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Relative importance of literary value as a criterion in declamation contests

Arleen Larson Baker

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THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF LITERARY VALUE AS A CRITERION
IN DECLamation CONTESTS

by

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B.A., University of Wyoming, 1931

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of
Master of Arts

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1956

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July 17, 1954
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the Problem</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization of Remainder of Study</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition of Terms</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Aims</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. SURVEY OF BACKGROUND HISTORY AND LITERATURE</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of the Montana High School Speech League</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standards of Literature</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience and Appreciation</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect of Literary Value Upon Interpretation as a Criterion</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect of Literary Value on Voice and Bodily Action as a Criterion</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect of Literary Value on General Effect as a Criterion</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect of Literary Value Upon Total Score and Rank</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. PROCEDURE</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of Data</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transposing Scores to a Uniform Scale</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formula Applied</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IV. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

General Effect Associated with Total Score .......................... 57
Compared with Interpretation .......................................... 58
In Dramatic Division ...................................................... 60
In Humorous Division .................................................... 62
In Oratorical Division ................................................... 62
Interpretation Versus Literary Value .................................. 64
In Humorous Division .................................................... 64
In Oratorical Division ................................................... 65
In Dramatic Division ...................................................... 62
Summary of Findings ...................................................... 69

V. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary ................................................................. 73
Recommendations ........................................................ 79

BIBLIOGRAPHY ........................................................... 81

APPENDIX AND CHARTS .................................................. 87
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

I. INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of the 20th century enthusiasm for speech contests among high schools in the United States has been steadily growing. Authorities generally concede that this enthusiasm stems from the potentials of speech contests for furthering basic educational aims and purposes. These aims for educational growth in students are designated essentially as 1) development of character and personality, 2) broadening of interests and viewpoints, 3) training for contacts and activities in later life, 4) appreciation and understanding of good literature, and 5) the development of efficiency in communication through speech skills. The Montana High School Speech League, instigated in 1904, is sponsored by the Montana State University and by speech contests promotes these basic educational aims.

During the Speech Tournament of 1955, the Montana High School Speech League voted to delete the criterion "Literary Value" from the ballot for declamation. Arguments in favor of this removal were that "Literary Value is an unreliable criterion for judging a contestant, and that the literary value of a selection is of little importance to the winning of a contest. In view of the fact that the constitution and by-laws and also the declamation ballot of the Montana High School Speech League encouraged contestants to choose
literature of value, it is apparent that the League considers the promotion of literary appreciation as one of its educational aims.

II. THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study has been to discover the importance of literary value to oral interpretation. Specifically, it was desirable to discover 1) if "Literary Value" was a reliable criterion for judging a contestant, and 2) in what ways literature of value affected oral interpretation and the ranking of a contestant.

III. ORGANIZATION OF THE REMAINDER OF THE STUDY

In order to pursue this purpose it was thought that the study of two points of view would be most gainful: 1) the opinions of authorities concerning literature of value and 2) the value that the judge places on the "Literary Value" of a selection as found in an examination of the judge's scorings on ballots for declamation.

Opinions of authorities are reflected in the objectives of the National Forensic League and the Montana High School Speech League, as well as in the statements of speech teachers concerning the importance of good literature to speech contests.

A survey was made to determine the reliability of "Literary Value" as a criterion by discovering existing standards for judging literature. This survey revealed also whether or not authorities believe literature of value asserts influence upon the judging of other criteria.

The point of view of the judges regarding "Literary Value" was
revealed in a statistical study of ballots for the declamation contests of the Montana High School Speech League Tournaments of 1954 and 1955. The ballots for these two years were used because they provided complete records for all declamations, and because the judges in both these years were virtually the same judges. The reliability of judges was not considered in this study since it had already been found in a previous study that judges do not appreciably disagree in the judgment of criteria regardless of their training or experience in judging, but that the greater the number of judgments pooled, for any contestant, the more accurate will be the final rating of that contestant.¹

An analysis of the statistical findings was made in order 1) to determine the actual influence that the criterion "Literary Value" had upon the ranking of contestants in the declamation contests of 1954 and 1955, 2) to compare the influence of "Literary Value" with the influence of "Interpretation" and "General Effect" upon the ranking of contestants, and 3) to find the amount of influence that literature of value had upon the judgments accorded the other criteria.

The conclusions drawn concern the importance of "Literary Value" as a criterion on the ballot for declamation and the recommendations that follow reflect the importance of literature of value as an educational aim of contests. The statistical findings include observa-

tions which were not computed by correlations or applied formula, but which became apparent through the correlations.

IV. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Terms are used throughout this thesis with certain connotations which need clarification for understanding by the reader.

Contest. Contest is used in this study to mean speech tournaments. It is used particularly to designate the three divisions of declamation which are examined in this thesis: Oratory, Dramatic, and Humorous.

Declamation and Oral Interpretation. These two terms are used interchangeably to indicate the Oratorical, Dramatic, and Humorous types of forensics under discussion. There is, however, a distinction between these two terms as defined by some authorities. Oral interpretation of the printed page is not necessarily memorized, although it may be. Declamation, however, as defined by Edna Gilbert, "is reciting from memory an oration for selection of literature,7 someone else has written."

Division. As used in this thesis, Division refers to the grouping of contestants according to types of literature: Oratory, Dramatic, and Humorous.

Round. This term will be found in the chapter on procedure and is used in the explanation of the organization of the declamation

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contest. It is applied to the successive appearances of a contestant before a judge in competition with other contestants within a division. Often "round" is used with a number to indicate the number of times the contestants have competed, i.e. Round I, Round II, Round III, Round IV.

**Judgment.** Judgment, unless the context clearly designates the mental activity of the judge, refers to the scores assigned to contestants by judges.

**Evaluation.** Evaluation is used when referring to the process of determining a value.

**Criteria.** Criteria are the standards of judgment used on the ballot. The criteria for declamation are: "Literary Value," "Interpretation," "Voice and Diction," "Bodily Activity," and "General Effect." Those criteria used in the statistical computations of this study are "Literary Value," "Interpretation," and "General Effect."

**Scores.** This term alludes to the grading or rating given by judges to the several criteria. The sum of the scores assigned to the individual criteria make up the "Total Score."

**Rank.** The rank is the number assigned to contestants in each round which places them in the order of their excellence. Those contestants who received the final ranking of 1, 2, or 3 were those who received the highest aggregate rankings in all rounds in which they appeared.

**Intangibles.** This term alludes to the factors of criticism and judgment which are unmeasurable. These factors are found in the judge-
ment or appreciation of a selection or a performance.

Significance. When applied to statistical data, significance means that a relationship which exists between two groups is not due to chance. A perfect correlation would produce the correlation number of 1. The nearer a correlated number is to the number 1, the more significant is the relationship of the numbers correlated.

V. SUMMARY

It is of particular importance to discover through an evaluation of opinions of authority and an evaluation of scorings on ballots whether or not literature of value asserts some influence upon Oral Interpretation. It may be found incidentally whether or not the use of "Literary Value" in contests furthers the basic educational aims supported by the Montana High School Speech League. It is hoped that significance, as applied to the effects of this study upon educational aims, may reach beyond the Montana High School Speech League.
CHAPTER II
SURVEY OF BACKGROUND HISTORY AND LITERATURE

For the purpose of understanding the place that literature of value has in Declamation Contests, a survey was made of three aspects of the problem posed by this thesis.

First, a study was made of the organization, the aims and purposes of the Montana High School Speech League, which provided the data for the findings presented. This study included the opinion of authorities regarding the aims and purposes of declamation contests and the place of "Literary Value" among these aims and purposes.

Second, the survey examined opinions of various authorities to discover the factors involved in an evaluation of literature since "Literary Value" as a criterion on the ballot for judging declamation contests was important in the statistical investigations of this thesis.

Finally, the reading aimed at a discovery of the effect that "Literary Value" has on the other criteria listed on the ballot, i.e., "Interpretation," "Voice and Diction," "Bodily Action," "General Effect," and "Total or Rank."

History of the Montana High School Speech League

The study of the Montana High School Speech League disclosed that it is a member of the National Forensic League which was originated by Bruno Jacob of Ripon College, Wisconsin, in 1925. The
Executive Committee consists of one representative from each of the

faculties and two representatives of some faculty member appointed by him. The

director is the faculty member of the Montana State University in charge of

the Montana High School Association. The activities of the organization are

for membership in high school in Montana that is also a member of

the organization of the Montana High School Speech League and

the speech program at the state level. Each state is responsible to the Montana P

organization in that the work done in the high schools is the same time, the or-

ganization is the highest level of the National Forensic League have influence on the kind of

ment of state high school speech leagues. The educational process

according to Paul A. Carmack, the discussion of "the degree of the member

through conference for the state chairman of the member school,

conference interested in speech activities by conferences on annual me-

structure its schools as members. The National Forensic League has

In 1929 By H. Talking, By 1934, the National Forensic League

launched high school speech association which had been founded.

The National Forensic League grew out of the act and successfu
high school districts in the state.

The Constitution and By-Laws of the Montana High School Speech League name the publication of the Montana Speech Bulletin as one of the duties of the Director. These Bulletins, published six times yearly, are designed to keep the members fully informed about the Constitution and By-Laws, about forthcoming tournaments and also tournaments already concluded. Previous to tournaments, the Bulletin contains copies of the ballots and the instructions to judges as to how the ballots shall be used in all of the contests.

The Montana High School Speech League follows the pattern set by the National Forensics League in encouraging interest in speech activities by annually sponsoring district tournaments held at various high schools throughout the state, and a state tournament held at the Montana State University in Missoula, Montana. This thesis is concerned with that aspect of the tournament called Declamation. According to the Constitution and By-Laws, Declamation is divided into three separate classifications: Dramatic (or serious), Humorous, and Oratorical, and it is provided that separate contests be held for each of these three classifications.

That the Montana High School Speech League not only encourages interest in speech activities, but is influential in promoting those basic educational aims which may be achieved by speech contests, is attested to in several places throughout the Constitution and By-Laws. For example, the purpose of this organization is:
...to stimulate interest in and improve debating and other forms of speech in the high schools of Montana, to provide opportunity for such activity through friendly rivalry, and to assist teachers and administrators in realizing basic educational aims achieved through debating and other forms of speech. 5

Moreover, the Director and Executive Committee are specifically charged in their duties to the League to encourage basic educational aims by promoting interest in speech activities.6

Still more pertinent to the interests of this thesis, however, is the fact that one of the basic educational aims is the development of literary appreciation. The By-Laws for Declaration state that:

The League Director shall urge coaches and contestants in Declaration to choose selections of good literary value. Selections of inferior literary value shall be discouraged for use in district and state tournaments.7

The instructions to Judges adapted from the rules for the National Forensics League tournaments and appearing on all ballots for declamation, point up the importance of literature of merit. Here the judges are informed that selections:

...should be judged for their appropriateness as contest material and their suitability to the particular contestants using them. The use of good literature should be noted favorably and the 'pieces' devoid of literary merit should be graded lowest.8


6Ibid.

7Ibid., p. 4

It is to be noted, then, that the Montana High School Speech League under the auspices of the National Forensics League has as its aims and purposes the stimulation of interest and improvement in speech activities, and the assistance to teachers and administrators in realizing the value of speech activities in achieving the basic educational aims. It is also to be noted that these organizations recognize literary appreciation as one of the basic educational aims, that this appreciation may be achieved through speech activities, and that its development should be encouraged by urging upon coaches, contestants, and judges the importance of choosing selections which have literary value.

