

Review of Professional Resources

Millard F. Eiland, Editor

INTRODUCTION TO DEBATE

edited by Carolyn Keefe,

Thomas B. Harte, and Lawrence E. Norton

New York, NY: MacMillan Publishing Co., 1982

The editors of *Introduction to Debate* provide a wealth of rewarding experience for the novice debater, matriculating law student, or director of forensics. This long overdue review reveals the quality of the contributors' experience in the field of speech communication. Pi Kappa Delta can be extremely proud of a product which was produced by so many outstanding members of its organization.

The 15 chapters in the text, comprise (a) historical information, (b) elements of debate—format and structure, and (c) key factors in the process of critical thinking. I must stress that each contribution presents a unique frame of reference for the studious reader to analyze or study. Another element of critical consideration by the authors is the strong basis for consistent recognition of format, procedures, standards of debate presentation, and methods of objective critique.

Norton in Chapters 1 and 2 opens with a clear historical as well as academic rationale for serious consideration by the reader. Special notice should be taken as it relates to the critical thinking skills which can be produced by participation in debate. After a clear analysis and classification of standard debate formats in Chapter 3 by Baird, Goodwin presents the process of analysis and research in Chapters 4 and 5. In these basic theoretical descriptions for the reader, one must become familiar in order to understand overall design of the text.

Harte approaches the use and evaluation of evidence in Chapters 6 and 7 in a very methodical manner. In fact, for the novice debater a serious understanding would structure any future consideration in the process. For the affirmative and negative presenters, these chapters clearly neutralize the ability to understand basic methods for evidence consideration. Derryberry in Chapters 8 and 9 continues with a clear discussion on the philosophical elements of reasoning; one important element here is the defined relationship in the debate process and theory.

Short deserves special consideration in Chapters 10 and 11 even by a matriculating law student as the actual affirmative/negative

case building process begins. The precise method of case structure aids in the basic understanding of planning the case as well as its defense. This is an invaluable section to the fundamental principles and rationale for the case. Beagle concludes the thought process as it relates to challenging the opposition in Chapter 12 by focusing on what is very important in the debate process—listening skills! Kleinan in Chapters 13 and 14 introduces judges to the key elements of consistent factors in the evaluation process. Major concern should be to develop a clear understanding for problems, responsibilities, and factors relevant to the debate process. The primary objective by Kleinan is to establish consistency among participants and practitioners. Chapter 15 finalizes the element of ethics and morality as considerations in the debate process. Keefe points to the "balance that can be obtained in the success or misunderstanding of self in the process. The process and product are viewed in this regard as key elements for the debater and the debate.

The appendix sections present a variety of examples of debating, tournament procedures, the debate brief, a practice classroom debate, and American Forensic Association standards. These are excellent sections for the incorporation of theory, process, and practice for the novice debater and study by the new coach.

The text is instructional for the beginning student, instructor, or coach and it provides a practical series of exercises after each chapter. The suggested readings introduce the reader to the rich variety which is provided through the experiences of the authors. Certainly, there is one area of concern that readers will encounter which might possibly raise some awareness to debate. That is the degree of academic and intellectual material for study which should provide a challenging element for the participant.

Introduction to Debate must be added to the required readings list of basic textbooks for Pi Kappa Delta members and student participants.

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