

A STUDY OF ADMINISTRATORS' ATTITUDES TOWARD DEBATE

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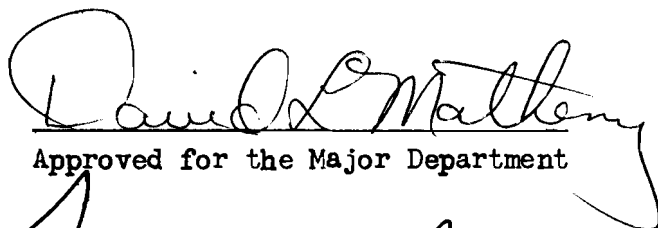
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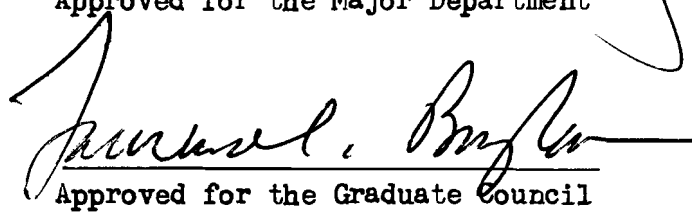
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

I. THE PROBLEM

Interscholastic debate in the state of Kansas has enjoyed a long and healthy status. In return it has given great benefits to a large number of students who have chosen to participate. Generally, the program has been well conducted and regulated; however, as with all other activities, there are problems.

A look at virtually any speech publication will indicate considerable discontent from some areas of our field. In Kansas one need only reflect on the actions of the Kansas State High School Activities Association in recent years to realize that all is not well with debate programs.

The prestige of a tournament, unfortunately, has rested on the size or quantity of the trophies presented to its winners. As competition grew among tournaments in Kansas, so, also, did the trophies presented at those tournaments, to the extent that the Activities Association ruled that trophies should be "in keeping with the size of those awarded in the regional, and state tournaments."¹

A complaint common with administrators has been that too much time was taken from class to attend debate tournaments. The complaint

¹"Speech and Drama Manual" (Topeka: Kansas State High School Activities Association, 1969-70), p. 10.

was voiced so long and with such force about Kansas high school debate that coaches were notified by the Activities Association that novice tournaments could last only one day.

A number of administrators noticed that there was no limit to the number of tournaments a student could attend in any season. Overzealous coaches and debaters could conceivably spend every available weekend at a tournament, thus neglecting other obligations. Consequently, a season limit of five tournaments was applied to all Kansas debaters. Similarly, so that schools with the financial resources available could not dominate the tournaments by their mere presence, each debate squad was classified by its size, and each size was limited to a maximum number of tournaments it may attend.

II. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND JUSTIFICATION

The problem, then, is that there seems to be an abundance of criticism concerning the basic structure of debate and the administration of debate programs. The purpose of this study was to determine the attitudes of Kansas high school administrators toward debate. It appeared, in light of the problem presented, that it would be helpful to collect these criticisms by the use of a questionnaire, and to analyze the results.

III. PROCEDURES

Administrators are the best choice of respondents for three reasons: (1) they receive the bulk of the criticism in case of

complaints concerning any school program; (2) they play a very large role in the decision-making within our governing Activities Association, and, thus should realize or in fact generate much of the existing criticism; and (3) they should be fully aware of all their programs, not just the more obvious and easily observed, and if they, in fact, know little of the debate program, the opportunity to examine it should provide a method to increase their awareness.

A study similar to this was done by Clayton H. Schug, then Director of Debate at Pennsylvania State College, and published in The Speech Teacher, in 1952.² Mr. Schug was concerned with the status of debate in the minds of "secondary school and college administrators and officials, as well as college teachers in related subject matter areas, outside the field of speech and debate."³

Schug had obtained his model questionnaire from Thurstone and Chave's questionnaire on attitudes toward the church.⁴ After selecting sixty statements from a list of 174, Schug mailed the questionnaire to his subjects.

There are three reasons the study by Schug should not be prohibitive to this study. First, it is seventeen years old and could be updated; second, its location was Pennsylvania, whose program was

²Clayton H. Schug, "A Study of Attitude Toward Debate", The Speech Teacher, I (1952), 242-252.