Authorities who have written about speech contests within the last twenty years have acceded to the premise that such contests are conducted for the purpose of furthering educational objectives. These objectives or aims are realized when they result in the stimulation of students to greater knowledge and appreciation of society; the adjustment of their own personalities; the development of speech skills; and the acquisition of taste and appreciation in good literature.

H. L. Ewbank, discussing contests as an educational device says:

Speech contests, like any other educational device, are, of themselves, neither good nor bad. Their value rests on whether they stimulate the student to efforts he would not otherwise have made, in situations that are measurably like those he may meet outside of school.\(^9\)

Edna Gilbert, writing twenty years later, agrees with Ewbank

that the value of contests lies in their educational achievements. The development of speech skills being one of these aims, she describes its effect as "the ability to communicate thought and feeling to a group through the effective use of the tools of speech: voice, diction and free bodily action."\(^{10}\)

That the development of speech skills for the communication of thought is one of the major educational aims, is agreed upon by Lowrey and Johnson. They say further that communication through developed speech skills contributes to the adjustment of personality. "Interpretative reading should make distinct contributions to mental stability and emotional security," the extent of the contribution being dependent upon the quality of the literature chosen.\(^{11}\)

Hayakawa believes that the development of skills and the growth of personality are accomplished through the literature read, for literature itself is social and therefore is an aid to social as well as personal adjustment.

The ordering of experiences and attitudes of the writer produces in the reader some ordering of his own experiences and attitudes. The reader becomes, as a result of this ordering, somewhat better organized himself.\(^{12}\)

Experience gained through the knowledge and appreciation of good literature seems to be essential to the development of personal and social adjustment and to the development of skills for the communication of thought. Many authorities agree that living with great thoughts and attempting to communicate them to others results

\(^{10}\) Gilbert, op. cit., p. 117.

conceptions in the reception with in the press, reaction of the

there are many in it to offer good teachers are the

of value

passed by those deductive nothing criteria for selecting literature

persons own development of a conception are shown by the question

idea of good literature and the characteristics derived from it to the

lead to the original experience. The relationship between the know-

part of personal experience as study as though the reader had

any role. The knowledge of the to read through the characters and reactions of others.

through understanding the characters and reactions or others. In

as he above has understood, an adjustment of their own reactions to

experience to the world about them. It may be a determinate. When

comprehension contained in their reading as a means of furthering their

Those who understand and like good literature receive the in-

determination of, and a genuine attitude for good literature. It

but only a means to an end — the development of a sympathetic un-

those for reading, the reading is not to become an end in itself.

He who reads in the press, conduct and consciousness that in preparing

and humanizing potentialities inherent in the best literature

encourage in the minds of pupils the realization of the cultural

in some aspiration of the greatness. The American Renaissance would

13-19
experience? Was it chosen with...regard for the pupil’s weaknesses and strengths? Does it help develop his personality?16

I. STANDARDS OF LITERARY VALUE

The evaluation of literature is a subject which has absorbed critics throughout the history of writing, yet no set factors or standards for evaluating literature have been agreed upon. Most critics, however, would concur in the definition of good literature given by Mabel Irene Rich that good literature must not only give pleasure to the reader through the expression of true and beautiful thoughts in fitting language, but it must also "fire the imagination and arouse noble unselfish emotions."17 This definition admits the necessity of great thoughts written well, impressing the reader imaginatively and emotionally. However, the evaluation of literature involves more than these few factors.

The difficulty of finding set standards for the evaluation of literature lies in the fact that artistic judgments are highly subjective. Literary standards would need to be based upon fact and fact is in the province of science. S. S. Curry believes that literature as an art can be studied only as an art and not as a science.18 Canby says that except where literature is based upon

15Ibid. 16Gilbert, op. cit., p. 117.


facts, it has always been

...beyond proof, though not beyond reason... It is made
up of imagination, intuition, emotion and prophecy; it
is instinct with beauty, and the power of idea -- in-
deed with precisely those intangibles which can be ap-
proached, but not controlled by fact.\textsuperscript{19}

The distinction between the humanities (or arts) and science, ac-
cording to Dudley and Faricy, is a distinction in the way of know-
ing. They explain that "the sciences belong to the class of logi-
cal knowledge, whereas the humanities belong to the class of intu-
tive knowledge."\textsuperscript{20} We apparently know, or realize, that a sunset
is beautiful largely because it touches our emotions or senses, our
experiences or appreciation, and we know literature in the same way.

However nebulous the process, there are certain aspects of lit-
erature, as of any other art, which can be approached analytically.

One of these is through its composition which includes 1) invention,
2) arrangement, and 3) style. According to Harrington, these three
divisions have been recognized by all great rhetoricians from the
ancients, beginning with Aristotle, to the modern.

Invention, as distinguished from arrangement and style, may be
understood as the creation of idea by the author about a subject.

For instance, much good literature has had for its subject the strug-
gle for power. It is only the author's creative idea, the conception
of circumstance, character, situation and result which sets his work
apart from others who use the same subject. Thus, invention, as
used in the following discussion constitutes the conception of a

\textsuperscript{19} Henry Seidel Canby, \textit{American Estimates} (New York: Harcourt,
subject and once conceived it is actually the subject of the work.

Arrangement concerns the organization, development, clarity, and unity of the subject matter. Style is the wording and phrasing used to express the author's creative idea through the written word.

Although critics agree on the three classical divisions of the composition, they do not agree upon the relative importance of each division. For instance, Aristotle considered invention of the greatest importance. Longinus emphasized style in writing, while O'Connor believed the structure or arrangement to be the most important division.

In discussing invention most authorities agree with Dudley-Faricy that it is the ethos of the writer which produces greatness; that "the value of art does not lie in the subject but in what the artist does with his subject. The greatness of art comes not from the subject but from the artist." Bennett says:

The deepest quality of a work of art will always be the quality of the mind of the producer. In proportion as that intelligence is fine will the novel...partake of beauty and truth.

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24 Dudley, op. cit., = 34.
Haslitt believes literature must contain "the virtues that could have been put into it only by a man of very exceptional qualities." 26

Originality as a quality of invention important to a subject is discussed by Maier and Reninger who state that "an idea to be valuable must be new, i.e., it must cover facts which have not been interpreted before in a similar manner."27 They continue by saying that the interpretation should be new, for "mere repetitions and imitations contribute little or nothing to literature." 28 The importance of originality of idea is suggested by Haslitt in his question, "Has this book force, flavor, personal insight, originality?" 29

Truth also, according to Maier and Reninger in their discussion of the qualities of invention, is indispensable to a valuable idea. 30 Bennett considers truth a most important factor in the worth of a subject. He advises the reader that one way to determine whether the literature is worthwhile or not is to ask himself if the book seems sincere and true, for "honesty in literature as in life is the quality that counts first and last." 31 Writers of all ages


28 ibid., p. 43. 30 Maier, op. cit., p. 74.

29 Haslitt, op. cit., p. 261. 31 Bennett, op. cit., p. 46.
however, to become a

universal problems. 36

must be of universal interest, for, in real phases of interest, the

to contribute to the expression of the idea, clearly,

It must contain truths which may be universally recognized. In order

interpreted with certainty to be universally recognized as different.

what emotion may be universally recognized as good. It must be con-

In order to appeal to all men, it must be concerned by one

just as to be addressed to all men, it must be for a certain

Certainty if the end

writer is an absolute, addressed to all men. 79

true, "One writes for the universal reader, that is, he

or subject matter must deal with universal experience, stating be-

truth emotion known and shared by all mankind." 32

that we experience in the universality of all objects.

"The whole is to externally and relatively matter." 32

things more of these absolute or as somewhat quite relative and change-

have realized the force of truth, yet the conception of truth and me.
whole work of art the ideas and ideals of the author must be transmitted to the reader in such a way that they will have value for him. This transmission of the idea is dependent upon the arrangement or organization of the idea. Mitchie believes that the value which the subject has for the author is revealed by "the form which he gives to it, the interpretation he places upon it, the way in which he organizes and arranges the details of it." 37

In good literature "there is strict logic in the organization of content, and definite order in the arrangement of the thought." 38

Many literary critics believe that if the arrangement is planned well, the idea will be written well. "Plan in literature is based only on the succession of ideas, the organization of thought." 39

The organization of thought must be pointed, consistent, and unified.

It is not possible to consider arrangement apart from the subject. Hayakawa sees arrangement in literature as an ordering of the idea of the author, forming it into a clear understanding of the whole unified concept. He believes that literary greatness requires great powers of ordering the subject meaningfully. 40

As plan or arrangement are governed by the subject, so is the


38 Dudley, op. cit., p. 417.

39 Ibid., p. 413.

40 Hayakawa, op. cit., p. 154.
style in writing. "When a writer conceives an idea, he conceives it in a form of words. That form of words constitutes his style, and is absolutely governed by the idea," according to Bennett.41

"Having chosen an experience of value and selected from it the significant details, having interpreted and shaped it into an artistic whole, he then puts it into words."42 Style is, therefore, essentially the way in which ideas are expressed.

To be acceptable as good literature, style as well as invention of content must have universal appeal. It is the style which clothes the universal idea in emotion and beauty, and presents it to the reader to be re-created imaginatively. It is the well-chosen word, the charm of phrasing, the vividness of imagery, that is the art of imaginative expression. It is the beauty of wording linked with the beauty of thought which stirs the reader imaginatively and emotionally.

In conceiving his idea and in forming the idea into words, the author's personality and ethos will be apparent. In other words, "The style is the man."43 Hitchie seems to summarize the integration of invention, arrangement, and style in this passage:

...the creator of literature is a man of greater sensitiveness and a power of imagination that enables him to transmit the value of his experiences and to make a thing of beauty out of the expression of it. The genius is the writer who possesses this equipment in the higher degree.44

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41Hitchie, op. cit., p. 187.
42Hitchie, op. cit., p. 469
43Hitchie, op. cit., p. 55.
II. EXPERIENCE AND APPRECIATION

Appreciation of literature is an experience, and to appreciate literature requires experience. It does not necessarily require an analytical mind. It is when symbols set down by the author stir the reader emotionally, move him to simulate the experience of the author that he begins to appreciate or "know" literature. Evaluation of literature is a subjective process, since its effect upon the reader is a significant consideration in estimating its worth. It "must ever be dependent upon and measured by the energy and power it awakens in the depths of the soul." This is to say that when literature is read it is not read to discover the system used, or the standards obeyed by the author. It is read for the enjoyment it gives, the appreciation it satisfies, the experiences it evokes or teaches. Or, as George Santayana puts it, "To feel beauty is a better thing than to understand how we come to feel it." The reader expects to become enriched by contact with good literature. "We look for intellectual, spiritual and emotional refreshment and growth." Intellectually, literature may add to one's store of knowledge or experience. Spiritually, it may inspire or impel. Emotionally,
it can enlarge experience and appreciation. "It should be clear why good writing is so easy to recognize but so difficult to discuss intelligently: it is 'felt' by people who are incapable of analyzing it." Bennett says: "Literature does not begin 'till emotion has begun," and, "All literature is the expression of feeling, of passion, of emotion, caused by a sensation of the interestingness of life." When the reader feels the emotion or understands the emotion which was felt or described by the author he can be said to experience the emotion, and these experiences lead to wider knowledge of life and, hence, to greater appreciation. Some emotions may never be actually felt by a reader but he may learn of them and appreciate them in others through the experiences offered by the author.

