

**EVENTS ASSOCIATED WITH DRAMATIC ACTIVITIES  
IN KANSAS HIGH SCHOOLS**

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**A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Faculty of the Graduate School  
Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia**

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**In Partial Fulfillment  
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Master of Science**

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## CHAPTER I

### ORIGIN OF THE PROBLEM

No activity of the school is more communal in its nature, or more diversified in the talent used, than is dramatic arts. Through participation in this activity, latent talents are discovered and cultivated: the overaggressive pupil subdued; the shy encouraged and given self-confidence. Each one according to his talents, five or two or one, is given an opportunity to serve the common good and reap the rich benefits of participation in a creative endeavor. . . . Thus, dramatic arts, in turn, render service to the greatest of all arts--the art of living.<sup>1</sup>

These words, appearing in The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, provoked the question, has there been an endeavor to provide dramatic activities in the high schools of Kansas and provide students with the opportunity to acquire this "art of living"? No record of events associated with dramatic activities in Kansas high schools could be found. However, the fact that dramatic activities have been of interest to students and faculty in Kansas high schools was shown in articles appearing in the Kansas

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<sup>1</sup>American Educational Theatre Association, The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals (National Association of Secondary-School Principals of the National Education Association, Washington, D.C.: Volume 33, Number 166, December, 1949), pp. 2-3.

High School Activities Journal and the Kansas Speech Teacher. As early as 1938 Mr. Harold G. Ingham of Lawrence, state director of speech activities at that time, recommended that district speech festivals should be held, which would include one-act plays and radio drama.<sup>2</sup> The same year the opinion that there was a noticeable increase in the number of schools taking part in speech activities, drama included, went on record in the Kansas High School Activities Journal.<sup>3</sup> In October of 1938, the delegate assembly meeting of the Kansas Activities Association voted to set up district speech festivals to be held during the second semester, these to include extempore speech, one-act drama, radio drama, after-dinner speaking, original and standard oration, reading and declamation.<sup>4</sup>

The Kansas Speech Association has been active in arousing interest and promoting the development of dramatic activities in Kansas high schools. This organization is open to all persons interested in the study, teaching, direction of speech activities or the administration of

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<sup>2</sup>The Kansas State High School Activities Association, Board of Directors Meeting (Topeka: Volume II, Number 3, November, 1938), p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>4</sup>The Kansas State High School Activities Association, The Delegate Assembly Meeting (Topeka: Volume II, Number 2, October, 1939), p. 1.

school activities.<sup>5</sup> One of the objectives of the Kansas Speech Association is "to promote the general welfare of all speech activities in the state, both high school and college."<sup>6</sup> The official publication of this organization is the Kansas Speech Journal, which includes articles of interest to the drama teacher, i.e. In the May, 1949, issue facts were given to stimulate interest in affiliating with the National Thespian Society.<sup>7</sup> The Kansas Speech Journal reviews books which would be of interest to the drama teacher, as well as printing articles telling what various schools are doing in the interest of dramatic activities in the high schools.<sup>8</sup>

The American Educational Theatre Association, representing the school theatre on all levels, including high school, college, university, and children's theatre, is another organization which contributes to the interest of dramatic activities. In 1940 the American Educational

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<sup>5</sup>The Constitution of the Kansas Speech Association.

<sup>6</sup>Kansas Speech Association, KSTA Objectives (Allen Press, Lawrence, Kansas: Volume I, Number 5, May, 1950), p. 4.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., Tips for Teachers, p. 9.

<sup>8</sup>Kansas Speech Association, A Report of Speech Activities in the Kansas "Third District" by Marguerite Overstreet (Allen Press, Lawrence, Kansas: Volume XI, Number 5, May, 1950), p. 4.



Theatre Association prepared a publication for The Bulletin Of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals. This publication described the place of dramatic arts in secondary education. It gave emphasis to qualifications of teachers and to methods and instructional aids necessary for the development of a varied and effective program.<sup>9</sup>

The Gilson Players, an organization under the direction of Dr. F. H. Gilson, instructor of drama and head of the speech department at Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia, took plays which were designed to stimulate interest in the dramatic arts, on tour to the surrounding communities. The fact that the Gilson players were invited back during the following years would be an indication that some interest in the art of drama was evident. These tours originated in the year of 1915. During the following thirty years the Gilson Players went on tour almost every year with the exception of the war years.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>American Educational Theatre Association, The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals (National Association of Secondary-School Principals of the National Education Association, Washington, D.C.; Volume 33, Number 166, December, 1949).

<sup>10</sup>David Matheny, A Historical Review of the Department of Speech of Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, Kansas, from 1885 to 1957 (unpublished Master's thesis, Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, 1957).

The Kansas Year Book 1937-1938 stated that the Gilson Players had become a state institution. In addition to bringing standard drama to the small towns, seldom visited by professional theatre companies, the organization gave advanced training in play production to those who desired it. During the summer months the Gilson Players presented a Shakespearean play at Peter Pan Park, Emporia.<sup>11</sup>

People, as well as organizations, interested in the field of drama helped in its growth and development. W. W. Bass, while chairman of the speech committee of the Activities Association, in 1938, stated that the number of schools participating in league and county meets in which drama and other noncompetitive events are stressed was increasing.<sup>12</sup>

Miss Wanda May Vinson, director of speech and K.A.Y. of the Kansas High School Activities Association, has been instrumental in building the interest in drama through her office with the Kansas State High School Activities Association. She will, upon request, send out a list of

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<sup>11</sup>Kansas State Chamber of Commerce, Kansas Year Book 1937-1938 (Published by the Kansas State Chamber of Commerce, Topeka, Kansas, 1938), p. 162.

<sup>12</sup>The Kansas State High School Activities Association, Board of Directors Meeting (Topeka: Volume I, Number 6, February, 1939), p. 1.

approved<sup>13</sup> plays, if the director so desires.<sup>14</sup> Miss Vinson also directs all speech clinics sponsored by the Activities Association.

Mr. E. A. Thomas, retired commissioner of the Kansas State High School Activities Association, was helpful in getting the State Board of Education to accept the establishment of speech and drama as an approved department in high schools.<sup>15</sup> Although speech and drama became an approved department in the high schools, speech was not, as yet, a requirement for graduation. In the Kansas State High School Activities Association Objectives, 1949-1950, Mr. Thomas stated:

It is well to note that the State Board of Education has already approved the establishment of Speech and Drama as an approved department in high schools and subjects taught in it may be used for a two-year Minor by students in meeting their requirements for graduation. This is encouraging, especially for the larger high schools, but in order to reach the

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<sup>13</sup>Approved applies to the list of plays which the Committee, chosen by the Activities Association, picked during the period when plays must be approved for use in the speech and drama festivals.

<sup>14</sup>Miss Wanda May Vinson, Director of Speech and K.A.Y., Kansas State High School Activities Association, in interview, June 12, 1964, Topeka.

<sup>15</sup>Kansas Speech Association, Kansas State High School Activities Association Objectives: 1949-1950 (Allen Press, Lawrence, Kansas: Volume XI, Number 1, September, 1949), p. 7.

students in all high schools no doubt a speech requirement is necessary. The growth of interest in speech training on the high school level is encouraging and it is the aim of the Activities Association to assist in the firm establishment of speech training as absolutely essential in the education of high school students, this is to be supplemented and popularized through our speech clinics and a well-organized program of basic speech activities in our district and state festivals.<sup>16</sup>

In treating the subject of drama, the Kansas Chamber of Commerce in their 1937-1938 year book pointed out that the high school was probably drama's strongest foothold in the state. It went on to state that no school was so small that it didn't have its class plays.<sup>17</sup> They also pointed out the following:

The inroads of the movies and the dismal future of the legitimate stage are mitigated by the fact that thousands of boys and girls at an impressionable age are being coached in dramatics and in the mechanics of modern play presentation.<sup>18</sup>

Although there has been an indication of interest in drama in the high schools of Kansas manifested in various ways, there have been no studies made which have drawn together events associated with the dramatic activities in

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Kansas State Chamber of Commerce, Kansas Year Book 1937-1938 (Published by the Kansas State Chamber of Commerce, Topeka, Kansas: 1938), p. 162.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

Kansas high schools. The facts are obscure up to 1937 when the Kansas State High School Activities Association was formed. However, in 1938 speech activities became a part of the Activities Association and more accurate records became available. The question thus arose, What were the events associated with the growth and development of dramatic activities after 1938? This question served as the genesis for this study.