³Ibid., 242.

⁴Ibid.

quite possibly different in some aspects from our program in Kansas; and third, some major alterations have been made in the structure of the questionnaire to better fit the purpose of this study.

Style of the Questionnaire. The questionnaire used for this study had as its basis the one which was used by Schug. The questionnaire was composed of two parts; the first section had eight questions designed to give the auditor an idea of his subjects' backgrounds and interests. The second part was a series of sixty (60) statements of attitude related directly to debate and the subjects' experiences with debate. The subjects were asked to check the statements with which they agreed. Some example statements were: #21--"Debating is sophistry"; #31--"Debate teaches one not what to think, but how to think"; #53--"There is altogether too much reliance upon debate handbooks and manuals"; #2--"The successful debater learns more about library investigation, note-taking, orderly classification, and 'handling data' than any other undergraduate could possibly learn from all the classes in the curriculum", and #5--"Tournament debating should be supplanted with audience debating."

The statements ranged from the extremely favorable (#2--"The successful debater learns more about library investigation, note-taking, orderly classification, and 'handling data' than any other undergraduate could possibly learn from all the classes in the curriculum."), to the relatively neutral (#5--"Tournament debating should be supplanted with audience debating."), to the extremely unfavorable (#21--"Debating is sophistry.").

For every statement aimed at a specific area, e.g., (#7--"The cross-examination style of debate is better training for the debater and is more interesting to the audience than the orthodox style."), there was a counter-statement, e.g., (#47--"The orthodox style of debate is better training for the debater and is more interesting to the audience than the cross-examination style.").

Problems of the Schug Questionnaire. There were three significant faults with this questionnaire. (1) Several statements were concerned with more than one thought. One attempting to reply to such a statement was faced with an "all or none" situation if he agreed with just one part, and would probably have taken "none". Two examples were the following: #22--"Debate needs coaches with better training and a more wholesome philosophy of debate."; and #29--"Debaters may be characterized as having glib tongues, strong lungs, and bad manners." (2) Simple endorsement of a statement may not necessarily have meant complete agreement; it may have meant "strongly agree", or just "agree". Therefore, it was not a true barometer of opinion. (3) Every area of debate about which a statement was made should have been confronted directly. In Schug's questionnaire, it was easy for the subject not to make any commitment at all concerning the values or vices of cross-examination style debate, or whether, in his opinion, debaters tend to ignore the opinions of others. By merely not reading each and every statement, it could appear that the subject did not agree with the statement when, in fact, he may have agreed.

Alterations Made in The Questionnaire. The three problems in Schug's questionnaire were alleviated by discovering what areas of debate were considered, rephrasing them so that they were limited to just one topic, and allowing the subject to mark each statement in some way. If the subject strongly agreed or strongly disagreed, he could mark that space; or if his feelings were less severe, he could mark just "Agree" or "Disagree". "No Opinion", "No Experience", and "Question Unclear" were the remaining choices for those statements not otherwise marked. There should be no misleading results due to an oversight of the statement by the subject since each problem was handled separately. In addition to altering the format and rephrasing statements, some were omitted and others added. These changes were made for the purpose of improving the questionnaire and hopefully adding to its validity.

The revised questionnaire was sent to the superintendent and principal of every high school in the state of Kansas, although only thirty-four per cent of the schools sponsor debate. If only those administrators whose schools have a debate program had been asked to respond, the results would likely have been more biased than if a cross-section were obtained.

IV. RESEARCH

The following sources were checked for similarities or duplications of this study: The Speech Teacher; The Quarterly Journal of Speech; The Southern Speech Journal; The Kansas Speech

Journal; Dissertation Abstracts; Bibliographic Index; Speech Monographs; and Arthur Kruger's, Classified Bibliography of Argumentation and Debate. All sources were checked from the earliest edition available.

Only the Schug study was found to consider the attitude of administrators in evaluating debate. The result of this bibliographic search was that there appears to be no study done which should diminish the value or status of this study.

V. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions are used in this study:

School classification--Kansas high schools are divided into five classifications according to size. The sixteen largest schools represent the AAAAAA(5A) class. The next thirty-two schools become AAAAA(4A); the next sixty-four are AAA(3A); the next 128 are AA(2A); and the remaining 200 represent A(1A) classification.

