.64	.50	0	0	1.55
	N	4	7	15	4	1	2	33

TABLE IV  
Stepwise Discriminant Analysis Summary Table

Step	Statement	Wilkes Lambda	Sig.
1	The debaters should properly determine, through argument, the specific nature of the resolution. [RES DEB]	.4335	.0002
2	The debaters should properly determine the legitimacy or illegitimacy of policy implications in a debate round. [POLIMPDB]	.2337	.0001
3	Theoretical issues in CEDA debate should not be debated in the rounds due to time constraints of the round itself. [THTIMENO]	.2015	.0003
4	Depending on the topic, I see a strong possibility of policy implications (with attendant policy issues, e.g. inherency, solvency, disadvantages, etc.) in a CEDA round. [POLIMPOK]	.1743	.0006
5	The resolution operates as a statement of probable truth to be tested during the debate. [RESTRUTH]	.1379	.0006

Standardized Canonical Discriminant Function Coefficients

Variable	Function 1	Function 2
RESTRUTH	.1857	.8870
RESDEB	1.9925	-.5065
POLIMPOK	.0978	.8227
POLIMPDB	-.9494	.3889
THTIMENO	.5779	.2010

Canonical Discriminant Functions

Function	Eigen Value	Pct. of Variance	Canon. Correl.	Chi-Square	D E	Sig.	$\eta^2$
1	2.098	64.75	.82	34.063	10	.000	.829
2	1.142	35.25	.73	13.710	4	.008	

TABLE V  
Classification Results

Paradigm	N*	Predicted Group Membership		Hypo/Arg.
		Arg. Skills	Tabula Rasa	
Argument Skills	6	5 83.3%	0	1 16.7%
Tabula Rasa	15	2 13.3%	13 86.7%	0 0
Hypo/Arg.	3	0 0	0 0	3 100%

Percent of Grouped Cases Correctly Classified: 87.5%

\*To be included in this analysis, the subject could have no missing value on any of the discriminating variables.