### I. LIMITATIONS

The events examined in this study is limited to those brought about by colleges, The Kansas State High School Activities Association, and The Kansas Speech Association. It will not include events occurring in the individual high schools of Kansas.

### II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It is the purpose of this study to discover and present the pertinent facts, in chronological order, of the events associated with dramatic activities in Kansas high schools during the period 1938-1964.

### III. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Events. Those happenings, in and through the work of institutions of higher learning and organizations which have helped develop dramatic activities in Kansas high schools.

Dramatic activities. Those activities which deal with the production of plays, the production of contest material, and classes in drama on the high school level.

High schools of Kansas. Those high schools belonging to, or which have belonged to, the Kansas State High School Activities Association.

### IV. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A study of Speech Monographs, American Educational Theatre Journal, Quarterly Journal of Speech, The Speech Teacher, Dissertation Abstracts, and Lester Thonssen's Bibliography of Speech Education and the 1939-1948 supplement to this book, indicate there were no published or unpublished works of the nature which the writer intended to pursue.

In reviewing the literature, several theses were found with titles which indicated a possible similarity to this study. A careful study of these theses revealed the

similarity was in title only. The following are those which indicated a similarity: A Survey of the Extracurricular Dramatic Activities in Ohio High Schools-1958-1959 by Robert Kibler.<sup>19</sup> Kibler dealt with a survey and an analysis of the dramatic productions in Ohio high schools which had an extracurricular dramatics program.

M. Jean Scott in A Descriptive Study of a Three Year Speech Arts Program for High School,<sup>20</sup> presented a program in a Missouri school, which included dramatic activities.

Charles R. Brown's Survey of the Theatres in The Public Senior High Schools of Salt Lake County, Utah<sup>21</sup> was primarily concerned with the physical conditions of the theatres in Salt Lake County. In The Wisconsin Idea in the Wisconsin High School Forensic Association,<sup>22</sup> Thompson focused her attention on debate rather than drama.

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<sup>19</sup>Robert J. Kibler, A Survey of the Extracurricular Dramatic Activities in Ohio High Schools-1958-1959 (Master's thesis, the Ohio State University, Department of Speech, 1959).

<sup>20</sup>M. Jean Scott, A Descriptive Study of a Three Year Speech Arts Program for High School (Master's thesis, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas, 1962).

<sup>21</sup>Charles Lee Brown, A Survey of the Theatres in the Public Senior High Schools of Salt Lake County, Utah (Master's thesis, Department of Speech and Theatre Arts, University of Utah, August, 1959).

<sup>22</sup>Mary Elizabeth Thompson, The Wisconsin Idea in The Wisconsin High School Forensic Association (Ph.D., Northwestern University, 1950).

David Matheny in his masters study at Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia presented the events and activities of the college department.<sup>23</sup>

Mr. E. A. Thomas is in the process of authoring a history of the Kansas High School Activities Association, of which speech is a part. This writer worked with Mr. Thomas in an effort to avoid duplication of his work.

It was evident after a review of pertinent sources and literature that there were no studies similar in method or approach to those studied in this thesis.

Thus, the problem of this study appears unique in its approach and to have significance in terms of manifested interest in high school dramatic activities in Kansas. Further study of the events in the high school programs can be aided through a collection and recording of past events which will provide a groundwork for future contributions.

The procedures used in the study are presented in Chapter II. Chapter III presents the chronology of collected events and Chapter IV the summary of findings, the conclusions drawn, and suggestions for further study.

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<sup>23</sup>David Matheny, A Historical Review of the Department of Speech of Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, Kansas, From 1885 to 1957 (Master's thesis, Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, Kansas, 1957).



## CHAPTER II

### THE PROCEDURES

The primary purpose of Chapter II is to show the procedures the writer has employed in this research. These procedures may be divided into two parts. The first part deals with the method of gathering information to be used, the second with the presentation of data collected.

#### I. METHODS OF GATHERING INFORMATION

##### Step One: Through Organizations.

Information was gathered from official publications of organizations. The Kansas High School Activities Journal<sup>1</sup> was used to find events which were conducted by or evoked through the Activities Association. The Kansas Speech Teacher<sup>2</sup> was used in the same manner. The American Educational Theatre Association's Educational Theatre

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<sup>1</sup>The Kansas High School Activities Journal, Official Publication of the Kansas State High School Activities Association, published September through May at 1300 Topeka Avenue, Topeka, Kansas, by the Kansas State High School Activities Association.

<sup>2</sup>Kansas Speech Journal, official publication of the Kansas Speech Association, published at Lawrence, Kansas.

JOURNAL<sup>3</sup> and the National Thespian Society's Dramatics Magazine<sup>4</sup> were used with the thought that some articles pertaining to dramatic activities in Kansas might be found.

### Step Two: Correspondence and Contact

A letter was sent to the forty-six colleges and junior colleges, both state and church affiliated, in the state of Kansas. (See Appendix A) The purpose of this letter was to determine if there were events--workshops, clinics, or other activities involving high school teachers and students--sponsored by the colleges which may not have received publicity through The Kansas State High School Activities Journal or the Kansas Speech Teacher.

The files of the State Historical Association in Topeka were examined for information on high school dramatic activities in the state.

### Step Three: Interviews

A. Institutional. The writer conducted personal interviews with the heads and/or the people concerned with

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<sup>3</sup>Educational Theatre Journal, Official Publication of the American Educational Theatre Association.

<sup>4</sup>Dramatics Magazine, Official Publication of the National Thespian Society.

the drama departments of certain colleges in Kansas. People with whom the writer had an opportunity to speak were: Dr. Karl C. Bruder, Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia; Dr. William Conboy, Dr. Lewin Goff and Dr. Jed Davis of the University of Kansas, Lawrence; Professor Dennis Denning, Kansas State University, Manhattan; Dr. Robertson I. Strawn, and Dr. Mary R. Roberts, Kansas State College of Pittsburg; Professor Lesslie Blake, State University of Wichita. Interviews were conducted on the basis of the following questions,

1. What services are or have been provided by your department for the high school dramatics teacher; workshops, clinics, speech tournaments which include drama?
2. Can you cite other events outside of your institution which may have contributed to the dramatic activities in Kansas high schools? When? Where?
3. What in your estimation has been the greatest step toward the growth and development of drama in Kansas high schools?

Question three could not always be answered in terms of events and dates. The abbreviated answers are considered in a separate section of Chapter III.

B. Non Institutional. An interview with Miss Lois Caffyn, Language Arts Consultant of the Department of

Public Instruction at Topeka, produced answers to the following questions.

1. Can drama classes count toward graduation? What year did this start?
2. Do you have the number of schools in which drama is offered as a subject?
3. Does the State Department of Public Instruction have specific requirements for teaching drama?
4. Is there a state course of study for drama?