Both 1A-2A--Although most school systems have a superintendent for the system and a principal for the high school, some of the smaller systems employ one man for both positions. These are referred to in this study as Both 1A-2A.

CHAPTER II

RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

I. IMPLEMENTATION OF RESULTS

Returning the Questionnaire

A total of 753 questionnaires was mailed to superintendents and principals of every Kansas high school. The return tabulated was 412, or 55 per cent. An additional 10 were returned not completed for one of two reasons: (1) either the administrator was on vacation or away at summer school; or (2) the administrator knew so little about debate that he felt it unwise to attempt to complete the questionnaire.

Explanation of the Tables

There are basically two types of tables in this chapter: (1) those dealing with the respondents' background data; and (2) those used in the discussion of the statements of attitude. The table of the respondents' background data illustrates questions three, four, five, seven, and eight (the "Yes" tallies of question number six were so few that no table was felt necessary). Tables II (question three), III (question four), and IV (question five) are similar in construction. On the left side are tabulations broken into administrative position--superintendents, principals, and those who function in both positions. To the right are tabulations by school classifications. In the first number column are raw scores; in the second are percentages.

Table V contains the same basic structure; however, for spatial reasons, the illustration by position is above the illustration by school classification instead of to its left. Table VI needs no explanation.

Tables illustrating results of each of the thirty statements are structured differently from those just discussed. At the top of each table (Tables VII-XXXVI), is the statement and its number. Below the statement are the abbreviations representing the seven choices of the respondents; S.A. (Strongly Agree), Agr. (Agree), N.O. (No Opinion), Dis. (Disagree), S.D. (Strongly Disagree), N.E. (No Experience), and Q.U. (Question Unclear). Below each abbreviation is the raw score.

It should be noted that, although 412 people filled out and returned this questionnaire, most of the raw scores do not total 412; many total less, and some total more. The reason that many total less than 412 is that those statements did not receive the attention of all those responding. Some statements received more than 412 tallies because some respondents, when they had marked No Experience, also marked No Opinion.

Table I is an illustration of the number of questionnaires originally mailed, and the number returned recorded in percentage figures. It is divided into three sections, each having three columns (Number Sent, Number Returned, and Per Cent Returned), but with different perspectives. The first section records the administrative position, the second records school classification, and the third, position and classification. The table follows:

TABLE I
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS

By Position	Number Sent	Number Returned	% Returned
Superintendents	313	207	66
Principals	389	190	49
Both (1A-2A only)	<u>51</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>29</u>
Totals	753	412	55

By School Classification	Number Sent	Number Returned	% Returned
5A	23	20	87
4A	59	38	64
3A	123	98	80
2A	216	132	61
1A	281	109	39
1A-2A Both	<u>51</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>29</u>
Totals	753	412	55

By School Classification and Position	Number Sent	Number Returned	% Returned
5A Superintendents	7	7	100
5A Principals	16	13	81
4A Superintendents	27	19	70
4A Principals	32	19	59
3A Superintendents	59	46	78
3A Principals	64	52	81
2A Superintendents	95	74	78
2A Principals	121	58	48
1A Superintendents	125	61	49
1A Principals	156	48	31
1A-2A Both	<u>51</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>29</u>
Totals	753	412	55

II. RESPONDENTS' BACKGROUND DATA

Eighteen per cent of the respondents had debated in high school. Superintendents indicated more experience in high school debate than principals and 1A-2A Both. Strictly on a percentage basis, 5A superintendents had the most high school debate experience, and 1A principals had less experience than any of the other groups. Administrators in the 5A classification indicated the highest percentage of high school debate experience; and 2A administrators had the least, as seen in the following table:

TABLE II
ADMINISTRATORS WHO DEBATED IN HIGH SCHOOL

By Position			By Classification	Superintendent		Principal		Aver.	
	#	%		#	%	#	%	#	%
All	73	18	5A	2	29	3	23	5	25
			4A	4	21	5	26	9	24
Supt.	40	19	3A	12	26	10	19	22	22
Prin.	31	16	2A	8	11	8	14	16	12
Both (1A-2A) .	2	13	1A	14	23	5	10	19	17