Experiences differ almost as widely as the people having them, but there are three general types. First, there is the original experience of the author. Second, there is the experience of the person who enjoys the writing — the author creates a picture and the reader recreates the experience of the author. These two types of experiences are direct. Third, there is the indirect experience of the person who has enjoyed any work of art, becoming more sensitive to all expressions of art and the world

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48Maier, op. cit., p. 115.
49Bennett, op. cit., p. 31.
50Ibid., p. 29.
51Dudley, op. cit., p. 627.
in general.  

Imagination is an indispensable aid to both experience and appreciation. Curry believes that imagination is one of the important mediums for experience. It is the means whereby the author transposes experience into literary form and whereby the reader translates this literature into his own experience.

Imagination should be developed because all true appreciation of art and literature is dependent upon its exercise. Man can appreciate art only by the same faculty which creates it. In short, imagination not only creates all art, but it appreciates art.

Appreciation cannot be taught. It must be acquired through a growing consciousness of experiences. Neither can experience be taught. "No experience can ever be transferred from one person to another; each person must have his own experience." The ability to evaluate literature depends upon the extent of the reader's experience. "Effective evaluation comes from the critic's own knowledge and sensitivity."

Thus, it is important in the consideration of literary evaluation, to understand that literature should be judged with the whole of the reader's experience and knowledge. The application of standards and principles are valuable but should be used indirectly;

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51 Dudley, op. cit., p. 627.
52 Curry, Studies in the Art of Interpretation, p. 118.
53 Dudley, op. cit., p. 8.
54 Maier, op. cit., p. 116.
otherwise, the whole purpose of reading for pleasure and inspiration will be unsuccessful, for, "nothing can take the place of personal discernment." Since literature, then, is evaluated or judged through experience and appreciation, it follows that literature will be made "good" or "bad" by the extent or limit of the author's experience and appreciation; and will be judged "good" or "bad" by the extent or limit of the reader's experience and appreciation. The ultimate evaluation of the worth of a selection of literature will vary with the personal equation, according to Mitchie, and no one critic will be an infallible guide for every reader. She says, "A book may mean much to one man and little to his neighbor, yet both of them, if their judgments are the final aftergrowth of much endeavor, may, within their limitations, be right."

The personal equation is one factor which is never denied by those who write about literary evaluation. The cause for discrepancies in judgment of a selection of literature lies in the diversity of human temperaments. Brewster explains this discrepancy in evaluations by saying:

No two men will be struck by precisely the same thing, by the same body of facts, in precisely the same way... no two critics would hold identical views with regard to a book they happen to be reading in common.

55 Haslitt, op. cit., p. 269.
56 Mitchie, op. cit., p. 55-56.
In "An Experimental Study in the Amount of Agreement Among Judges in Evaluating Oral Interpretation," Evelyn Seedorf has found that these differences in critical evaluation become more apparent as experience increases. She says:

Assuming that a judge's critical sense increases with experience, the results here point out that it does not necessarily follow that with increase in the critical sense there is increased agreement among judges. In fact, merely increasing experience in this case seemed to provide for greater independence of judgment.⁵⁸

It must be admitted from the discussion thus far, that the distinguishing element in an art is in the way of knowing through experience and appreciation. The reader cannot base his knowledge of literature upon the standards of writing alone. Experience and appreciation enter into every analysis and, furthermore, they are personal and individual. Charles Lamb in his essay on "The Art of Fiction" says, "Nothing, of course, will ever take the place of the good old fashion of 'liking' a work of art or not liking it; the most improved criticism will not abolish that primitive, that ultimate test."⁵⁹

Many authorities concur on the concept of "liking" a selection of literature as an evaluation of it. Dudley and Parley qualify "liking" by saying, "It must be real liking; it must be an honest opinion....No real appreciation can come of pretending to

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⁵⁹Brewster, op. cit., p. 249-250.
like what one does not really enjoy....Neither should he pretend to enjoy the art that he recognizes as inferior." Brooks Atkinson would have us

Apply to the world of art the same standards you apply to people. Be as honest with art as you are with friends and acquaintances....For a work of art is not a mechanical achievement, automatically performed and capable of infinite production, like a factory assembly product.

People learn to recognize and appreciate the enduring qualities of a personality as they have ever widening experience in society. In the same way people learn to recognize and appreciate the lasting and artistic qualities of literature. Descartes holds that "the reading of good books is like a conversation with good friends, enjoying and living with them their best thoughts." And Haslitt expresses the same idea by saying:

How you never judge men directly by abstract "principles" or, in fact, by any rigid measuring rod. You judge them with all your knowledge, experience and preferences; your whole personality judges their personalities. Well, you judge a work of art or literature in the same way.

This personal preference and discernment is called taste. "Taste is the expression of man's aesthetic judgment." It is

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60 Dudley, op. cit., p. 564.
61 Atkinson, op. cit., p. 49.
63 Haslitt, op. cit., p. 262.
simply an expression of likes and dislikes, those things which are appreciated or are not appreciated. And tastes grow from experience. More than this, "Tastes change. The impression of any work is modified by greater experience." Widening experience may teach a liking for what was once disliked, or may reverse a dislike to a liking.

Tastes, then, are to be cultivated if one is desirous of attaining good tastes. Experience should be sought among the best in literature if tastes are to extend to the best. "Since any experience of art gives a sense of heightened living, the greater art gives greater pleasure, a more intense sense of living."

All art forms are produced through a desire for communicating an aesthetic belief. All art forms are appreciated through a reception of this aesthetic belief. Literature as an art can be appreciated completely only through an aesthetic rapport with the work as a whole -- not through an analysis of its parts.

III. EFFECT OF LITERARY VALUE UPON INTERPRETATION AS A CRITERION

Interpretation is an art dependent upon literature for its subject and its form. Although the interpreter makes his own contribu-
to art, his obligation is that of presenting material created by a writer. This contribution is "no less important and individual, no less worthy and delightful, no less skillful and significant, than

65Pudley, op. cit., p. 563.
66Ibid., p. 566.
that of the writer. Nevertheless, it depends upon literature for its impetus.

Not only does oral interpretation depend upon literature but literature depends upon oral interpretation for its fullest appreciation by an audience. "A large portion of the world's greatest literature was never intended for silence." It is only when the art of oral interpretation is fused with the work of the creative artist "that literature can take its rightful place...as a fully communicative art." A skillful interpretation of a selection of literature can communicate qualities of force, vitality and imagery not apparent in a silent reading of the selection. Miriam Booth has concluded from her study of the values of oral interpretation of the printed page that "Literature, meaning the finest writing of every age, is essentially an oral art." It would appear, then, that the two arts, literature and oral interpretation, may well be inter-dependent.

It is the purpose of an interpreter "to translate literature,


being true to the complex attitudes contained in the written composition.\textsuperscript{71} Before literature becomes an interpretation it must permeate the interpreter. His obligation is "to discern the ideal in great literature, to penetrate its reality, and then reveal [these] which may well be the spiritual elements of literature, in terms of material appearances."\textsuperscript{72} It calls for the most sincere searching of one's own thoughts and feelings, the most genuine use of one's own trust and best, for it is the most face to face of all arts, the most intimate, the most direct, the most man-to-man.\textsuperscript{73}

The more completely the interpreter submerges himself into the literature and takes on the author's point of view the more successful he is in communicating his interpretation. According to McLean, the performer must efface himself. "The more successfully he effaces himself and becomes the embodiment of the author's creation the more successful and useful and penetrating will his own work become,"\textsuperscript{74} He cannot avoid bringing himself into the picture physically, as well as evaluating the literature in terms of his personality and his experience, but these should remain subtle undertones to the author's thought and emotion. They manifest themselves only through the interpreter's deep and honest appreciation of universal thoughts and emotions found in good literature and his enthusiasm for sharing these thoughts with others.\textsuperscript{75}


There is a wide realm of literature where rich experiences can be felt. In making his selection, the interpreter must consider the appeal of the literature to those to whom he is communicating as well as to himself. It has already been pointed out that universality is a necessary quality of good literature. If not a necessary quality for a good interpretation, at least an interpreter gains better understanding on the part of his audience by selecting material of high literary value because that literature will be permeated with the intellectual and emotional qualities which appeal to all mankind.

This quality of universality is present in the best expression of the best thoughts of men. While not all fine literature is adaptable for interpretation, Pearson complains that many interpreters underestimate the vocal possibilities of many literary masterpieces and choose, instead, selections which cannot pass in literary company and which are below the best appreciation of their audience. Don Geiger, while not insisting that the interpreter "slay the ultimate dragons of value-theory," believes he may yet make a proper selection from the kind of literature traditionally offered in the liberal arts program.

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73 Woolbert, op. cit., p. 30.
74 McLean, op. cit., p. 51.
75 Simon, op. cit., p. 27.
76 McLean, op. cit., p. 44.
In order to do justice to this literature the interpreter's choice should be made with regard to the extent of his own experience and appreciation; his ability to respond and sympathize with what he reads; and the existence of a challenge in what he reads. The reasons for these considerations are clear. He cannot translate what he does not understand; he cannot project what he does not feel; he cannot be vital about that which does not challenge him. Unless he is able to experience and appreciate the literature the oral interpreter will lack "the will-to-communicate." It is his eagerness to share with an audience the experience which has stirred his own response, which brings vigor and vitality to the interpreter's performance. Cunningham believes that "communication will inevitably follow upon the understanding of the selection." Charles Laughton explains that to communicate, the reader must seek a response in the hearer; and that to experience, he must grasp the thought and mean-


81. Ibid., p. viii.


83. Cunningham, op. cit., p. 293.
ing and feel the emotion. By pronouncing the printed words with the same feeling the author experienced when he wrote them, the reader is led to experience kindred emotions and it follows that by effectively communicating these kindred emotions, the interpreter may cause the audience to respond similarly.

The judge, too, is a member of the audience and will evaluate "interpretation" on the ballot principally through his appreciation of the interpretation of the selection. His appreciation will be determined by his experience, and his evaluation of the literary value in relation to the interpretation will depend upon how far he himself has grown in an appreciation of literary value. If he takes into account the principle of growth by experience, he will expect a message within the limits of the experience of the speaker. He will determine the appropriateness of the selection by deciding how well the interpreter understands the logical and emotional contents. If he takes into account the principle of inter-dependence of literature and interpretation, he will look for a vital, living, renewed experience.

IV. THE EFFECT OF LITERARY VALUE ON VOICE AND BODILY ACTION AS A CRITERION

Voice and body may be called the instruments used by the interpreter to communicate the thought of the writer's work di-

\footnote{Holm, op. cit., p. 39.}
rectly to the audience. \(^{85}\) Lowry believes that interpretative reading "involves the coordinated use of body, voice and language guided by the thought content of the literature one chooses to read." \(^{86}\) The manner in which these instruments are coordinated for the interpretation will be suggested by the thought content of the literature chosen. The thought content dictates the emotional response, and this emotional response to the literature must be conveyed along with the thought. "The audience will receive the full emotional impact only if the interpreter himself is responding as he reads." \(^{87}\) Charlotte Lee would have the reader respond in such a way that his voice and body are in harmony with the thought. \(^{88}\)

From a communicative point of view, the interpreter is expected to do no more than any other speaker in any communicative situation. His vocal expression and bodily movements are coordinated with his thought and feelings to produce the desired effect within the hearer. Judging him from an artistic point of view, however, the interpreter must do all this beautifully.

Neither the artistry of technique by itself nor the content

\(^{85}\) Lowrey, op. cit., p. 10-11

\(^{86}\) Lowrey, op. cit., p. 179

\(^{87}\) Lee, op. cit., p. 20.