Interviews were held with Miss Wanda May Vinson, Director of speech and K.A.Y. of the Kansas High School Activities Association; Mrs. Mary Jane Teal, director of the Wichita Community Theatre; Professor Allen Crafton, retired head of the speech department of the University of Kansas; Mr. E. A. Thomas, retired executive director of the Kansas High School Activities Association; Mrs. F. H. Gilson, wife of the late Dr. Gilson, head of the speech department at Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia; Miss Shameleffer, retired speech teacher from Wichita; Mr. Kenneth Scott and Mr. Henry Ellenberger, both of Emporia and former students of Dr. Gilson; Mrs. Marjorie Williams, daughter of the late Dr. Gilson. The following questions were used to facilitate determination of events making the greatest contributions to the furtherance of dramatic activities.

1. What events, in the interval 1938-1964, do you recall as being related to dramatic activities in high schools?
2. Do you feel that the quality of drama in the high schools has improved?
3. To what do you attribute this?

## II. METHOD OF PRESENTATION

Events associated with the dramatic activities in Kansas high schools were tabulated and arranged in chronological sequence. Pertinent facts surrounding each event were collected and noted in relation to that event. For ease of reference a historical timeline was developed which serves to indicate at a glance both the chronology and concentration of events.

The events are presented and discussed in terms of pertinent data in Chapter III.

## CHAPTER III

### PRESENTATION OF DATA

Chapter III presents the findings of this study in two parts. Part I records the significant events and a discussion of these events. It should be remembered that, although there are no events recorded for some years, dramatic activities were being carried on in the schools. High schools were offering classes and extra-curricular work in drama, teachers were instructing students in different phases of drama, colleges were offering classes to improve the standards of teaching drama in the high school. These facts, which may not have been an event in themselves, has an impact on high school dramatic activities and are discussed in part II.

#### PART I

The events pertinent to the dramatic activities in Kansas high schools are presented in chronological order with the total chronology divided into four segments as follows: 1938-1943, 1944-1949, 1950-1957, and 1958-1964. This division is designed for ease in reading. In each segment, the year is listed followed by the events and the discussion of the events.

1938-19431938:

1. Speech activities secures recognition as a part of the Kansas State High School Activities Association.

The Kansas State High School Activities Association was a new organization having been founded in 1937. Until this year the Activities Association had been an Athletic Association and in 1937 it expanded, changed its name, and began taking in all activities which were associated with the high schools. In 1938 speech activities became a part of the Kansas State High School Activities Association.<sup>1</sup> Speech, upon becoming a part of the Activities Association, achieved status as a major secondary school activity and has maintained both its place in the association and the relevant status through the succeeding years. Drama, in Kansas, is considered a "speech activity" and thus shares in the prestige acquired by speech in 1938.

1939:

1. Harold G. Ingham recommends district speech and drama festivals to the Kansas State High School Activities Association.

In 1938 Mr. Harold G. Ingham of Lawrence, the State director of speech activities, made the following

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<sup>1</sup>Mr. E. A. Thomas, Retired Executive Director, Kansas State High School Activities Association, in interview, June 5, 1964, Emporia.

recommendation to the delegate assembly of the Activities Association:

Following the state debate tournament, district speech festivals be held so as to include such activities as original and standard oration, one-act plays, radio drama, extempore speech, after-dinner speaking, reading and declamation.<sup>2</sup>

2. Kansas State High School Activities Association establishes district speech and drama festivals.

The recommendation given by Mr. Ingham resulted in the delegate assembly taking the following action:

It was voted to discontinue district and state extempore speech contests in connection with debate tournaments; to hold district and state debate tournaments earlier; to set up district speech festivals to be held during the second semester, these to include extempore speech, one-act drama, radio drama, after-dinner speaking, original and standard oration, reading and declamation.)

Passed in 1939, this resolution actually took effect in the spring of 1940. The forensic committee met to outline plans for the speech and drama festivals. For the first year's festivals, five centers were chosen and dates set. Centers at which the festivals were to be held were: Chanute and Garden City on March 30, Lawrence on March 29

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<sup>2</sup>The Kansas State High School Activities Association, Board of Directors Meeting (Topeka: Volume II, Number 3, November, 1939), p. 1.

The Kansas State High School Activities Association, The Delegate Assembly Meeting (Topeka: Volume II, Number 3, October, 1939), p. 1.



and 30, Great Bend and Colby on April 6.<sup>4</sup> The district speech and drama festivals were held each following year except in 1943 when the Activities Association made no plans for a district festival.<sup>5</sup> The festivals, since they became annual events, are not recorded hereafter in this chronology.

### 3. Organization of the Kansas Speech Teachers Association.

The year of 1938 saw the formation of the Kansas Speech Teachers Association. This association later changed its name to Kansas Speech Association. When the association was organized there were forty members with the five following objectives:

1. Foster interest in and out of schools in all phases of speech activities.
2. Help bring about unity in a state speech program.
3. Help in solving problems which speech teachers might have.
4. To encourage higher professional standards among speech teachers.

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<sup>4</sup>The Kansas State High School Activities Association, Speech (Topeka: Volume II, Number 6, February, 1940), p. 11.

<sup>5</sup>The Kansas State High School Activities Association, Speech (Topeka: Volume V, Number 5, January-February, 1943) p. 14.

5. To promote the general welfare of all speech activities in the state, both high school and college.<sup>6</sup>

Throughout the years since the Speech Association's organization, it has served a "behind the scenes" function in promoting speech activities. A committee of the Speech Association works in an advisory capacity with the Kansas State High School Activities Association.<sup>7</sup> The Drama Interest Group of the Kansas Speech Association presents a separate meeting at the annual convention during which problems of interest to drama teachers are discussed and programs of interest to drama teachers are presented. Thus, though no particular drama events have been sponsored by the Association, it has served the vital and necessary functions of unifying and supporting drama activities while contributing to the useful knowledge of those persons directing dramatics in the high schools of Kansas.

#### 1940:

1. Delegate assembly passes a motion that speech events, except debate, be rated, not ranked.

Formerly events were ranked first, second, third and so on. With the rating system any event, meeting the

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<sup>6</sup>Kansas Speech Association, KSTA Objectives (Allen Press, Lawrence, Kansas: Volume I, Number 5, May, 1950), p. 4.

<sup>7</sup>Kansas State High School Activities Association, Speech (Topeka: Volume IV, Number 2, October, 1941), p. 12.

judges standards of a commendable performance, was to be given a I division rating. The reasoning behind this motion was that there were many entries in the festivals deserving of high recognition but with the existing method of ranking, only one entry could receive the top honor. Hereafter it was only events which met this qualification which were approved by the Board of Control of the Kansas State High School Activities Association.<sup>8</sup>

1941, 1942, 1943:

During this period there were no new events to record. There was the continuation of the festivals, already mentioned, and the speech work within the high schools. Due to World War II, the vacancies for speech teachers were hard to fill.<sup>9</sup> Gas and tire rationing hampered participation in speech events. "Even though traveling may be prohibited, we can't think of quitting, more inter-school activities should be held,"<sup>10</sup> was an Editorial Comment found in the Activities Journal indicating

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<sup>8</sup>The Kansas State High School Activities Association, Speech (Topeka: Volume III, Number 2, October, 1940), p. 11.

<sup>9</sup>The Kansas State High School Activities Association, Speech (Topeka: Volume VI, Number 4, December, 1943), p. 14.

<sup>10</sup>The Kansas State High School Activities Association, Editorial Comment (Topeka: Volume V, Number 9, May, 1942).

that speech activities remained, even though they had to be conducted on a rather limited basis.