Seven per cent of the respondents had debated in college. Superintendents had slightly more college debate experience than principals and 1A-2A Both. 5A superintendents indicated the most college debate experience, and 1A principals, the least. 4A and 5A administrators had significantly more college debate experience than the other school classifications on a percentage basis. The following table illustrates:

TABLE III
ADMINISTRATORS WHO DEBATED IN COLLEGE

By Position			By Classification	Superintendent		Principal		Aver.	
	#	%		#	%	#	%	#	%
All	29	7	5A	2	29	1	8	3	15
			4A	3	16	3	16	6	16
Supt.	17	8	3A	2	4	3	6	5	5
Prin.	11	6	2A	3	4	3	5	6	4.5
Both (1A-2A) .	1	7	1A	7	11	1	2	8	7

Of the 412 high school administrators in Kansas answering this questionnaire, 24, or 6 per cent have coached debate in high school. Slightly more principals than superintendents coached, and none of those who are both principal and superintendent had ever coached debate in high school. On a percentage basis, class 5A administrators had considerably more experience and 2A administrators had less experience coaching debate than any of the other classes, as is shown in the table below:

TABLE IV
ADMINISTRATORS WHO COACHED DEBATE IN HIGH SCHOOL

By Position			By Classification	Superintendent		Principal		Aver.	
	#	%		#	%	#	%	#	%
All	24	6	5A	2	29	1	8	3	15
			4A	1	5	2	11	3	8
Supt.	10	5	3A	3	7	4	8	7	7
Prin.	14	7	2A	0	0	4	7	4	3
Both (1A-2A) .	0	0	1A	4	7	3	6	7	6

Three of the 412 respondents had coached debate in college.

Of those 3, one was a 5A principal, and two were 2A superintendents.

Nearly one-half (44%) of the responding administrators have not seen a tournament debate in the last five years. Principals have seen more debates than superintendents and 1A-2A Both. Administrators from larger school classifications have seen more debates in the last five years than their counterparts from the smaller schools, as seen in the following table concerning question seven:

TABLE V

DEBATE OBSERVATION IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS

	0		1-10		11-30		31-60		61-100		over 100	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Overall Average	182	44	174	42	44	11	10	2	2	.5	0	0
By Position	0		1-10		11-30		31-60		61-100		over 100	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Supt.	98	47	86	42	18	9	4	2	1	.5	0	0
Prin.	73	38	84	44	26	14	6	3	1	.5	0	0
Both (1A-2A)	11	73	4	27	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
By School Classification	0		1-10		11-30		31-60		61-100		over 100	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
5A Supt.	2	29	3	43	2	29	0	0	0	0	0	0
5A Prin.	1	8	10	77	2	15	0	0	0	0	0	0
4A Supt.	2	11	15	79	1	5	1	5	0	0	0	0
4A Prin.	3	16	8	42	5	26	3	16	0	0	0	0
3A Supt.	13	28	23	50	9	20	1	2	0	0	0	0
3A Prin.	14	27	24	46	10	19	3	6	1	2	0	0
2A Supt.	40	54	27	37	5	7	2	3	0	0	0	0
2A Prin.	23	40	30	52	5	9	0	0	0	0	0	0
1A Supt.	41	67	18	30	1	2	0	0	1	2	0	0
1A Prin.	32	67	12	25	4	8	0	0	0	0	0	0

One-third of the Kansas high schools maintain a debate program. Of the 412 responses to this questionnaire, however, 211, or 51%, had a program. The hope was expressed in the beginning of this report that the administrators whose schools had no program would tell why they did not. The results do provide for comments in the following chapter. It may be noticed that the lack of a capable coach was the most cited answer. The responses and reasons follow:

TABLE VI
WHY NO DEBATE PROGRAM

Reasons	Number of Responses
a. Lack of students' time	33
b. Lack of teachers' time	55
c. Lack of funds	35
d. Lack of student interest	44
e. Lack of administration interest	7
f. Lack of capable coach	125
g. Lack of value	4
h. Other reasons	5
	(too many courses now; lack of facilities; school for the blind; school for the deaf; under 100 pupils)