\(^{88}\) Ibid.
by itself, however valuable the latter may be, is adequate. Pearson says that if the interpreter's "passion is for the thought, if it is to give us only the thought we had best spend our time reading." On the other hand, "If he is to give us only the beautiful tone, diction and gesture, we had best spend our time at chamber concerts or the opera." Charles Laughton, a master of reading technique, also warns novices of the inseparability of thought and technique, and at the same time suggests the source of technique. "Form is born of spirit," he says. The goal of the reader "is sincere expression which is achieved simply by thinking and feeling the selection and without giving attention to the careful development of the technique."

Bodily and vocal modulations are matters of response to the interpreter's understanding of the literature. He must be able to determine what he would do "in a given situation under the influence of location, situation and mood." Every change in the situation, thought, and feeling of a person will create natural responses of vocal modulations and bodily action. It is the opinion of Duffey that if the interpreter truly feels the situation, lives the character, feels the mood of the literary environment, and understands the progression of the theme, then voice and body will

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89 Pearson, op. cit., p. 39.
90 Lennon, op. cit., p. 87.
91 Duffey, op. cit., p. 19.
co-operate to give the calibre and purpose of a selection. Stan-
islavski tells the actor to "feel your part and instantly all your
inner chords will harmonize, your body apparatus of expression will
begin to function." Unless the reader sympathetically responds
to the mood of the author and to the emotions induced by the mater-
ial, and unless he is able to communicate the mood and emotion to
his audience, he is not a good reader.

Many authors believe that an interpreter's natural responses
to situations can be learned only through his growth of experience
and appreciation. They believe that if interpretation is to be ar-
tistic, the experiences should be gained through valuable literature.
For instance, Duffey avers:

If the great writers and speakers and their products
are studied for thought and style, the student will
become conscious of his own strength, his own power
to conceive, and his higher ideals which are inher-
ently based in his own nature. He will rightfully
ask the reasons for greatness and so awaken the qual-
ities of his own soul that his own expression will
become greater when he has become greater.

Literature in its many artistic forms encompasses all the actual
experiences of life. Its cultivation, says Curry, is the most po-
tent factor in stimulating imagination which creates vocal tone
color, refines body action, and creates harmony and unity of ex-
pression. Simon believes that the interpreter's muscular re-

92 Constantin Stanislavski, An Actor Prepares (New York:
95 Curry, Imagination and Dramatic Instinct, p. 1
response (both voice and body) will become more refined as his appreciation grows deeper and finer. 96

"The technique is perfect that enables the artist to do just as he desires with his medium." 97 As an example, the significance of physical acts in highly tragic or dramatic moments is emphasized by the fact that "the simpler they are, the easier it is to grasp them, the easier to allow them to lead the interpreter to pure objective, away from mechanical action." 98 If the mind of the interpreter is occupied with his technique, this concentration will hinder the proper communication of the thought in the selection, drawing attention to the technique as well as to the interpreter's inexperience with the thought. Lennon and Hamilton suggest that part of Charles Laughton's success as a reader is due to his "effective and lucid delivery which does not call attention to itself." 99

It is the opinion of many authorities that all "speech should be used for the communication of ideas and feelings, not for the exhibition of skills and techniques." 100 They concur that the wider the experience, the better the interpreter; the more artistic the performance, the more seemingly artless it is. The skills

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96Simon, op. cit., p. 27.
97Dudley, op. cit., p. 89.
98Stanislavski, op. cit., p. 142.
99Lennon, op. cit., p. 87.
of voice and bodily action should be used as a means of conveying the interpreter's appreciation of his selection to an audience for the purpose of arousing similar appreciation of the selection. "Techniques of any art are never ends in themselves." They are essential, but when attention is called from the art to the technique which produces it the technique is bad. "Beauty in art is accomplished through technique; it does not lie in the technique." 101

In the evaluation of "Voice and Diction," and "Bodily Action" as criteria on the ballot, the judge will consider them effective if they have conveyed the meaning and feeling in the selection without becoming distracting to that meaning and feeling. He will expect the interpreter to seem spontaneous and natural in the visible and audible techniques of his interpretation. 102 Indirectly, he will also be placing an evaluation upon the literary value of the selection itself, since the extent of the interpreter's experience and appreciation will be shown through his choice of selection and his ability to re-create the imagery and emotions. The judge will also be aware that the ballot instructions say, "This is a contest in oral interpretation, not solo acting. Although gestures and pantomime are not barred they should be used with restraint." 103

101Dudley, op. cit., p. 4.
102 Ibid., p. 91.
103 Gilbert, op. cit., p. 120.
104 Sample Ballot from the Montana High School Speech League, Missoula, Montana.
V. THE EFFECT OF LITERARY VALUE ON GENERAL EFFECT
AS A CRITERION

There are three factors to consider in choosing a selection for oral interpretation, these factors influencing the "general effect" of the performance. First, the literature should be chosen for the appreciation it arouses in the interpreter. Second, it should be within the realm of the interpreter's experience to re-create through his skills. Third, it should be chosen with anticipation of the mental and emotional capacity for appreciation to be found in the audience. It is not too much to ask of a good speaker that his material be chosen "to appeal to the tastes, the wants, and the motives of his audience."

The interpreter, as a creative artist, knows ahead of time what effect he wishes to produce and he plans accordingly. Because fine art requires a good subject, he will make his selection with thought to the audience's requirements. This is the first step in collaborating with the audience. "There can be no interpretation without the collaboration of the audience, and that collaboration is the business of the artist to secure." If he is an artist, the interpreter will choose a selection within the limits of his own experience and appreciation, so that the effect of his expression of the author's thoughts will be natural and enthusiastic. He will create "all the wealth of living

106 Holm, op. cit., p. 40
107 Pearson, op. cit., p. 39
for an audience so that the impression of his interpretation will be one of unity between the author's work and the interpreter's expression of the work.

The interpreter must maintain a balance between the emotional and intellectual reaction to his selection, a balance in his own reaction and that of the audience. There must be sufficient restraint to maintain believability and enough vitality to lend warmth, color, and general appeal. "Art cannot be appreciated by the mind alone." It must add to our delight, or enlarge our beliefs, or admit a truth, or extend our souls. The extent to which it is successful depends upon the sender, who is the author; the re-creator, who is the interpreter; and the hearer, who receives the experience. The artistic performance never fails. "It becomes more pleasing, penetrates more deeply all the time, until it embraces the whole being of an artist and his spectators as well."

The artist has his techniques at his command. By these techniques he must represent "the thought of the author as he supposed it was meant to be interpreted. Anything less than a full charge of meaning, rich and varied, comes short of the standard

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108 Duffey, op. cit., p. 37.
110 Atkinson, op. cit., p. 135.
111 Stanislavski, op. cit., p. 28.
involved in the term Interpretation."\textsuperscript{112}

"The whole is not just the sum of its parts. There is always something of the inexplicable about art,"\textsuperscript{113} One inexplicable feature is personality, for no matter how carefully the individual has been trained, nor how successful his conditioning has been, he remains a distinct personality "with capacities for independent thought, feeling and action." The particular slant he gives to his material is evident in the general effect of his interpretation. "Without the stamp of the reader's personality the interpretation lacks authenticity, vitality, originality."\textsuperscript{115} The effect of the interpretation is in proportion to the effectiveness of the individual. Duffey believes that literature must be interpreted by man as a product of man. He says, "whether we look into life or literature or [any] art, we find man. He must be known before we can understand his product, whether that product is his speech...or his art."\textsuperscript{116} Among the characteristics of a personality which go to make up the general effect of his product are "spontaneity, enthusiasm, dignity, poise, geniality and refinement."\textsuperscript{117}

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{112} Woolbert, op. cit., p. 17.
\bibitem{113} Dudley, op. cit. p. 533-534.
\bibitem{115} Lowrey, op. cit., p. 199
\bibitem{116} Duffey, op. cit., p. 404.
\bibitem{117} Holm, op. cit., p. 41.
\end{thebibliography}
The fiber of man's thinking is woven into his general effect. In order to improve this fiber, Hugh Blair prescribes good literature, for the reason that

From reading the most admired production of genius, whether in poetry or prose, almost everyone rises with some good impressions left on his mind; and though these may not always be durable, they are at least to be ranked among the means of disposing the heart to virtue.\(^{118}\)

Another inexplicable quality of the general effect of an interpretation comes from the audience, or as Barret and Foster put it, "Impressions of the speaker are derived largely from signs of which the audience is unaware."\(^{119}\) Many authorities identify this unconscious audience response as empathy. Woolbert and Nelson call empathy a "feeling in" process.\(^{120}\) From the interpreter come certain meanings and feelings which create a similar response in the audience. In essence it is the effect of one person upon another which produces empathy. The muscles tend to do in the hearer what the interpreter suggests. The concentration of the audience is upon "the experience and not on what the Interpreter is doing. Empathy in the audience gives evidence of the speaker's success in communicating reality."\(^{121}\) The part of the interpreter is to arouse the right emphases in the mind of his audience. He

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\(^{119}\) Barret, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

\(^{120}\) Woolbert, *op. cit.*, p. 177

\(^{121}\) Lowrey, *op. cit.*, p. 62.
must interpret the selection with sincerity and faithfulness to
the author's original thought, and he must present the thought
through this individuality of his experience. "Then the empa-
thies that he arouses...will determine the success of his com-
munication."122

In the opinion of Holm, "The single total effect of speaker
upon audience is the greatest fundamental of all the criteria of
judging. Speech is effective when it accomplishes its purpose of
response in the audience."123 In judging the "General Effect" on
the ballot, the judge will first consider the success of the
speaker in achieving his purpose with the audience.124 He will
expect the interpretation to have enriched or confirmed his own
intellectual and emotional experiences; he will expect to have
been absorbed and moved. He will judge the performance in terms
of his own empathy and in this as in any art, the judge is his
own arbiter -- the experience he receives is according to his
own appreciation.125 Next he will consider the interpreter in
respect to his performance as a whole. If the interpreter has
understood the author's purpose, theme and character; if he has
presented the images vividly and felt the emotions sincerely; if

122 Argus Tresidder, Reading to Others (Chicago: Scott,

123 Holm, op. cit., p. 33.

124 Ibid, p. 25.

125 Woolbert, op. cit., p. 177.
he has been eager and direct in his communication of thought and feeling; and if he has created an interpretation which is touched with artistry, the "General Effect" of his performance will be successful.126

Ultimately, the "General Effect" of an interpretation is tested by the audience response. The significance of "Literary Value" on the "General Effect" will depend upon the reader thoroughly understanding the meaning of all words, names, allusions, and images; his clear comprehension of the ideas presented; his knowledge of the interrelationships or phrases and ability to express them; and his insight into the attitude of the writer, as well as skill to express that attitude. The significance of "Literary Value" on "General Effect" will further depend upon the audience being pleased with the personality and presentation of the reader, feeling empathic responses to the material being read, and having the breadth of experience and the depth of appreciation to understand the writer's original thought through the re-creation of the reader.

VI. THE EFFECT OF LITERARY VALUE UPON TOTAL SCORE AND RANK

On the ballot for Declamation the total score is the sum of the scores assigned to all criteria. This total should correlate closely with the scoring of "General Effect," since "Gen-

126 Gilbert, op. cit., p. 119.
"General Effect" is a judgment of all the criteria contributing to a complete and satisfying performance. In the analytical criticism based upon separate criteria "each speaker should be compared both to those with whom he is competing and to an established set of standards of performance." The standards of performance are outlined on the ballot under "Instruction to Judges" and they state:

...the final test of good interpretation is the ability to use all these factors (of interpretation) so successfully and unobtrusively that the hearer forgets that this is a contest and is carried away to the time and place of the story being unfolded.