1944-1949

1944:

1. Delegate assembly urges emphasis on speech activities.

Although travel during the war years was restricted, the Delegate Assembly urged that inter-school speech activities be held. They hoped to continue the emphasis on speech activities and provide motivation and stimulation through a statewide program of speech and drama festivals, speech institutes and clinics.<sup>11</sup>

2. A one-day speech clinic is held at Parsons and at Wichita North. Drama was included.

The Activities Association sponsored a one-day clinic at Parsons on Friday, October 27. Professor D. D. Moore, Kansas State College, Pittsburg, was in charge of the drama section in which he featured the selection and staging of plays and gave a demonstration on stage make-up. Ten schools and approximately 70 teachers and students were represented at this clinic.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>The Kansas State High School Activities Association, Delegate Assembly (Topeka: Volume VII, Number 2, October, 1944), p. 2.

<sup>12</sup>The Kansas State High School Activities Association, Speech (Topeka: Volume VIII, Number 3, November, 1944), p. 5.

The Activities Association sponsored a similar clinic at Wichita North on October 28. Howard T. Hill was in charge at this clinic with twenty schools and one hundred seventy-five teachers and students attending.<sup>13</sup> These two clinics were sponsored to provide the motivation and stimulation referred to in event number one for this year.

1945-1946:

No events were recorded for these two years. World War II was over. The once hard to fill vacancies in speech were again being filled. Speech activities, which had continued during the war years, were now being built up again.

1947:

1. Speech clinics at Lawrence, Dodge City, Wichita, and Hays, included drama.

The Activities Association sponsored four speech clinics: one each at Lawrence on October 17 and 18, at Dodge City on October 24, at Wichita on October 25, and at Hays on November 1. Although these clinics were billed as including drama, very little drama was discussed. Miss Wanda May Vinson, Director of speech activities for the Kansas State High School Activities Association, indicated the reason for the lack of drama at the clinics was due to

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

the fact that the debate season was at hand and debate seemed to be the topic for the day.<sup>14</sup> These four clinics were well attended by both teachers and students. Over seven hundred teachers and students from more than fifty-three high schools were in attendance.<sup>15</sup>

1948:

No events for this year were recorded. It seems that the speech activities, as they were, were being tested to determine what the next step in the development of the program would be. Transportation difficulties in getting to annual meetings had caused the Kansas Speech Association to become inactive during the period 1942-1947. In 1948 the Association was in the process of "getting back on its feet."<sup>16</sup>

1949:

1. Speech Clinics at Lawrence, Dodge City, Wichita, and Hays, drama included.

The Activities Association made plans for clinics at Lawrence on October 14 and 15, at Dodge City on October 21,

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<sup>14</sup>Miss Wanda May Vinson, Director of Speech and K.A.Y., Kansas State High School Activities Association. In interview, July 24, 1964, Topeka.

<sup>15</sup>The Kansas State High School Activities Association, Speech (Topeka: Volume VII, Number 3, November, 1944), p. 5.

<sup>16</sup>Kansas Speech Association Minutes, April, 1947.

at Wichita on October 22, and at Hays on October 29. Again, as in 1947, debate seemed to dominate the clinics. In a description of the clinics, the Speech section of the Activities Journal noted that, "at all clinics this year emphasis was placed upon debate, extempore speech and original oratory."<sup>17</sup>

2. Consideration given to getting more district speech and drama festival centers.

Speech teachers recommended the number of district speech and drama festivals for those receiving first division ratings in the regionals<sup>18</sup> be increased. This recommendation later led to the establishment of the state speech and drama festival.<sup>19</sup>

3. Spring of 1949 - First state speech and drama festival is held at Kansas University, Lawrence, on April 8 and 9.

The recommendation for more district speech and drama festivals resulted in the following action:

Arrangements are underway for a state high school speech and drama festival. Indications are that it

<sup>17</sup>The Kansas State High School Activities Association, Speech (Topeka: Volume XIII, Number 3, November, 1949), p. 3.

<sup>18</sup>According to all information obtainable, regional was used to indicate district, and was evidently a misprint. Mr. E. A. Thomas stated that this might well be a misprint.

<sup>19</sup>The Kansas State High School Activities Association, Board of Control Meeting (Topeka: Volume XI, Number 5, January, 1949), p. 2.

will be held at the University of Kansas on April 8 and 9. This will follow the district festival scheduled for March 26, and the winners of first division ratings at the district festivals will qualify for the state meet.<sup>20</sup>

The state speech and drama festival began with the one festival at Lawrence on April 8 and 9. In 1951 two centers for the state speech and drama festival were approved with the second being held at Fort Hays State College.<sup>21</sup> Since that time the pattern has remained the same with the locations of the centers being varied occasionally.

4. A list of "approved" plays is compiled by the Kansas State High School Activities Association and used as a basis for district and state speech and drama festivals.

With the beginning of the state speech and drama festival, the Activities Association compiled a list of "approved" plays to be used for festival work. This list was designed to help the directors of one-acts choose plays more suited to contest work. The list, chosen by a committee appointed by the Activities Association, contained some selections which had low, or no royalty fee. A

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<sup>20</sup>The Kansas State High School Activities Association, Speech (Topeka: Volume II, Number 6, February, 1949), p. 3.

The Kansas State High School Activities Association, Annual Meeting of the Association (Topeka: Volume XIII, Number 7, March, 1951), p. 2.



requirement that the plays for speech and drama festivals be taken from this "approved" list was adopted.<sup>22</sup>

### 1950-1957

#### 1950:

1. Consideration is given to the possible addition of centers for one-act play festivals.

The one-act play was proving to be a popular event. During the 1949 district speech and drama festivals the number entered was almost too large to be accommodated at the regular festival centers. The Activities Association therefore believed it might be possible to add one or two more centers for one-act plays.<sup>23</sup>

#### 1951:

1. Recommendation is made for modification of the regulations governing selection of one-act plays for festivals.

It was recommended that there be some modifications of the regulations governing the selection of one-act plays for festival performance.<sup>24</sup> The purpose of the recommendation was formulated by a group of speech teachers to

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<sup>22</sup>The Kansas State High School Activities Association, Speech (Topeka: Volume XI, Number 3, November, 1949), p. 22.

<sup>23</sup>Kansas State High School Activities Association, The Annual Meeting (Topeka: Volume XIII, Number 7, March, 1951), p. 2.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

counteract the publication of plays, on the "approved" list, which had little literary value. The publication of plays with little literary value fostered feelings of discontent by the directors who were required to choose from this list, and were then rated down, at contests, because of the choice of script.<sup>25</sup> This recommendation resulted in the revision of the "approved" play list<sup>26</sup> and the comment found in event Number 1, 1952.

2. Recommendation is made for two state speech and drama festivals.

At the annual meeting of the Activities Association, it was recommended there be two state speech and drama festivals. This recommendation was made with the thought in mind that the schools in the western part of the state would not have to send their students so far.<sup>27</sup> This recommendation carried and a second state speech and drama festival was organized at Fort Hays State College as mentioned in event Number 3, 1949.

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<sup>25</sup>Dr. George R. E. Pflaum, Former Head, Speech Department, Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, in interview, August 5, 1964, Emporia.

<sup>26</sup>The Kansas State High School Activities Association, Speech (Topeka: Volume XIII, Number 5, January, 1951), p. 3.

<sup>27</sup>The Kansas State High School Activities Association, Annual Meeting of the Association (Topeka: Volume XIII, Number 7, March, 1951), p. 2.

1952:

1. Kansas State High School Activities Association urges care in selection of one-act plays.

The activities association was concerned with the quality of drama the speech and drama festivals were producing and in an editorial comment it urged the schools to be more careful in the selection of one-act plays:

A larger list of plays has been submitted for consideration and turned down. The number of plays that have not met the requirements for presentation in a district or state festival has been surprisingly large, in the opinion of the committee. Many of them contain good material for skits and might be suitable for special occasions on the local school level. Not enough consideration has been given, apparently, to the selection of plays that contain worthy plots, acting requirements, proper language, and other elements that go to make up a play that has real dramatic and educational value.<sup>28</sup>

This would indicate the Association was concerned with the educational benefits the students were receiving by participating in the speech and drama festivals.