III. RESULTS OF THE STATEMENTS OF ATTITUDE

Explanation of the Categories

Each of the thirty statements was placed into one of two categories: Philosophical, e.g., #17--"Debate should teach a balance between the use of reasoning and opinion evidence."; or Practical, e.g., #23--"Too many coaches write the debate cases for their students." They were then divided into one of the five following categories: (1) Interscholastic Competitiveness, e.g., #13--"Wins and losses should not be given because they are not essential to the learning process."; (2) Evidence, e.g., #12--"Far too many debaters fabricate evidence."; (3) Debate Forms and Programs, e.g., #10--"The cross-examination format allows the debater to clarify points of contention more effectively than the standard format."; (4) Detrimental Aspects, e.g., #2--"Debate demands too much of a student's time."; and (5) Positive Aspects, e.g., #25--"Debate promotes good habits of public speaking."

Statements within the Interscholastic Competitiveness category deal with the possible effects of competition on debate. The category of Evidence has statements concerning the gathering and use of evidence in debate. Debate Forms and Programs deals with types and formats of debate, and policies of individual programs. The Detrimental Aspects category mentions possible problems caused by debate; and Positive Aspects lists possible values of debate.

Table XXXVII shows the table in its entirety, but each statement will be shown, with its results illustrated and discussed in the text.

Discussion of each statement will be treated in terms of (1) distinctions between superintendents' attitudes and principals' attitudes, and (2) distinctions on the basis of school size or classification (5A, 4A, 3A, 2A, 1A). Because superintendents and principals have different duties within a school system, there may be some difference in their responses to the statements. The size of a school, also, may affect responses given by administrators. If there is minimal attitude variation for any statement, however, the results will be reported more generally and in less detail.

Interscholastic Competitiveness. Philosophical:

TABLE VII

#13--"Wins and losses should not be given because they are not essential to the learning process."

S.A.	Agr.	N.O.	Dis.	S.D.	N.E.	Q.U.
7	30	49	261	24	35	1

Both principals and superintendents seemed to disagree that wins and losses are not essential to the learning process; and there appeared to be little distinction between the attitudes of those in different school classifications. Seventy per cent of the total disagreed; and eighty-nine per cent of those who expressed an attitude disagreed.

Practical:

TABLE VIII

#3--"Most coaches put too much emphasis on winning."

S.A.	Agr.	N.O.	Dis.	S.D.	N.E.	Q.U.
19	127	72	146	11	48	1

The general attitude is nearly equally divided on the statement, with slightly more disagreeing that coaches place too much emphasis on winning. There was very little difference between the attitudes of superintendents and principals; however, when viewed from school classification, differences do appear. 4A superintendents (2 agree-13 disagree) and 5A principals (1 agree-11 disagree), for example, disagreed with the statement more often than do the administrators in other classifications. Conversely, 2A superintendents (32 agree-17 disagree), 2A principals (26 agree-21 disagree), 1A principals (22 agree-6 disagree), and administrators who are both principals and superintendents (7 agree-4 disagree) agreed that coaches stress winning too much.

TABLE IX

#16--"Rather than an exercise in problem-solving, most debaters seem to be playing a game."

S.A.	Agr.	N.O.	Dis.	S.D.	N.E.	Q.U.
3	69	100	155	11	65	1

Forty per cent disagreed that debaters play a game while debating, but seventeen per cent agreed with the statement. There was little difference in the ratios of the superintendents and principals, or the school classifications with the exception of the 4A superintendents who disagreed by a high ratio of 2 agree-14 disagree.

TABLE X

#23--"Too many coaches write the debate cases for their students."

S.A.	Agr.	N.O.	Dis.	S.D.	N.E.	Q.U.
2	56	154	83	10	101	1

Sixty-two per cent of the respondents had either no opinion or no experience concerning whether coaches write the cases their students use. Of those who did express an opinion, twenty-three per cent disagreed, and fourteen per cent agreed. The groups which disagreed most often with the statement were 4A superintendents (1 agree-10 disagree), and 5A principals (0 agree-7 disagree). 2A superintendents were evenly divided (13 agree-12 disagree), 1A superintendents (9 agree-5 disagree), 1A principals (8 agree-5 disagree), and the administrators who are both superintendents and principals (2 agree-1 disagree) varied from the norm.