It sometimes happens, however, that the "Total Score" of several contestants will be identical, although the scoring of the separate criteria are varied. When this happens, in order to assign ranks to the contestants, it becomes necessary for the judge to compare the contestants further. He may then rely upon artistic criticism. This standard of criticism would place the final burden of judgment upon "Literary Value," since it is the value of the subject used for interpretation that stimulates the interpreter's appreciation and determines the use of his skills to convey his appreciation to the audience. Artistically, the judge will "take for granted that the artist has done what he wanted to do; in other words, that he has not been hampered by

127 Holm, op. cit., p. 25.
128 Sample Ballot, Appendix, p. 87.
lack of technique." The judge will assume that the reader has chosen his selection because he appreciated the author's ideas and wished to convey them to others.

In the final ranking of a contestant the score will depend upon the judgment of the actual attainments of the contestants as compared with the ideal possibilities of the author's original work. However, the full appreciation of the contestant's attainment will depend upon the judge's capacity for appreciation and receptivity as much as upon the reader's projection of the idea. All judges are not capable of recognizing the extent to which "standards have been attained by a given reader, the rating that a reader receives from any judge is, if not capricious, at least subject to that judge's own powers of aesthetic discrimination."

This dependency of the final scoring of a contestant upon the powers of reception within the judge might at first seem a capricious scoring. However, Seedorf found in her study of judging oral interpretation that the rank of contestants were approximately the same regardless of whether the same scores were based upon several weighted criteria or upon the one criterion, "General Effectiveness." It was also found in this study that groups of

129 Dudley, op. cit., p. 91.
130 Curry, Studies in the Art of Interpretation, Johnson, p. 237.
131 Seedorf, op. cit., p. 20.
judges variously trained did not deviate significantly in their scoring. Judges "professionally trained in criticism, trained in rendering an artistic interpretation, instructed carefully in the definition of the criteria used, and wholly inexperienced" showed no significant variation in scoring.\textsuperscript{133}

The differences in the amount of variation within these several groups of judges was significant in that "the judges seem to agree that the mediocre readers are mediocre, but [the judges] have different ideas as to what is very good and what is very poor."\textsuperscript{134}

Oral interpretation as an art can best be appreciated through an aesthetic rapport evidenced in the criterion, "General Effect," and not through the analysis and weighing of the parts which produce it. A judgment of art is, in the final analysis, the judgment of the effect the work has upon the aesthetic appreciation, the intelligence, imagination, and emotions. This appeal cannot be predicted and may not be understood. It is the evidence of intangible factors of judgment discussed in an earlier part of this chapter. True criticism is the application of taste and good sense to an art. Its object is to distinguish "what is beautiful and what is faulty in performance."\textsuperscript{135} In judging performance it must be realized that only the more obvious factors can be analytically

\textsuperscript{133} \textit{Ibid}, p. 20.  \quad \textsuperscript{134} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 14.  \quad \textsuperscript{135} \textit{Blair, op. cit.}, p. 41.
treated. Some factors "are so intangible and elusive that they
defy present analysis."\textsuperscript{136}

\textsuperscript{136}Simon, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 22.
CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE

The statistical study began by examining ballots scored by judges in the 1954 and 1955 declamation contests of the Montana High School Speech League (described in Chapter II) to discover the number of contest rounds, number of contestants in each division and the results of the scores of judges.

In the 1954 declamation contests, there were 14 contestants who chose to compete in the Oratorical division, 39 contestants in the Dramatic division and 41 contestants in the Humorous division. In each division each contestant delivered his selection in three different rounds, receiving a score each time from a different judge. For each division the top ranking contestants were scored in a fourth round. (See Appendix, Chart I.)

It was observed in the Oratorical division of 1954, that six or seven contestants were allocated to a room with one judge. Those contestants who did not receive scores in all of the first three rounds were eliminated from this study. In allocating contestants to their respective rooms for the three rounds, there was an attempt to allow each contestant to compete with every other contestant in this division. A fourth round was composed of the seven highest contestants from the three previous rounds. These contestants were ranked by a judge who had not judged in the previous three rounds. In the fourth round only first, second, and third places were ranked. The other contestants were not assigned a
The Dramatic division of 1954 followed the same organization as the Oratorical division described above. There were, however, seven contestants instead of six included in each room for the three rounds with one judge for each room. In the fourth round there were six highest ranking contestants instead of seven, and two judges scoring instead of one.

In the Humorous division of 1954 six or seven contestants were allocated to a room for each of the three rounds with a single judge to score. The seven highest ranking contestants competed in the fourth round and were scored by two judges who, as in the case of the Oratorical and Dramatic divisions, gave first, second, and third places to the best three contestants.

The 1955 declamation contests entered fifteen contestants in the Oratorical division, forty-six contestants in the Dramatic division, and thirty-five in the Humorous division. In all three divisions seven or eight contestants were allocated to separate rooms in each of the three rounds with two judges scoring in each room. As in the 1954 contest, the distribution of contestants in the three rounds permitted each contestant to compete with every other contestant in the division. There was no fourth round in the 1955 contest. The three highest ranking contestants in these three rounds were accorded first, second, and third place. The contestants' final ratings were based on the ranks in the three rounds.
Each contestant received as many "Total Scores" and "Ranks" as there were judges who evaluated him in the rounds in which he appeared. For example, in the Humorous division of 1954, if a contestant appeared in three rounds only, and was scored by a single judge in each round, this contestant received three different "Total Scores" and "Ranks." However, if he also appeared in the fourth round where he was scored by two judges he received five "Total Scores" and "Ranks" for the division.

According to the ballots used by the judges, each contestant was supposed to receive scores for five different criteria measuring the performance for the contestant, in addition to the "Total Score" and "Rank." These criteria consisted of 1) "Literary Value," 2) "Interpretation," 3) "Voice and Diction," 4) "Bodily Action," and 5) "General Effect." The ballot instructed the judges to give "each of the above criteria...equal importance in evaluating the declamation." It continued, "if a total of a hundred percent is used a maximum of twenty percent could be placed upon each criterion. However, evaluations of A, B, C, D, E, or any other system may be used."137

An examination of judges' scoring on ballots for the two years, 1954 and 1955, revealed that nine systems of scoring were used. The twenty to one percent system, rating in order of excellence, was used the greatest number of times. The A, B, C, D, E, and the ten

137 Sample Ballot, (Appendix, p. )
...of the data points in the two years with each other... of the other year in each data point, and of comparing the findings of one year with the findings of the other year, was considered as a separate unit. This was for the purpose of comparing the findings of one year with the findings of the other year. The data points each contained one or more of the categories: occupational, demographic, and geographical. In tabulating the scores, each data point of the determination...

(See Appendix for Scale for Scoring)

Score and ranking established by the judge for any given case. Given the five criteria were arranged to conform with the total twenty to one percent scale, the total of the corrected scores of these criteria were calculated into the twenty to one percent scale. To correspond with the twenty percent scale, the total of the corrected scores of the various systems of scoring into the twenty to one percent scale. The various systems of criteria were calculated separately in the total...

In order to tabulate the judge's scores of any given case, one to ten percent, one to five percent, and one to twenty percent...

A few judges used a reversed score of the above scoring one percent. The exception: good, fair, and poor, and the hundred to one percent. Three other systems were used: occupational -- the judge to one per cent...
For each of the six divisions (three divisions for each of the two years) every contestant was listed in one column. Separate columns running parallel to the contestant's name were titled, "Literary Value," "Interpretation," "Voice and Diction," "Bodily Action," "General Effect," "Total Score," and "Rank," in keeping with the appearance of the judges' ballot. The scores received from all judges in all rounds of each division were tabulated in their respective columns. Where it was necessary, the scores were adjusted to the scoring scale before they were tabulated.

The "Total Score" was the sum of all other scores where the judge scored the contestant in each of the five criteria. There was a "Total Score" accorded every contestant. Every contestant had the same number of scores listed under the title "Total Score" as he had under the titles "Literary Value," "Interpretation," "Voice and Diction," "Bodily Action," and "General Effect."

Since, then, "Total Score" was a measure of the contestant's artistic achievements on the basis of the criteria evaluated, the problem was to find out the contribution that "Literary Value" made to this measure of artistic achievement. Hence, for each division calculations were made to discover the correlation of "Literary Value" with the final achievement of the contestant. It was not the intention of this study to discover the importance of "Literary Value" to any single contestant's rank within a division but rather the relative importance of "Literary Value" to Oral Interpretation in comparison with the other criteria that
contributed to the "Total Score."

Both "Literary Value" scores and "Total" scores were converted into ranks in order to give uniformity to the distribution of scores and facilitate the attainment of correlations. Since scoring devices used by judges were not precise, ranks were the most reliable measure attainable from the scores. For example, a total score of 60 or 90 assigned to a contestant had meaning only in relation to total scores assigned to other contestants. That is, the comparative value of literature in achieving artistic effects could be determined only by knowing where this score placed in rank order with the other contestants.* To achieve a rank or-

* Individuals can be placed in rank order in respect to the degree of the trait they exhibit, such as the attempt to place in order of merit the performances of a number of contestants for an award in an area where the criteria cannot easily be reduced to quantitative terms, or to place individuals in order in respect to their possession of some intangible such as "attractiveness," "sense of responsibility," "courtesy," and the like. The quality of "Literary Value" would be similar to the above traits in being difficult to reduce to quantitative terms. Another situation to which rank correlation is adaptable is when traits which can be measured on a scale are recorded as ranks instead. The chief occasion for doing this is when the distribution of scores is obviously not normal, and a measure of relationship is sought which does not depend for its validity upon the assumption of a normal bivariate universe. Nearly all the tests of significance are derived on the assumption that the cases used are from a normal universe. The distribution of the variance and of the correlation coefficient are seriously disturbed by lack of normality. If, however, scores are transformed to ranks, a procedure which Hotelling calls "uniformizing the distribution," the validity of the findings is not dependent upon the assumption of a normal bivariate universe. Therefore, the correlation by ranks was the most satisfactory formula for determining the degree of association between traits difficult to bring to quantitative terms and which may not be cases of a normal universe — such as "Literary Value" and "Total Score." (from Helen M. Walker and Joseph Lev., Statistical Inference (New York: Henry Holt and Company Incorporated, 1953), p. 281.)
der the average of a contestant’s scores in "Literary Value" given by all the judges on any selection was obtained as well as an average of the total scores given him by the same judges and these averages were then ranked for each division. Whenever there were ties on an average score the "Mid-Rank" method was used. For instance, if three contestants averaged thirteen on "Literary Value," the number fourteen was assigned to all three. Then the next average in line would be assigned sixteen. This could not be done by using the rank scores assigned by the judges since only the three highest ranking contestants received any final rank at all.