1953-1954:

No events were recorded during these two years. Since 1948, much had been done in dramatic activities. The greatest effort during this period was an attempt to

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<sup>28</sup>The Kansas State High School Activities Association, Editorial Comment (Topeka: Volume XIV, Number 5, January, 1952), p. 5.

improve the speech and drama festivals. In the years immediately prior to 1953-1954, accomplishments made were being tested in an effort to find what the next improvement in dramatic activities should be.

1955:

1. Clinics held in the fall include discussion of one-act drama.

Again an effort to combine the debate and drama clinic was made. Since 1949 the clinics had stressed debate, and this year debate was also predominate.<sup>29</sup>

2. A drama loan service is established through Kansas University Extension Division.

The drama loan service was started by the Kansas University Extension Division and was supervised by Mrs. Nola Ring. This service was designed to assist the drama coaches in selecting plays for school production or contest work. Through this service a teacher could order plays to be read and after reading, return them. The only charge for this service was twenty-five cents for each packet sent out. If the teacher wished, he could describe the number and kind of actors he had and the facilities for producing a play, and the drama loan service would make the

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<sup>29</sup>The Kansas State High School Activities Association, Speech (Topeka: Volume XVIII, Number 2, October, 1955), p. 2.

selection for him. This service was especially for the teacher who was not familiar with selecting a play for presentation.<sup>30</sup>

3. Drama workshop for teachers is offered by the University of Wichita.

During the summer of 1955, the University of Wichita offered a workshop in drama designed for the high school teacher. The workshop was conducted by George Goodrich of the University. Emphasis in this workshop was placed on play directing and the training of actors.<sup>31</sup>

4. Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia begins summer theater program.

The Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia, in the summer of 1955, established a new program, the first of its kind in the state; The Emporia State Summer Theater. The purpose of this additional offering was closely related to the primary mission of the college--that of training teachers. The program was designed to be a training medium in which students could learn techniques leading to the

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<sup>30</sup>Dr. William Conboy, Head, Department of Speech and Drama, University of Kansas, in interview, July 23, 1964, Lawrence; Miss Wanda May Vinsen, director of speech and K.A.Y., Kansas State High School Activities Association, Topeka, in interview, July 24, 1964, Topeka.

<sup>31</sup>Kansas Speech Journal (Allen Press, Lawrence, Kansas: Volume XVI, Number 4, March, April, 1955), p. 11.

improvement of school productions and a deeper knowledge of plays. Laboratory activities would be stressed and the learning process connected with the program would occur as a part of actual production activities. The wholeness of production was to be emphasized. This was encouraged by requiring participants to work on all parts of the production.<sup>32</sup>

1956:

1. The last year debate clinics attempt to include drama.

As in the previous year the speech clinic was to include drama. Debate, being the activity that was presently active, again took the most attention. This was the last year speech clinics attempted to include both debate and drama. Hereafter when drama clinics were conducted they were treated as a separate clinic.<sup>32</sup>

2. Kansas University of Lawrence adds a high school drama camp to their midwestern music and art camp.

During the 1955-1956 school year the Activities Association put its stamp of approval on Kansas University's

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<sup>32</sup>Dr. Karl G. Bruder, Head, Department of Speech, Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, In interview, July 28, 1964, Emporia.

<sup>33</sup>Miss Wanda May Vinson, Director of Speech and K.A.Y., Kansas State High School Activities Association, Topeka, In interview, July 24, 1964, Topeka.

high school drama camp. The camp is designed to include high school students ranging in age from those ready to commence their sophomore year to those who have graduated from high school the preceeding spring. The theatre campers prepare a production which is given at the conclusion of the camp. Along with the rehearsals the students have regularly scheduled class sessions in the mornings. This drama camp also gives the University of Kansas directing classes and graduate students an oppertunity to work with the high school age students.<sup>34</sup> The Kansas University drama camp has become an annual event, varying in length from four to six weeks.

1957:

1. Speech and drama clinics for sponsors and students interested in second semester speech activities are held.

The Activities Association sponsored a series of speech and drama clinics in December and January. These were designed with the teacher and students of second semester speech activities in mind. There were four different clinics held: December 7, Salina High School; December 14, Baker University of Baldwin; January 11, Meade High School; January 18, Oberlin High School.

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<sup>34</sup>Dr. Lewin Goff, Department of Speech and Drama, University of Kansas, Lawrence, In interview, July 16, 1964, Lawrence.

Each program will feature authorities in the fields of speech and drama. Consultants will have charge of the morning sessions and will act as leaders of one afternoon workshop. The programs will include student demonstrations in each of the following events: one-act plays; dramatic readings; humorous readings; manuscript readings; and extempore speech. . . . The one-act plays will be presented in the morning, a critique will be given, and the consultant will speak on "Criteria for the selection of your one-act play."<sup>35</sup>

This type of clinic was held in 1957, 1958, and 1959 and then discontinued due to the lack of time for preparing them after the debate clinics earlier in the fall.<sup>36</sup>

2. Beginning of the High School Service Center at the Kansas University of Lawrence.

The High School Service Center was the outgrowth of the need for the faculty at Kansas University of Lawrence to be in closer contact with the high school teacher group.

Each fall, the High School Service Center at the University of Kansas conducts a post card survey of all secondary schools in the state in an attempt to gain a more accurate and current assessment of the teachers and activities (both curricular and extra-curricular) in the speech and drama programs of these institutions. The Service Center, a joint function of the Department of Speech and Drama and University Extension, seeks this information for a two-fold purpose: first, to help in the formation of an

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<sup>35</sup>Kansas State High School Activities Association, Speech (Topeka: Volume XI, Number 2, October, 1957), p. 9.

<sup>36</sup>Miss Wanda May Vinson, Director of Speech and K.A.Y., Kansas State High School Activities Association, Topeka, In interview, July 24, 1964.



accurate mailing list for the High School Service Center Bulletin; and second, to gain a fuller appreciation and awareness of the needs of the readers of the Bulletin.<sup>37</sup>

3. Beginning of the Bulletin of the High School Service Center.

The Bulletin began in conjunction with the High School Service Center. The purpose of the Bulletin was to provide a monthly information file which would be for practical use, not research.<sup>38</sup>

1958-1964

1958:

1. Kansas State University offers a High School Speech Institute during the summer.

In the summer of 1958, Kansas State University of Manhattan started their annual Kansas State High School Speech Institute. This institute has been continued each summer with the exception of one summer. The institute, which includes high school students from their sophomore to senior year in high school, offers three areas of work; Radio and TV, Forensics (debate), and Theatre. The avowed purpose of the institute is to offer an enriching experience

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<sup>37</sup>Dr. William Conboy, Head, Department of Speech and Drama, University of Kansas, In interview, July 23, 1964, Lawrence.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

in an academic program in communication; to help evaluate the students' depth of interest in speech; to offer the students an opportunity to meet and to study with regular university faculty; to anticipate for the students a supervised college environment; and to help the students develop their own potential in communication.

The morning sessions consist of lectures in the fundamentals of drama. The afternoon sessions are laboratory sessions in fundamentals of acting and the evenings are spent rehearsing the summer production. The students are offered other activities such as tours to Nelson Art Center and Starlight Theatre in Kansas City.