Evidence. Philosophical:

TABLE XI

#6--"The debater should not use commercially prepared evidence (e.g., handbooks of quotations or printed file cards.)"

S.A.	Agr.	N.O.	Dis.	S.D.	N.E.	Q.U.
9	82	93	163	13	55	3

A ratio of two administrators to one felt that it is acceptable for debaters to use purchased quotations and printed file cards. 4A superintendents (1 agree-10 disagree) especially, and 1A superintendents (7 agree-24 disagree) and 4A principals (4 agree-12 disagree) more than average, hold this opinion. 1A superintendents (4 strongly disagree) strongly maintain this attitude, while 2A principals (3 strongly agree) and 3A superintendents (3 strongly agree) held the extreme opposite attitude. There is no distinction worthy of mention between the attitudes of superintendents and the attitudes of principals.

TABLE XII

#17--"Debate should teach a balance between the use of reasoning and opinion evidence."

S.A.	Agr.	N.O.	Dis.	S.D.	N.E.	Q.U.
19	267	47	25	0	39	3

Seventy per cent of the administrators agreed, to six per cent who disagreed, that debate should teach a balance between the use of reasoning and opinion evidence. 4A superintendents (16 agree-0 disagree), 1A superintendents (44 agree-2 disagree), 2A principals (39 agree-1 disagree), and administrators who are both superintendents and principals (9 agree-0 disagree) agreed to a greater extent than the other groups.

TABLE XIII

#29--"Debate should use more evidence than reasoning."

S.A.	Agr.	N.O.	Dis.	S.D.	N.E.	Q.U.
3	94	122	129	2	52	5

Forty-two per cent of the responding administrators had either no opinion or no experience regarding the use of more evidence than reasoning in debate. Thirty-one per cent disagreed, and twenty-four per cent agreed. The principals as a group expressed opinions more often than the superintendents. Thirty-one per cent of the principals agreed, while only seventeen per cent of the superintendents agreed. The difference in the figures is explained by the fact that the No Opinion column of the superintendents was marked fourteen per cent more often than the same column of the principals.

5A superintendents (0 agree-5 disagree) most repeatedly disagreed. 3A superintendents (13 agree-13 disagree) and 2A principals (14 agree-14 disagree) were evenly divided. 3A principals

(22 agree-12 disagree) differed from the other groups by agreeing that debate should use more evidence than reasoning.

Practical:

TABLE XIV

#12--"Far too many debaters fabricate evidence."

S.A.	Agr.	N.O.	Dis.	S.D.	N.E.	Q.U.
1	73	132	113	4	89	3

Fifty-four per cent of the responding administrators had either no opinion about or no experience with this statement. Twenty-eight per cent disagreed and eighteen per cent agreed that far too many debaters fabricate evidence. There was little difference between the attitudes of superintendents and the attitudes of principals. 5A superintendents (0 agree-3 disagree), 5A principals (0 agree-10 disagree), and 4A principals (2 agree-10 disagree) disagreed most often. 3A principals (16 agree-14 disagree) and 2A principals (16 agree-11 disagree) were the only groups which agreed with the statement.

Debate Forms and Programs. Philosophical:

TABLE XV

#10--"The cross-examination format allows the debater to clarify points of contention more effectively than the standard format."

S.A.	Agr.	N.O.	Dis.	S.D.	N.E.	Q.U.
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5	141	151	19	16	69	5
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Fifty-three per cent of the respondents had either no opinion or no experience concerning cross-examination debate. Three out of four administrators who held opinions about the statement agreed with it. The principals were more opinionated than the superintendents, although they both agreed substantially. The superintendents marked the No Opinion and No Experience column considerably more than did the principals. Eight per cent of the principals strongly disagreed, and the superintendents had seven per cent more in the No Experience column than the principals. 5A superintendents (3 agree-0 disagree), 4A superintendents (8 agree-0 disagree), 4A principals (10 agree-1 disagree), and 1A principals (15 agree-7 disagree) agreed more often than the other groups.