In ranking, as in tabulating, the two series of numbers for each division of the contests of 1954 and 1955 were considered separately. In achieving a rank order correlation for this data, the following formula by Spearman was applied:

\[ R = 1 - \frac{6 \sum d^2}{N(N^2-1)} \]

where \( R \) is the measure of correlation, \( d \) is the difference between two ranks given for each contestant, and \( N \) equals the number

* An examination of the scores in "Rank" as compared with "Total Scores" assigned by a judge to a contestant disclosed certain discrepancies, which made it impossible to use the ranking assigned by the judges themselves. For example, according to the rules of the contest only the top three contestants in each division were given a final ranking; therefore, the remaining contestants had no final ranking, but only the rankings received from the several judges in the three rounds. Hence, for some contestants there were three rank scores, and for others as many as six, the winner having still further scores of first, second, and third rank place. Another discrepancy was occasionally found where a judge accorded high scores for a contestant in all criteria but gave him a lower rank than another contestant whom he had scored less high in the same criteria. For instance, in the Dramatic division of the 1955 contest, in round II, a judge scored one contestant five A's, and
of contestants.  133

Using the ranks in "Literary Value" and "Total Score," for each contestant in each division the standard deviation \( (d) \) was found and squared, and the sum of \( d^2 \) was computed. \( \bar{d} \), or the number of contestants appearing in each division, had already been determined. The findings represented the amount of association between the "Literary Value" score and the summation score of the separate criteria, indicated by "Total Score." Since evaluation of "Literary Value" and "General Effect" both constitute a subjective judgment on the part of the judges, it seemed desirable to compare the amount of association between "Literary Value" and "Total Score" with the amount of association between "General Effect" and "Total Score." Hence, the Spearman formula of rank correlation was applied to the rank averages of "General Effect" and "Total Score." Similarly, the Spearman formula was applied to the rank averages of "Interpretation" and "Total Score."

Since the interest in this study was to discover the importance of the "Literary Value" score to the "Total Score" assigned a contestant, to have carried out further correlations with the two remaining criteria would not materially have altered these findings. "Voice and Diction" and "Bodily Action" are skills applied equally to good and poor literature and are considered in a

133 Walker, op. cit., p. 281.
score for "General Effect." Moreover, "Interpretation" can be revealed only through "Voice and Diction" and "Bodily Action," and therefore any judgment of "Interpretation" involves a judgment of these two criteria.
CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The correlations of "Literary Value" with "Total Score," "Interpretation" with "Total Score," and "General Effect" with "Total Score" for all divisions in both years, 1954 and 1955, are considered in this explanation of the analysis of judges' scorings of declamation contests. The results of the rank correlations of criteria on the ballot, reveal the relative importance of the criterion, "Literary Value," to the "Total Score" as well as to other criteria on the ballot. This relative importance is inferred from comparisons of the significance of correlation numbers and examination of the raw scores.

The difference between "Total Score" and "General Effect" is that "Total Score" stands for the sum of the scores assigned the separate criteria, whereas "General Effect" considers how the separate criteria specified on the ballot, along with other intangible factors of a performance, are blended with each other. "Literary Value" and "Interpretation" on the other hand, concern specific parts of a performance and are, themselves, considered in the scoring of "Total Score" and "General Effect."

Since the "Total Score" is a composite of all criteria on the ballot, it is expected that the ranking assigned a contestant for the "Total Score" would show a significant correlation with the ranking of each criterion. Moreover, since "General Effect" cannot be considered apart from the other criteria which also are
scored on the ballot, it is to be expected that "General Effect" correlated with "Total Score" would show a greater significance than any of the other criteria correlated with "Total Score." This, however, was not the case. Comparing first the correlations of "General Effect" with "Total Score" and "Interpretation" with "Total Score," we find that the correlation of "General Effect" with "Total Score" in only three out of six cases was more significant than the correlation of "Interpretation" with "Total Score." (See Chart II)

Those instances in which "General Effect" correlated more significantly with "Total Score" than did "Interpretation" were as follows: In the Oratorical divisions of 1954, "General Effect" had a correlation of .781 with "Total Score" while "Interpretation" had a correlation of .642 with "Total Score"; in the Dramatic division of 1954, "General Effect" had a correlation of .877 with "Total Score" while "Interpretation" had a correlation of .872 with "Total Score"; and in the Dramatic division of 1955 "General Effect" had a correlation of .848 with "Total Score" while "Interpretation" had a correlation of .835 with "Total Score."

Instances where "General Effect" did not correlate more significantly with "Total Score" than did "Interpretation" were 1) in the Humorous division of 1954, where the correlations of "General Effect" and "Interpretation" with "Total Score" were identical, both correlations being .882; 2) in the Oratorical division of 1955, where the .749 correlation of "General Effect" with "Total Score" was of less significance than the .800 correlation of "Interpretation" with "Total Score;" 3) in the Humorous division
of 1955, where there was less significance in the .865 correlation of "General Effect" with "Total Score" than in the .873 correlation of "Interpretation" with "Total Score." (See Chart I)

In considering the significance of these correlations it must be remembered that "General Effect" takes into account not only all the criteria which are scored separately on the ballot, including "Literary Value," but also intangibles which do not appear on the ballot. On the whole, there was little statistical difference between the correlations of "General Effect" with "Total Score" and "Interpretation" with "Total Score." The greatest disagreement was in the Oratorical division of 1954 where there was a .14 difference. The correlations of "General Effect" and "Interpretation" with "Total Score" were identical in the Humorous division of 1954. This close statistical agreement of the correlations of "General Effect" and of "Interpretation" with "Total Score" would indicate that the judges' scoring of "Interpretation" included some of the same intangible factors of measuring a contestant's performance as in measuring "General Effect," particularly since the correlations of "Literary Value" with "Total Score" fluctuated inversely with the correlations of "General Effect" with "Total Score" and with "Interpretation" with "Total Score."

The relative importance of the correlation of "Total Score" with "Literary Value" becomes apparent when it is compared with correlations of "Total Score" with "General Effect" and "Total
Score with "Interpretation." In the correlations of "General Effect" with "Total Score" compared with those of "Literary Value" with "Total Score" it was found that "General Effect" was more significant in every division for both years. This is as might be expected since "General Effect" is a judgment of the effectiveness of all the other criteria appearing on the ballot.

The fact that "General Effect" correlated with "Total Score" is significant in every division, is only a further substantiation of the findings in a study made by Evelyn Seedorf, who found that "the critical ratio of the difference of the mean scores between 'average of item scores' and 'General effectiveness scores' indicated no significant difference between the scores given by the two methods." 139

In both years it was in the Dramatic division that the closest agreement between the "General Effect" with "Total Score" and "Literary Value" with "Total Score" occurred. Here the difference between these two correlations was .3 in 1954, and .08 in 1955. As the correlation between "Total Score" with "Literary Value" in the Dramatic division increased in significance for the year 1955, both the correlation between "Interpretation" with "Total Score" and the correlation between "General Effect" with "Total Score" decreased in statistical significance. It is apparent that increase in "Literary Value" of dramatic literature fails to guarantee either an improved understanding of that literature (interpretation) or a
more effective presentation of that literature.

Although in the Dramatic division of 1955, "General Effect" correlated less significantly with "Total Score" than in 1954 and "Literary Value" correlated more significantly with "Total Score" in 1955 than in 1954, this may not necessarily deny the significance of "Literary Value" to "General Effect," since "General Effect" may be marred by intangibles in spite of improved "Literary Value." This inference is supported by the fact that correlations of "Total Score" with "Interpretation," which also measures intangibles, showed a similar loss of significance in 1955 in the Dramatic division as the "Literary Value" rose in significance.

In order to find some explanation for "Literary Value" rising in significance while "Interpretation" and "General Effect" dropped in significance, in the Dramatic division of 1955, an examination of the raw scores was made. The raw scores given for "Literary Value" in the Dramatic divisions for both years, showed that the scores for this division were on the whole higher than the scores for "Literary Value" in the Humorous division, but not as consistent as in the Oratorical division where the scores clustered closely around the median.

The close agreement of correlation between "Literary Value" with "Total Score" and "General Effect" with "Total Score" may be accounted for by the fact that in the Dramatic division where the literature was scored high the performance was scored high, and where literature was scored low "General Effect" was scored low.
then the correlation between "general effect" and "total score"
between "interferry value with total score" were less significant.

In the hummingbird flight of 1978 and 1979 the correlation

correlated less significantly with the association in not so apparent.
the score in the hummingbird flight of 1978, when "interferry Valu-
prestation" and "general effect" correlated significantly with 10-
the other datasets of 1979 or 1979. However, since both in the

"general effect" in the hummingbird flight of 1979 and "interferry and "interferry Value" and "interferry Value" and

This might indicate that there was a greater association between
numbers obtained for any of the other datasets in other year.

"general effect" for the hummingbird flight of 1979 than in the correlation
the correlation is not "general effect" and "general effect" with each of the three separate
the from correlation. "total score" with "total score" as a greater degree in the
difference in the correlation numbers result.

Dramatic difference than in any other dataset.

"interferry Value" affects "general effect" to a greater degree in the
score and "general effect" with "total score". It would seem that
agreement between the correlation of "interferry Value" with "total
since in the hummingbird flight of both years there is greater

score.

Agreement with the correlation of "general effect" with "total
show the correlation with the total score, and hence, little
for "interferry Value" derived from the median they would
on the other hand, in the hummingbird flight, since the scores
for the Dramatic division of either 1954 or 1955. The reason may be that all raw scoring on "Literary Value" in the Humorous division tended to be lower than for the other criteria that made up the "Total Score," whereas all scoring on "Literary Value" in the Dramatic division tended to range from low to high and showed much less variation from the other criteria than in the Humorous division. Hence, the relation of "Literary Value" to the total score in the Humorous division as shown in correlation numbers was proportionately less significant than the relation of "Literary Value" to "Total Score" in the Dramatic division.

The Humorous division of 1954 showed a difference of .5 between the correlations of "General Effect" with "Total Score" and "Literary Value" with "Total Score." This was the greatest difference between these two correlation numbers found in any division for either year. This would seem to imply that "Literary Value" contributed little to the general effectiveness of a humorous declamation. This inference may appear to be indefensible in view of the fact that in 1955 the difference between the correlations of "Literary Value" with "Total Score" and "General Effect" with "Total Score" in the Humorous division decreased from .51 to .22. This decrease in difference was due not so much to a decrease in "General Effect" correlation numbers (from .82 to .65) as to an increase in "Literary Value" correlation numbers (from .376 to .645). Thus, since the correlation between "General Effect" with
This would indicate that the "interpretation" in 1954 was greater and of greater significance than in 1953. The "corrected" with "total" score, of the same significance as the "corrected" with "total" score, were larger with the "interpretation" of "total score" and were larger with the "interpretation" of both "total score" and "interpretation" of "total score." The correlation of both "total score" and "interpretation" of "total score." Improved performance makes it apparent that "interpretation" as a guarantee of an increased proportion of "interpretation value" as it correlated with "total score." Score increased in the "interpretation" of all scores correlated with "total score" increased in the "interpretation" of all scores correlated with "total score" increased in the "interpretation" of all scores correlated with "total score" increased in the "interpretation" of all scores correlated with "total score" increased in the "interpretation" of all scores correlated with "total score" Increased with "total score" over the years. Moreover, there is evidence that the correlations of "total score" with "total score" are highly significant in further evidence is found in the fact that the correlations of "total score" prompted further research. It may be inferred that

-64-
Humorous divisions tends to be more important to the performance than either "Literary Value" or "General Effect."

In the Humorous division of 1955, when the correlation of "Literary Value" with "Total Score" became significant, the correlation of "Interpretation" and "General Effect" with "Total Score" dropped in significance. It appears that increase of "Literary Value" in Humorous declamation effects a decrease in "Interpretation" and "General Effect."