In conjunction with the speech institute Kansas State University offers a course in the teaching of speech. This offering is for the furtherance of knowledge in the theories and practice of speech teaching.<sup>39</sup>

2. Critic judges of one-act plays are required to present an oral criticism of each play judged.

At the Annual Spring Meeting of the Kansas Speech Association, a resolution to require that one-act events be

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<sup>39</sup>Professor Dennis Denning, Department of Speech, Kansas State University, Manhattan, in interview, July 22, 1964, Manhattan.

followed by a critique of these events was passed.<sup>40</sup> This resolution was forwarded to the Kansas State High School Activities Association. The Activities Association in turn passed a resolution that all managers of speech and drama festivals should set aside a time at the end of a section of one-act plays for a critique by the judge. This enabled the judge to discuss, with the director and cast of the one-act play, the weaknesses and the strong points of the play, thus helping the director and cast to improve their production.<sup>41</sup>

3. A one-act play receiving a I rating two years in a row shall be removed from the approved list for one year.

The passing of this resolution by the Activities Association eliminated the overuse of a good play and thus motivated directors to continue their search for and selection of good one-act plays.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>Minutes of the Annual Spring Meeting of the Kansas Speech Association, Kansas University, Lawrence, April 27, 1957.

<sup>41</sup>Kansas State High School Activities Association, Board of Control Meeting (Topeka: Volume XII, Number 5, January, 1958), p. 11.

<sup>42</sup>Kansas State High School Activities Association, Board of Control Meeting (Topeka: Volume XI, Number 9, May, 1958), p. 1.

4. No school may present the same play two consecutive years for speech and drama festivals.

This resolution was designed, as event Number 3, to require directors to choose more plays and not use one to excess.<sup>43</sup>

1959:

1. The University of Wichita offers a summer workshop in speech, including drama.

In the summer of 1959 Wichita University offered a nine week course, under the direction of Eugene Spangler, in speech and drama. This class was designed to meet the needs of both graduate and undergraduate students. It was offered to fulfill a recognized need.<sup>44</sup>

1960:

1. Discontinuance of the one-act play list.

Discontinuance of the one-act play list was recommended to and approved by the Board of Directors of the Activities Association. The elimination of this list provided directors more freedom and wider choice in the selection of one-act plays for the speech and drama

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<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

<sup>44</sup>Professor Leslie Blake, Head, Speech and Drama Department, Wichita State University, In interview, July 17 and August 7, 1964, Wichita.

festivals.<sup>45</sup> This was an outgrowth of the recommendation for modifications in the rules governing the selection of one-act plays from event Number 1, 1951.<sup>46</sup>

2. Approval is granted by the Kansas State High School Activities Association for substitution of duet-acting for a one-act play or two readings.

At the April 22, and 23, 1960 Annual Spring Meeting of the Kansas Speech Association, held at Wichita, a demonstration of duet acting was presented by Dr. Robert Gebets and students from N. E. Oklahoma A & M College, Miami, Oklahoma.<sup>47</sup> This demonstration inspired the Association to recommend duet acting as an event for the speech and drama festivals. Upon recommendation the Activities Association ruled in favor of approving duet acting as a substitute division for the district and state speech and drama festivals. The rules established were that a school may present duet acting (instead of a one-act play) and four readings; or duet acting, two readings

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<sup>45</sup>Kansas State High School Activities Association, Board of Directors Meeting (Topeka: Volume XIII, Number 1, September, 1960), p. 2.

<sup>46</sup>E. A. Thomas, Retired Executive Director, Kansas State High School Activities Association, In interview, August 7, 1964, Emporia.

<sup>47</sup>Kansas Speech Association, Speech Association Convention, Wichita, Kansas: April 22 and 23, 1960, Kansas Speech Journal, Volume XXI, Number 4, April, 1960, p. 19.

(instead of four) and a one-act play; or a one-act play and four readings (if so desired).<sup>47</sup> The addition of duet acting as a substitute entry gave the director a greater variety of events for training of his students.

### 3. Published guide for teachers in choosing one-act plays.

With the elimination of the approved one-act play list, it was the Board of Directors, of the Kansas State High School Activities Association, decision to publish a criteria for choosing one-act plays. The published criteria, approved by the Executive Board, was expected to be used by drama coaches in choosing one-act plays for festival use. The criteria required that the plays have wholesome subject matter, devoid of profanity, drinking and smoking.<sup>48</sup> The choice of criteria resulted from the fact that students creating a role are going through an impressionable age, and when creating a role filled with profanity, drinking and smoking, may be impressed by these qualities in a personality.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>Kansas State High School Activities Association, Board of Directors Meeting (Topeka: Volume IXIII, Number 2, October, 1960), p. 22.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

<sup>49</sup>Miss Wanda May Vinson, Director of Speech and E.A.Y. Kansas State High School Activities Association, Topeka, In interview, July 24, 1964, Topeka.

4. Kansas State College, Pittsburg begins a summer tent theatre.

Kansas State College, Pittsburg, began their Tent By the Lake Theatre to give students an opportunity to learn theatre by doing. During the first four years the theatre was a self-supporting theatre; in 1964, the theatre changed to studio production, no longer attempting to be a self-supporting organization. It was felt the change made the theatre more educationally oriented; at all times drama credit had been offered and the theatre was run on an educational theatre basis. Participation in the theatre is open to all students who have graduated from high school.<sup>50</sup>

1961:

1. Kansas State College of Pittsburg starts Language in Action Conference during the second semester.

During the second semester of the 1960-61 school year Kansas State College of Pittsburg initiated a Language in Action Conference for high school and junior college students interested in English, foreign language, journalism and speech, with drama being considered a part of speech.

Since the beginning of the Language in Action conference in 1961, the college has held such a conference each

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<sup>50</sup>Robertson I. Strawn, Head, Language and Literature Department, Kansas State College, Pittsburg, In interview, July 27, 1964, Pittsburg.

semester. The Conference is held on a Saturday when the college is producing a play, thus affording the students an opportunity of seeing a college performance. Each Conference is attended by approximately 200 to 400 students from a fifty mile radius of Pittsburg.

The purpose of the Conference is to keep students informed and related to college programs. During the morning session there is a general assembly with a guest speaker, followed by various interest group meetings. During the afternoon the college presents a play which is in production at the time and this is followed by more group meetings.<sup>51</sup>

2. Kansas University, Lawrence, offers a speech education workshop.

Kansas University offered a speech education workshop in the summer of 1961. This workshop, one of a series in experimental professional development, was continued during the summers of 1962 and 1963. The workshop, conducted for high school teachers, runs one or one and one-half days. Each year the workshop featured some headliner who is aided and supplemented by program leaders. In 1961 Karl Robinson of Northwestern was the headline speaker. The summer of 1962 featured Dr. Robert Oliver of Penn State and Charlotte

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid.



Lee of Northwestern. In 1963 Dr. Ralph Nichols of the University of Minnesota was the speaker.<sup>52</sup>

1962:

1. Kansas State College of Pittsburg holds Speech Program Workshop.

This workshop was designed to serve secondary teachers of speech and directors of speech activities who are new to the field, as well as experienced teachers who wish to enrich existing speech programs in their schools. In addition to hearing lectures and working on individual projects, those enrolled in this workshop have the opportunity to observe high school classes in speech and drama conducted by Professor Harold Loy, supervisor at College High School. Before going to observe these classes the students in the workshop are briefed on what to look for and what is being done in the class for the day. Following the observation period, the workshop group has a discussion of the class. The workshop group also has directed observation of the college summer theatre program. Each year the workshop features a guest lecturer. For the summer of 1964, Dr. Loren R. Reid, professor of speech at the

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<sup>52</sup>Dr. William Conboy, Head, Department of Speech and Drama, Kansas University, Lawrence, in interview, July 23, 1964, Lawrence.