TABLE XVI

#11--"Criteria for judging debates should be changed."

S.A.	Agr.	N.O.	Dis.	S.D.	N.E.	Q.U.
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5	47	211	53	2	86	3
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The most significant feature about statement number eleven is that, of those administrators responding to the questionnaire, fifty-one per cent had no opinion, and twenty-one per cent had no experience concerning the judging of debates. Of those with an

opinion, only three more than half disagreed that there should be a change in judging criteria. There was little difference between school classifications, or between the attitudes of principals and superintendents.

TABLE XVII

#15--"The debate program should allow anyone to participate regardless of his talents."

S.A.	Agr.	N.O.	Dis.	S.D.	N.E.	Q.U.
16	177	26	146	13	29	5

Forty-seven per cent of the respondents agreed, while thirty-nine per cent disagreed, that anyone should be allowed to participate in a debate program. Superintendents agreed more often than principals. 5A principals (10 agree-3 disagree) agreed most often. 5A superintendents (2 agree-4 disagree), 3A principals (25 agree-29 disagree), 2A principals (18 agree-27 disagree) were the only groups who disagreed with the statement.

TABLE XVIII

#20--"Debating both sides of the proposition allows the debater to better understand both sides."

S.A.	Agr.	N.O.	Dis.	S.D.	N.E.	Q.U.
41	304	19	4	0	27	0

An extreme margin of agreement was found in this statement. Eighty-four per cent to one per cent agreed that debating both sides of the proposition allows the debater to better understand both sides. No respondent disagreed strongly to the statement. Administrators agreed strongly with this statement more often than any other. Eleven per cent more of the principals agreed than did superintendents. There was little difference between school classifications.

TABLE XIX

#21--"Contest discussion would be a more valuable activity than debate."

S.A.	Agr.	N.O.	Dis.	S.D.	N.E.	Q.U.
1	21	152	150	8	68	11

Although most administrators had either no opinion about or no experience with contest discussion, a substantial majority of those who did have an opinion disagreed that it would be a more valuable activity than debate. None of the administrators in the following groups agreed that contest discussion would be more valuable: 5A superintendents, 4A superintendents, 5A principals, or 3A principals. Principals disagreed with the statement more often than superintendents. More respondents felt this statement to be unclear than any other.

TABLE XX

#28—"Interscholastic debate is too formal and rigid."

S.A.	Agr.	N.O.	Dis.	S.D.	N.E.	Q.U.
3	29	109	180	9	73	1

Forty-four per cent of the responding administrators did not express an opinion; forty-six per cent disagreed; and eight per cent agreed that interscholastic debate is too formal and rigid. Considerably more principals expressed opinions than did superintendents. There was little difference between school classifications except for the 3A principals (2 agree-35 disagree) who disagreed more often than any other group.

Practical:

TABLE XXI

#7—"Most debaters don't research as much as they should when arguing important matters."

S.A.	Agr.	N.O.	Dis.	S.D.	N.E.	Q.U.
10	143	105	77	2	71	3

Forty-three per cent of the respondents expressed no attitude; but twice as many agreed as disagreed that most debaters don't research as much as they should. When viewed from school classification, however, some distinctions may be seen. 2A superintendents (28 agree-8 disagree), 1A superintendents (26 agree-2 disagree),

and 1A principals (19 agree-4 disagree) most often agreed. 5A superintendents (2 agree-4 disagree), 4A superintendents (4 agree-8 disagree), and 5A principals (3 agree-4 disagree) were the only groups to disagree. There was little difference between the attitudes of superintendents and of principals.

Detrimental Aspects. Philosophical:

TABLE XXII

#5--"The process of finding evidence to support a predetermined conclusion is educationally unsound."

S.A.	Agr.	N.O.	Dis.	S.D.	N.E.	Q.U.
6	27	57	237	32	32	7

A ratio of four administrators to one disagreed that finding evidence to support a predetermined conclusion is educationally unsound. There was virtually no difference between the attitudes of superintendents and principals; nor was there significant difference between school classifications.

TABLE XXIII

#2--"Debate demands too much of a student's time."