In comparing the correlation numbers of "Interpretation" with "Total Score" and "Literary Value" with "Total Score," it is found that "Interpretation" correlates more highly with "Total Score" than does "Literary Value" for both years. The greatest difference between these two correlation numbers is .5 which occurs in the Humorous division of 1954. This agrees exactly with the difference between the correlations of "Literary Value" and "Total Score" and "General Effect" with "Total Score" in 1954, and corresponds closely with the difference between these same correlations in 1955. The fact that the correlations of "Interpretation" with "Total Score" were always more statistically significant than "Literary Value" with "Total Score" means that "Interpretation" affected the "Total Score" more than did the "Literary Value." This would imply that the contestant's understanding and appreciation of his selection exceeded his judgment in his choice of literature.

The Oratorical division of 1955 is the only division where
correlations of both "Literary Value" with "Total Score" and "Interpretation" with "Total Score" increased in significance over these correlations in 1954. At the same time, the correlations of "General Effect" with "Total Score" decreased in significance in 1955. This would seem to indicate that with the improvement of "Literary Value" in the Oratorical contest the contestant's appreciation of the values contained therein becomes more evident. This was not evident in the Humorous and Dramatic divisions, where the correlation of "Interpretation" with "Total Score" decreased as the correlation of "Literary Value" with "Total Score" increased. It would also appear that with the increase of appreciation of good literature, the "General Effect" of performance is decreased. This does not necessarily indicate a causal relationship. The contestants for 1955 could have been less skillful in their performance than the contestants of 1954, regardless of the quality of literature.

In the Oratorical division of 1954 the .438 correlation of "Literary Value" with "Total Score" was insignificant. The reason for this low correlation may be found in the fact that the raw scores for all selections included scores from 15 to 20. Therefore, the "Literary Value" had less effect upon the "Total Score" than did the other criteria which were scored from 10 to 20.

However, in 1955 there was a significant correlation of .507 between "Literary Value" and "Total Score." The reason for this
significance was that there was wider variation and in general much lower scoring on "Literary Value" in 1955 than in 1954. Scores ranged from a low of 10 to a high of 19 in 1955.

The variation of judges' scores on "Literary Value" on a selection is shown by examining raw scores given to contestants using the same selection for contest material. The scores for "Literary Value" on these same selections sometimes ranged from 5 to 20.

An example to show the varied scores of judges upon a certain selection may be found where the same selection was given in 1954 and in 1955. In 1954 the selection was given the low score of 5 and the high score of 16, while in 1955 this same selection was given the low score of 14 and the high score of 20. In 1954 the judges' scores indicated that they agreed on the mediocre quality of a selection, while in 1955 their scores indicated that the same selection was of good "literary Value." This unreliability of judgments regarding "literary Value" is recognized by Sara Lowrey, who says:

Readers differ in their judgment as to the author's meaning and hence they differ in their interpretation. The judgment of two or more readers may result in very different interpretations of the same selection leaving decidedly different impressions on the audience.

If the judge does not recognize or appreciate good literature a selection of recognized "literary Value" can militate against a contestant's rating as much as a selection of lesser "literary Value."
An example of another discrepancy in judges' scoring "Literary Value" may be shown by the one contestant who was assigned by four different judges scores of 7, 11, 16, and 20 on his selection. These discrepancies may be explained by the fact that objective sensations are very common to individuals. We find that individuals agree as to the nature of the sensations of any particular objective experience. However, the sensations accompanying an affective or emotional experience vary greatly among individuals, and even the same stimulus will not always produce the same experience in the same individual.\(^{141}\) In other words, a judge is influenced by the intangibles of judgment which determine his private likes and dislikes of material, his appreciation and taste in literature.

An inference regarding the relationship of "Literary Value" to performance was drawn from a case in which one selection was given by two contestants in 1954 and by one contestant in 1955. For all three of these contestants the "Literary Value" was scored a low of 14 and a high of 20. The judges' scores indicated that they agreed that the selection was of good literary merit in both years. However, in spite of this close agreement on the "Literary Value" in 1954, one contestant was ranked 5 on "Total Score," while the other was ranked 37 on "Total Score." The contestant who read the same selection in 1955 was ranked 11 on "Total Score."

\(^{140}\) Lowery, op. cit., p. 197-198

\(^{141}\) Haier, op. cit., p. 63
This would verify the observation made previously that literature of merit does not guarantee a good performance. These variations in scoring agree with the findings by Seedorf that "increasing experience in \[her experiment\] seemed to provide for greater independence of judgment.\"^{142}

To sum up the correlations of the various criteria with the total scores, "Literary Value" showed the least significance in its correlation with the "Total Score," and "General Effect" the greatest significance half the time (three out of six). Both "General Effect" and "Interpretation" correlated more significantly with the "Total Score" than did "Literary Value" in any division. This shows a closer relationship between "Interpretation" and "General Effect" than between "Literary Value" and "General Effect" or between "Literary Value" and "Interpretation." Only where the scatter of raw scores for "Literary Value" ranged from low to high, as in the Dramatic division of 1955, the correlation of "Literary Value" with "Total Score" was statistically significant.

Where the "Literary Value" was scored consistently high, as in the Oratorical division of 1954, its effect upon the "Total Score" of contestants was insignificant. The scorings of other criteria on the ballot became the deciding factors in ranking the contestants.

\^{142}Seedorf, op. cit., p. 16
Where the "Literary Value" was scored consistently low, as in the Humorous division of 1954, its effect upon the "Total Score" was again insignificant. In this instance as in the instance of the Oratorical division of 1954, the final ranking of a contestant was decided by the other criteria. It may be observed that the purpose of an interpretation is to reveal the values of the literature. The scoring of "Literary Value" in the Oratorical and Humorous divisions of 1954 may have been affected by the contestant's manner of interpretation.

The fact that "Literary Value" correlated more significantly with "Total Score" in 1955 than in 1954 in every division, might indicate that contestants and coaches are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of "Literary Value" to the selections made for contests. However, it is also apparent that literature of value does not necessarily guarantee an interpretation of understanding and appreciation by the contestant.

Although it appears on the surface that increase in the statistical significance of "Literary Value" correlated with "Total Score" in 1955 resulted in a decrease in statistical significance of "General Effect" correlated with "Total Score," a consideration of the factors influencing a judgment of any of the criteria reveals that there is no causal relationship in this apparent inverse proportion.

It would seem that "Literary Value" as a criterion was super-
fluents in judging a contest since the literature is inherent in the "Interpretation" and the "General Effect" and must therefore be judged along with the "Interpretation" and the "General Effect."

It has been found in a previous study that judges trained or untrained, agree significantly upon the quality of an interpreter's performance as the quality is represented in "Total Scores," "General Effect," or in separate criteria. It has also been found in this present study that writers of literary criticism and judges scoring contestants show a wide disagreement as to the "Literary Value" of a selection. It may be inferred, therefore, that "Literary Value" is a less reliable criterion for ranking a contestant than any of the criteria which pertain specifically to his performance.

The statistical significance of correlations of "General Effect" with "Total Score" in each division of 1954 and 1955 implies that "General Effect" has the greatest weight in the "Total Score" of a contestant. It may be inferred, then, that a performance cannot be measured by its separate parts but that the unity of these parts includes criteria which do not appear upon a ballot but which are, nevertheless, responsible for the appreciative response of an audience.

"Total Score" as pointed out before, constitutes the sum of

143 Seedorf, op. cit., p. 15
scores assigned to other criteria. "General Effect" was found to correlate highly with "Total Score." It might be assumed, therefore, that a score for "General Effect" would suffice or be even more adequate than "Total Score" to measure a performance, since it takes into account intangibles not measured by "Total Score." If, however, ranking is based on "Total Score," then it would appear that the greater the number of single criteria scored, the more accurate the measurement of the performance. "Literary Value" and "Interpretation," although considered as part of "General Effect," can be analyzed as separate criteria. "Literary Value" and "Interpretation," however, can be broken down into even finer categories. The difficulty in setting up a ballot into separate criteria is in knowing where to stop.
CHAPTER V
SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. SUMMARY

It has been the problem of this thesis to discover the importance of "Literary Value" to Oral Interpretation in speech contests. There were two specific phases of this problem to be investigated: 1) to find whether or not "Literary Value" was a reliable criterion for judging a contestant in Declamation contests, and 2) to find in what way the "Literary Value" of a selection affects the ranking of a contestant.

In the discussions in Chapter II concerning the effect of "Literary Value" on "Interpretation" and on "General Effect," it became apparent that "Literary Value" is considered in the scoring of "Interpretation" and "General Effect." The fact that increased "Literary Value" did not increase the "Interpretation" and "General Effect" of a contestant's performance, might be explained by the fact that a successful contestant must have sufficient experience to fully appreciate good literature and sufficient skill to convey his appreciation to his audience.

Selections for Declamation are usually cuttings from books, stories, or plays. The "Literary Value" of a selection, then, is not entirely dependent upon the original material used, but upon the cutting which the contestant has made. The cutting may be well done, preserving the intent, mood, and thought of the original work, or poorly done, destroying these qualities which had
originally made the literature good. Therefore, the scoring of "Literary Value" is not only dependent upon the original material but upon the qualities of the original material which the contestant has preserved.

Unless a contestant's mediums of appreciation and skills are sufficient to translate the author's original thought and intent, the value of the literature may not be appreciated by the audience. In other words, the contestant's performance may depreciate the value of the selection. This observation, however, would be more pertinent if it were applied to individual cases. When viewed from the standpoint of all contestants in the Dramatic division of 1955, it can only be concluded that "Literary Value" does not insure the winning of a contest.

When "Literary Value" correlated with "Total Score" increased in significance in the Humorous division of 1955, "General Effect" decreased in significance. It was inferred from this that increase in "Literary Value" does not increase the general effectiveness of Humorous literature. It was found in studying the raw scores of the Humorous divisions that the criterion "Literary Value" was in general scored much lower than in the Dramatic and Oratorical divisions. It was also found in studying the correlations of "Literary Value," "Interpretation," and "General Effect" with "Total Score" of the Humorous divisions that "Literary Value" had less statistical significance to the "Total Score" than the criteria "Interpretation" and "General Effect." From
these findings it may be inferred that it is possible to present a pleasing and artistic performance of all written material whether that material be of "Literary Value" or not.

"Interpretation" correlated with "Total Score" was of greater significance than "Literary Value" correlated with "Total Score" in the Humorous division of both years and greater than "General Effect" in 1955 although the significance of "Literary Value" increased appreciably in the Humorous division in 1955. This is an indication that "Interpretation" in the Humorous division of Declamation is more important to the winning of a contest than either of the criteria "Literary Value" or "General Effect."

Furthermore, since "Literary Value" increased in significance in 1955 and "Interpretation" and "General Effect" decreased in significance, it appears that literature of value has an inverse effect upon a performance in Humorous Declamation. It might be concluded that a contestant's appreciation of a selection for Humorous Declamation does not agree with the more mature appreciation of a judge. The judge may regard the "Interpretation" and "General Effect" of a performance in terms of the best possibilities of the performance and still not appreciate the literature.

When the "Literary Value" of a selection was consistently agreed upon by judges in the Oratorical divisions, the correlations of "Literary Value" with "Total Score" were found to be insignificant. Yet the correlations of "Interpretation" and "General Effect" with "Total Score" were found to be highly significant.
This would indicate that when the "Literary Value" of a selection for declamation is of merit, its merit is recognized by all the judges and the final decision upon the winner of the contest will depend upon the appreciation and skill of the contestant in rendering the selection.