University of Missouri, was the guest. Dr. Walde W. Broden of Louisiana State University was the speaker in 1962; and Dr. Mary Louise Gehring of Stetson University, in 1963.<sup>53</sup>

2. Kansas State College of Pittsburg holds a one day speech conference in connection with the speech program workshop.

Any teacher interested in speech, including drama, may attend the one day speech conference which is held in connection with the speech program workshop. Each year the guest lecturer is featured at the speech conference, as well as during the rest of the workshop.<sup>54</sup>

3. Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia offers a two day session, "Contact 100."

"Contact 100" was held for two days. During these two days all phases of speech activity were covered and prominent speakers in each field of speech were featured. The session included: demonstrations in several contest areas with comment by a visiting expert on the material and its presentation, talks on activities not stressed in many programs such as Readers Theater, a showing of the film of the Emporia debaters from their CBS appearances, book

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<sup>53</sup>Dr. Mary M. Roberts, Literature and Language Department, Kansas State College, Pittsburg, In interview, July 27, 1964, Pittsburg.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid.

displays from leading publishers, and a discussion of the debate topic for the next year.<sup>55</sup>

4. Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia offers a workshop in creative dramatics.

During the summer of 1962, Katheryn Kayser, a visiting instructor on the Kansas State Teachers College campus, conducted a two week workshop in creative dramatics. Many high school as well as elementary school teachers were also enrolled.<sup>56</sup>

1963:

There was no recording of new events for this year. The events which had become annual programs were continued in the field of dramatic activities.

1964:

1. Oral interpretation workshop is offered at Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia.

The oral interpretation workshop offered at Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, was designed especially for high school teachers of English and speech with the purpose of promoting interest in oral interpretation as a technique of study and as a teaching tool in the high

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<sup>55</sup>Dr. Karl C. Bruder, Head, Speech Department, Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, In interview, July 28, 1964, Emporia.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid.

school. The workshop was devoted to a concentrated study of problems arising from the selection, presentation and preparation of oral interpretation. The program included: general background, literature in the field, types and sources of material, festival events, classroom activities, and Readers Theatre. Dr. Russell Grandstaff conducted the six week workshop.<sup>57</sup>

2. Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, offers acting class, conducted by Karl Malden.

Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, offers a three week class in acting, conducted by guest actor, Karl Malden, to enrich the existing summer theatre program. The class grew out of a desire of a professional actor to work with students whose primary interest was in teaching. The common problems of the educational and the professional theater were used as a beginning for the course. The encouragement of theatre as a part of each person's culture was also a central idea in the course.<sup>58</sup>

3. Tenth anniversary season of Emporia Summer Theater.

1964 marks the tenth anniversary of the Emporia Summer Theater. During the past nine years that this project has been underway, 258 different people have taken part.

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<sup>57</sup>Ibid., August 6, 1964.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid.

Of these 258 people, 70% of them are still in the teaching field of drama. Directors of the summer were Dr. Karl C. Bruder, Head, Speech Department of Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia, Don Hess, former director of Emporia Summer Theatre, and Walter Spits, former student of summer theatre.<sup>59</sup>

4. District and state speech and drama festivals will be classed and held separately.

In the '64-65 school year the district and state speech and drama festivals will be classed according to AA and A, B and BB schools and will be held at separate locations. The state B and BB festival will be held at Wichita, with the state AA and A being held at Lawrence.<sup>60</sup>

## PART II

Part II considers the answers to questions asked by the writer, while conducting personal interviews with individuals in administrative positions or who have achieved statewide prestige in the area of drama. The following basic questions were used for interview structure and to

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<sup>59</sup>Ibid.

<sup>60</sup>Miss Wanda May Vinson, Director of Speech and K.A.Y., Kansas State High School Activities Association, Topeka, In interview, July 24, 1964, Topeka.

synthesize the picture of the growth and development of drama in Kansas high schools.

1. What in your estimation has been the greatest step toward the growth and development of drama in Kansas high schools?
2. What events, since 1938, do you recall that furthered dramatic activities in Kansas high schools.
3. Do you feel that the quality of drama in the high schools has improved? To what do you attribute this?

The nature of these questions called for opinions rather than specific facts. These opinions reoccurred often enough in the interviews that they became of significant value to this paper. These opinions, although not definite events, are directly associated with the furtherance of dramatic activity in the Kansas high schools.

1. What in your estimation has been the greatest step toward the growth and development of drama in Kansas high schools?

Curriculum changes on the college level were a significant factor in the growth and development of dramatic activities on the high school level. The training of the college student and what has been done by that student, as a result of the training, when he became a teacher, is reflected in an improved curriculum and more knowledgeable

teaching.<sup>61</sup> The most significant work done in this state to improve drama in the high school has been done by the teachers graduating in the past 10-15 years. Their enthusiasm, talent, and solid training has brought a new approach to the use of drama in the public schools. They, more than any other single factor, have brought about the recent changes that are reflected in the fine uses drama now serves in the high schools of Kansas.<sup>62</sup> The college courses offered in the field of speech, including drama, have increased over the years and, in many cases, the hours required for a major or minor in speech have also increased. Examples in the increased number of courses offered in drama alone are: in 1938 the University of Wichita offered five courses, in 1964 they offered ten;<sup>63</sup> in 1938 Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia offered seven drama courses and in 1964 they offer twenty-six;<sup>64</sup> Kansas State

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<sup>61</sup>Professor Dennis Denning, Kansas State University, Manhattan, in interview, July 22, 1964, Manhattan.

<sup>62</sup>Dr. Karl C. Bruder, Head, Department of Speech, Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, in interview, July 28, 1964, Emporia.

<sup>63</sup>Biennial Catalogue, The Municipal University of Wichita Bulletin, Volume XIII, Number 6.

<sup>64</sup>Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia, Bulletin of Information, January, 1938 and September, 1963.

College, Pittsburg offered three drama courses in 1938 and fifteen in 1964;<sup>65</sup> Fort Hays State College, Hays, offered four drama courses in 1938 and eight in 1964;<sup>66</sup> Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia is just one example of the increase in the number of hours required for a major or minor in speech. In 1938 Kansas State Teachers College required 25 hours in the field for a speech major. In 1942 it was possible for a student to receive a minor in speech upon completing 15 hours in requirements. In 1964 the requirements for a major were 28 hours and for a minor, 21 hours.<sup>67</sup>

The heads of the speech departments, in interviews, indicated that the better prepared teachers were bringing about the growth and development of dramatic activity. These teachers were getting their school and community interested in the idea that plays were worth giving for the sake of the play and not for the sake of raising money.

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<sup>65</sup>Kansas State College, Pittsburg, Kansas State College Bulletin, April 1, 1939 and July 1, 1963.

<sup>66</sup>Fort Hays Kansas State College Bulletin, January 1938, and June, 1963.

<sup>67</sup>History of the Speech Department, Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia.



This has increased the value of drama in the high schools.<sup>68</sup>

"Grass roots theatre during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries provided a certain amount of latent interest."<sup>69</sup> Also the caliber of theatre all over the nation is greater, going right on down to the high school student, which is significant in the furtherance of dramatic activities.<sup>70</sup>

The beginning of the speech and drama festival offered a limited amount of competition, thus stimulating the interest of the high school student. Along with the speech and drama festival, the Kansas Speech Association was mentioned. Although the Speech Association contributed no events, it acted as an undercurrent, promoting many of the recommendations put before the Kansas High School

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<sup>68</sup>Dr. Lewin Goff, Kansas University, Lawrence, in interview, July 16, 1964, Lawrence.

Dr. Karl C. Bruder, Head, Speech Department, Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, in interview, July 28, 1964, Emporia.

Dr. Robertson I. Strawn, Head, Literature and Language Department, Kansas State College, Pittsburg, in interview, July 27, 1964, Pittsburg.