S.A.	Agr.	N.O.	Dis.	S.D.	N.E.	Q.U.
4	38	39	257	32	36	0

Seventy per cent of the respondents disagreed, while ten per cent agreed that debate demands too much of a student's time. Slightly more principals expressed opinions than did superintendents. None of the 5A superintendents, 4A superintendents, and 5A principals agreed with the statement.

TABLE XXIV

#9--"Interscholastic debate puts too much stress on winning rather than learning."

S.A.	Agr.	N.O.	Dis.	S.D.	N.E.	Q.U.
9	87	70	185	9	51	0

Twenty-nine per cent of the responding administrators had either no opinion or no experience regarding whether debate puts too much stress on winning instead of learning. Of those who expressed an attitude, two out of three disagreed. Although some groups disagreed only slightly, no group agreed with the statement. 4A superintendents (1 agree-15 disagree), 3A superintendents (7 agree-27 disagree), and 5A principals (1 agree-12 disagree) disagreed most often. The difference between superintendents and principals was minimal.

TABLE XXV

#22--"Debate tends to generate dogmatism rather than openmindedness."

S.A.	Agr.	N.O.	Dis.	S.D.	N.E.	Q.U.
3	31	89	210	10	47	2

One-third of the administrators expressed no attitude toward statement number twenty-two. Fifty-three per cent disagreed, and eight per cent agreed that debate generates dogmatism in debaters. Only slight difference could be found between the attitudes of superintendents and principals. 5A superintendents (0 agree-7 disagree), 4A superintendents (0 agree-16 disagree), 3A superintendents (1 agree-28 disagree), and 4A principals (0 agree-17 disagree) disagreed by the largest margins.

Practical:

TABLE XXVI

#8—"Certain gestures and phrases picked up by most debaters are more detrimental than beneficial."

S.A.	Agr.	N.O.	Dis.	S.D.	N.E.	Q.U.
7	61	122	137	7	79	4

Forty-nine per cent of the respondents expressed either no opinion or no experience. Of those administrators who did express an opinion, slightly more than two to one disagreed with the statement. Superintendents' and principals' attitudes varied little from those expressed by principals. 4A principals (0 agree-13 disagree) most often disagreed. A paradox was noticed with the 1A superintendents;

although they generally disagreed, as did the other groups, four of them strongly agreed that certain gestures and phrases picked up by debaters are more detrimental than beneficial.

TABLE XXVII

#14--"Interscholastic debate, as it is, does not encourage honest thinking."

S.A.	Agr.	N.O.	Dis.	S.D.	N.E.	Q.U.
4	18	53	247	22	57	3

Twenty-seven per cent expressed no opinion or no experience with this statement. Five per cent agreed that debate does not encourage honest thinking; sixty-five per cent disagreed. Slightly more principals expressed opinions than did superintendents. None of the groups agreed with the statement.

TABLE XXVIII

#18--"All too often debaters become preoccupied with trivialities."

S.A.	Agr.	N.O.	Dis.	S.D.	N.E.	Q.U.
12	137	114	83	0	63	2

Forty-three per cent of the responding administrators expressed no attitude toward this statement. Significantly more principals expressed opinions than did superintendents. The administrators generally agreed with the statement, but 5A superintendents (2 agree-3 disagree),

4A superintendents (6 agree-8 disagree), and 5A principals (3 agree-6 disagree) did not feel that debaters too often become preoccupied with trivialities.

TABLE XXIX

#23--"Debaters tend to lack respect for the opinions of others."

S.A.	Agr.	N.O.	Dis.	S.D.	N.E.	Q.U.
2	37	54	246	15	50	1

Sixty per cent of the responding administrators disagreed that debaters tend to lack respect for the opinions of others; nine per cent agreed that they do. Slightly more principals expressed opinions than did superintendents. 4A superintendents (0 agree-16 disagree), 3A superintendents (3 agree-33 disagree), and 4A principals (0 agree-18 disagree) disagreed with the statement more often than the other groups.

TABLE XXX

#26--"Participation in debate causes a student to miss too much class time."

S.A.	Agr.	N.O.	Dis.	S.D.	N.E.	Q.U.
8	58	43	227	18	52	1

Sixty per cent of the respondents disagreed that debate causes a student to miss too much class time; sixteen per cent agreed.