In Chapter II it was found that authorities agree upon universality as one quality of good literature, namely, the appeal to the universal problems and emotions of all mankind. Good literature, then, which contains the quality of universal appeal will be advantageous to the winning of a contest since the judges of contests would be expected to respond to its appeal. However, it is clear that "Literary Value" as a criterion is not the deciding factor in the winning of a contest. The ranking of a contestant depends, rather, upon the appreciation evinced by the interpreter and his skill in presenting his appreciation to the audience.

Examination of the raw scores disclosed disagreement among judges as to the "Literary Value" of a selection, except in the Oratorical division. It was found in Chapter II that literature may be appreciated by an individual only to the extent of his experience. A judge scores the "Literary Value" of a selection by the standards of his own experience and appreciation and, therefore, by intangible factors of judgment.

A further study of the raw scores revealed, moreover, a certain amount of disagreement among judges in the scoring of "Inter-
interpretation and "General Effect." Opinions expressed in Chapter II and the findings in Chapter IV both disclose that an evaluation of "Interpretation" and of "General Effect" contains intangible factors. It seems, therefore, that evaluations of "Interpretation" and "General Effect" are subjected to the same individual standards of appreciation and experience as is "Literary Value," and they are, therefore, as unreliable in scoring the winner of a contest as is "Literary Value." This conclusion, however, is not justifiable since "Literary Value" as a criterion is a measure of only one portion of a Declamation, while "Interpretation" and "General Effect" include the "Literary Value" of a selection in their measurements.

Although it has been found that the actual material used by a contestant in declamation contests is not as valid a criterion as "Interpretation" and "General Effect" upon which to judge his ranking in a contest, the "Literary Value" of a selection should be considered as of importance to the "Interpretation" and "General Effect" of a contestant's performance. It was found in Chapter II of this thesis that literature and Oral Interpretation are interdependent. Much of the world's great literature may be enhanced by Oral Interpretation. At the same time, Oral Interpretation receives its impetus from the force, vitality, imagery, and beauty in good literature. In scoring "Interpretation" the judge recognizes this interdependence, and judges the value of the literature
being interpreted. In scoring "General Effect" the judge considers "Literary Value" along with the other criteria on the ballot. In this way, the "Literary Value" of a selection asserts influence upon the "Interpretation" and "General Effectiveness" of a contestant's performance.

The fact that Declamation contests were originally designed as a device for furthering the basic aims and purposes of education must not be ignored in considering the results of contests. It has been explained in Chapter I and Chapter II that the Montana High School Speech League as well as all other leagues organized under the National Forensics League, are dedicated to the development of skills, personality, and character; integration into society; and appreciation of good literature. It is agreed upon by many authorities that the study of and the increased experience in literature of good value is a means for obtaining proper personal and social adjustments, as well as a means for developing skills in communication.

In considering the place of "Literary Value" in Declamation contests it should be realized that while "Literary Value" is not as valid a criterion for judgment as are "Interpretation" and "General Effect" it is a valid means for furthering the purposes of the educational accomplishments sought through contests. In the opinion of many authorities, the value of speech contests lies not with the winning of the contest but rather with the stimulation of contestants toward personal and social growth.
In order to promote this ideal of speech contests, students must be exposed to good literature. As a contestant in Oral Interpretation contests, the student will become a more effective reader as his experience and appreciation in good literature grow. As an individual the student will become more effective as a member of society through an acquaintance with the best thoughts of men found in literature of value.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

Three recommendations may be made as a result of the statistical study and the reading in background history and literature for this thesis.

"General Effect" might be considered as the only necessary criterion on the ballot for judging Declamation contests, since in an evaluation of the "General Effect" of a performance there is a consideration of all criteria now listed upon the ballot, as well as intangible factors of judgment found in any evaluation of artistic achievement. The statistical significance of the correlations of "General Effect" with "Total Score" in all divisions indicates the reliability of "General Effect" in ranking a contestant's performance.

It may be recommended, further, that more judges be used for judging each round in a contest in order to assure greater accuracy in the final ranking of a contestant. Evaluation depends upon the individual taste and appreciation of the judge. In spite of the statistical findings, the raw scores of the judges show dis-
disagreement upon the quality of a contestant's performance. The more judgments a contestant receives the more accurately will the aggregate scores measure the effectiveness of his performance.

In keeping with the policy of the Montana High School Speech League to promote interest in speech contests and to promote the educational benefits to contestants, it is recommended that ballots containing judges' scorings and evaluations be made available to the contestants and coaches following each contest. Students who are interested in their personal development, and those who are eager to improve their performance in contests, should be accorded the benefit and encouragement which judges' evaluations might offer.


PERIODICALS


Dow, Clyde W. "A Literary Interpretation Analysis Blank," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXV (April, 1939), 302-305.


**UNPUBLISHED MATERIALS**

"Constitution and By-Laws of the Montana High School Speech League," (Missoula, Montana: 1955), (mimeographed.)
Montana High School Speech League

BALLOT FOR JUDGING DECLAMATION

for use in

District and State Tournaments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name of contestant</th>
<th>Literary value of pre- and Bodily Eff- or Rank</th>
<th>Name of selection</th>
<th>Intonation</th>
<th>Voice</th>
<th>Posture</th>
<th>Gen'l Total</th>
<th>Act. Aver.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each of the above five criteria should be given equal importance in evaluating the declamation. If a total of 100% is used, a maximum of 20% could be placed on each criterion. However, evaluations of A, B, C, D, E, or any other system may be used.

Judge __________________________________________ Position ____________________________

Address ___________________________ Date ____________________________
INSTRUCTIONS TO JUDGES

(as appear on declamation ballots that are given to judges in NFL contests)

RULES FOR NFL TOURNAMENTS

Interpretation shall be divided into oratorical, dramatic and humorous contests.

1. ORATORICAL: Material used in this contest must have been presented by its author, a person other than the present contestant.

The contestant shall preface his presentation by a brief statement describing the circumstances under which the speech was delivered by its author.

2. DRAMATIC AND HUMOROUS: Selections used in these contests shall be cuttings from books, published short stories, or plays.

Contestants shall preface their presentation by naming the author of the reading and the book or magazine from which the cutting was made.

The art of interpretation is to be regarded as recreating the characters in the story presented and making them seem living and real to the audience.

Adaptation may be for the purpose of continuity only. They should be judged for their appropriateness as contest material and their suitability to the particular contestants using them. The use of good literature should be noted favorably and the "pieces" devoid of literary merit graded lowest.

This is a contest in oral interpretation, not solo acting. Although gestures and pantomime are not barred, they should be used with restraint.

The contestants should be graded on: poise, quality and use of voice, inflections, emphasis, pronunciation, enunciation, and especially the ability to interpret characters correctly and consistently.

Narrative should be vivid and animated so as to be an interesting and integral part of the story rather than just "filler" between portions of dialogue.

The final test of good interpretation is the ability to use all these factors so successfully and unobtrusively that the hearer forgets that this is a contest and in perfectly created atmosphere is carried away to the time and place of the story being unfolded.
## Chart I

**Number of Contestants and Judges in Each Round in Each Contest of 1954 and 1955**

### 1954

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Divisions</th>
<th>Round I</th>
<th>Round II</th>
<th>Round III</th>
<th>Round IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. of Contestants</td>
<td>No. of Judges</td>
<td>No. of Contestants</td>
<td>No. of Judges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oratorical</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramatic</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humorous</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1955

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Divisions</th>
<th>Round I</th>
<th>Round II</th>
<th>Round III</th>
<th>Round IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. of Contestants</td>
<td>No. of Judges</td>
<td>No. of Contestants</td>
<td>No. of Judges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oratorical</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramatic</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humorous</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
CHART II

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN RANKINGS ON CRITERIA AND TOTAL SCORE IN THE THREE DIVISIONS IN 1954 AND 1955

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
<th>ORATORICAL DIV.</th>
<th>DRAMATIC DIV.</th>
<th>HUMOROUS DIV.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literary Value</td>
<td>.438 .507</td>
<td>.560 .768</td>
<td>.376 .645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation</td>
<td>.646 .800</td>
<td>.872 .835</td>
<td>.882 .873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Effect</td>
<td>.781 .749</td>
<td>.877 .848</td>
<td>.885 .865</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHART III

COMPARISON OF CORRELATIONS BETWEEN CRITERIA AND TOTAL SCORE

FOR EACH OF THE YEARS 1954 AND 1955

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIVISIONS</th>
<th>CRITERIA WITH THEIR CORRELATIONS</th>
<th>1954</th>
<th>1955</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Literacy Value</td>
<td>Interpretation</td>
<td>General Effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORATORICAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRAMATIC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUMOROUS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRAMATIC</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>HUMOROUS</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

-91-
TABLE SHOWING HOW SCORINGS ACCORDING TO VARIOUS SYSTEMS
WERE EQUATED TO SCORINGS ON THE 20-1% SYSTEM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scoring systems as identified in this thesis</th>
<th>Scoring Systems, Equated from High to Low</th>
<th>Percent of judges using various scoring systems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 - 1%</td>
<td>20 19 18 17 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A+ - E-</td>
<td>A+ A+ B+ B+ C+ C+ D+ D+ E+ E+ E+ E-</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 1%</td>
<td>10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - 1%</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1 0</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex+ - 0%</td>
<td>Ex+ Ex+ Ex+ G+ G+ G- F+ F+ F- P+ P+ P- 0</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 - 1%</td>
<td>100 95 90 85 80 75 70 65 60</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 -10%</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 0%</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 -20%</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example: A scoring of B- on the A+ to E- system was considered to be
ABSTRACT

THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF LITERARY VALUE
AS A CRITERION IN DECLAMATION CONTESTS

The purpose of this study was to discover the importance of literature of value to oral interpretation. Specifically, it was desirable to discover 1) if "Literary Value" was a reliable criterion for judging a contestant and 2) in what ways literature of value affected oral interpretation and the ranking of a contestant.

These problems were pursued from two points of view: 1) the opinions of authorities concerning the recognition and judgment of literature of value and 2) the value that judges place on the "Literary Value" of a selection for Oral Interpretation as found in an examination of judge's scorings on ballots for declamation of the Montana High School Speech League (MHSSL) of 1954 and 1955.

It was found that Declamation contests are an educational device designed to further the basic educational aims of stimulating students to greater knowledge and appreciation of society; of adjusting their own personalities; of developing speech skills, and of acquiring taste and appreciation of good literature. It was found further that the appreciation of good literature is itself a means of furthering the other basic educational aims, and is important to speech contests in this way.
Methods of analyzing were pointed out. However, the appreciation of good literature being a matter of personal discernment, it was deduced that a judge's evaluation of the literary value of a selection will depend upon his own taste and appreciation, and may or may not agree with another judge's evaluation of the same selection.

The literary value of a selection was found to assert influence upon the interpretation, voice and diction, bodily action, and general effect of a contestant's performance. It was also found to be included in the judges' evaluations of the criteria "Interpretation" and "General Effect."

Statistically, the judges' scores for the criterion, "Literary Value," correlated less significantly with the Total Score than did "Interpretation" or "General Effect" in each of the three types of declamation: Oratorical, Dramatic, and Humorous. It was, therefore, inferred that "Literary Value" was a less reliable criterion for judging a contestant's performance than the other criteria on the ballot.

It was concluded that although as a separate criterion "Literary Value" in Declamation contests affected a contestant's ranking less than did "Interpretation" and "General Effect", nevertheless, in order to promote the educational aims of personal and social growth as asserted by the MSHSL, contestants should be trained to appreciate and present literature of value.