Professor Dennis Denning, Kansas State University, in interview, July 22, 1964, Manhattan.

<sup>69</sup>Dr. William Conboy, Head, Speech and Drama Department, Kansas University, Lawrence, in interview, July 23, 1964, Lawrence.

<sup>70</sup>Dr. Lewin Goff, Kansas University, Lawrence, in interview, July 16, 1964, Lawrence.

Activities Association.<sup>71</sup> The Speech Association has operated as considerably more than an "undercurrent" as far as its effect on the Activities Association goes. Its contribution is quite positive in that through its regular conventions teachers at all educational levels get together, have programs, panels, and speeches on matters relevant to high school teachers problems. Demonstrations are given of outstanding work among Kansas educators, talented students perform for the conventions, etc.<sup>72</sup> People, often the colorful type with tremendous personalities, were influencing factors on the growth and development of dramatic activities. These people were interested in and enthusiastic about drama and inspired other people to show interest in drama and thus became leaders in dramatic activities.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>71</sup>Professor Leslie Blake, Head, Speech Department, Wichita State University, in interview, July 17, 1964, Wichita.

<sup>72</sup>Dr. Jed Davis, Department of Speech and Drama, Kansas University, Lawrence, in interview, July 23, 1964, Lawrence.

<sup>73</sup>Dr. William Conboy, Head, Department of Speech and Drama, Kansas University, Lawrence, in interview, July 23, 1964, Lawrence.

Dr. Karl C. Bruder, Head, Department of Speech, Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, in interview, July 28, 1964, Emporia.

Professor Dennis Denning, Speech Department, Kansas

2. Which events, since 1918, do you recall that furthered dramatic activities in Kansas high schools?

The answers to the second question were found to be overlapping with those given to the first question. Two of the specific events already mentioned in the answers to question one were the beginning of the speech and drama festival and the beginning of the Kansas Speech Association.

A third event which was brought to the writer's attention was World War II. Professor Crafton stated that the war years were significant to the growth and development of dramatic activities. There was a great deal of incentive to work harmoniously, this jelled the groups together and there was an increased interest in all types of activities, including drama.<sup>74</sup>

3. Do you feel that the quality of drama in the high schools has improved? To what do you attribute this?

The answer to the first part of this question was positive. The answer to the second part of question four

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State University, Manhattan, in interview, July 22, 1964, Manhattan.

Dr. Robertson I. Strawn, Head, Literature and Language Department, Kansas State College, Pittsburg, in interview, July 27, 1964, Pittsburg.

<sup>74</sup>Professor Allen Crafton, Former head, Speech and Drama Department, Kansas University, Lawrence, in interview, July 16, 1964, Lawrence.

seems to go back to the answer for question number one and the significance of improved teaching. Here again it would indicate that the improved curriculum, producing improved and better qualified teachers, in turn produced better drama.

## CHAPTER IV

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

#### I. SUMMARY

The problem which this thesis was concerned with was finding and explaining the events associated with dramatic activities in the high schools of Kansas. The events recorded in Chapter III are those which had a bearing on this study. The events used were those brought about through the auspices of the Kansas Speech Association, the Kansas State High School Activities Association and the colleges throughout the state.

In the process of finding events associated with dramatic activities in the state, the writer used the Kansas State High School Activities Journal, the Kansas Speech Journal, and the minutes of the Kansas Speech Association meetings. In addition, the colleges were contacted to determine if events had occurred which were not otherwise publicized. When colleges replied to the letter, indicating that something had been or was being done on their campus or through their school to promote dramatic activities on the high school level, a visit was made to

the campus of that school to gather information concerning the event.

Each event, followed by a discussion of that event, was listed in chronological order. This was designed to call to the attention of the reader the progress of dramatic activities in the high schools of Kansas.

## II. CONCLUSIONS

In this study of events associated with dramatic activities in Kansas high schools, the three main sources, colleges of the state, The Kansas Speech Association, and the Kansas State High School Activities Association, all played major roles in bringing about events in dramatic activities. As the reader looks at the timeline (Appendix B) it may be noted that until 1955 the only events reported by the colleges were those sponsored by the Activities Association. Although no events as such were reported, the colleges were producing plays and many of the colleges were inviting, free of charge, high school students and directors from the surrounding areas to these productions.

Since 1955 the colleges have sponsored events of interest to drama teachers, thus, taking an active part in the dramatic activities in Kansas high schools. The colleges were aware of the need for further instruction in

drama and gave teachers an opportunity for this through workshops, classes added to the curriculum, and in some cases one and two day conferences and workshop sessions. As Professor Leslie Blake said of the 1959 workshop offered by the University of Wichita, "we were fulfilling a recognized need."<sup>1</sup> Fulfilling this need may be noted as the basis for the answer to question one, "What in your estimation has been the greatest step toward the growth and development of drama in Kansas high schools?"

As seen in the timeline, it may also be said that Kansas State College of Pittsburg offers the widest variety of programs in the interest of drama.

Examination of the chronology gives the impression that the Kansas State High School Activities Association was sponsoring more events than the other sources studied. The reason for this may be due to the fact that records of the Activities Association were more accurately kept. Also the Kansas Speech Association and the colleges were less active during the period, 1942-1947, because of the World War II situation.

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<sup>1</sup>Professor Leslie Blake, Head, Department of Speech, Wichita State University, Wichita, in interview, August 7, 1964, Wichita.

The events in which the Kansas State High School Activities Association has played a major part were those dealing with such inter-scholastic events as speech and drama festivals; district, state, league, and invitational speech and drama meets of any type. While participation in inter-scholastic activity must be sanctioned by the Activities Association, the activities held within the individual high schools do not have to be approved by the Activities Association.

The Kansas State High School Activities Association sponsored clinics for speech and drama teachers, with the colleges sharing a large part of that burden through providing time, space and consultants for these clinics.

The Kansas Speech Association is active in procuring a better speech and drama festival. The Drama Interest Group, which is a part of the Speech Association, meets to discuss problems arising in regard to drama. Some problems arise due to dissatisfaction with the speech and drama festivals. The Drama Interest Group discusses possible solutions for the elimination of dissatisfaction with the festival. The solutions are then drawn up in the form of resolutions and given to the advisory committee of the Kansas Speech Association which takes them before the Activities Association for approval. Some of the resolutions



taken to the Activities Association for approval were; the elimination of the "approved" one-act play list, the recommendation for dust acting as a substitute event, and the requirement that the one-act play be critiqued by the critic judge.

Problems arising outside the area of festival events are also discussed and possible solutions to these problems are given. The interested teachers of drama may use these solutions to improve dramatic activities within their respective schools.

There is no way in which we can measure how much impact each event associated with dramatic activity has had in producing a better program. The writer will not attempt to conclude whether more or less is being done, nor will the writer attempt to draw any conclusion as to the quality of these events. This conclusion may be drawn by the individual reader of this thesis.

### III. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

This study leaves openings within this area for further research. Ideas brought out in the thesis have also presented problems which bear further study.

1. A study of events occurring in the high schools which have promoted the growth and development of dramatic activities.

This thesis has dealt with events occurring through the Kansas State High School Activities Association, the Kansas Speech Association, and the colleges of the state. This leaves, for further study, the events which have occurred in the high schools throughout the state which would have contributed to the growth and development of dramatic activities.

2. A study of the drama curriculum in the high schools since 1918.

A study of this type would determine whether the high school curriculum was a contributing factor to the growth and development of dramatic activities.

3. A study of curriculum in the speech and drama departments on the college level.

Research in this area would indicate whether the colleges were training the teachers more adequately and giving them a better background, thus preparing them in a way to do a better job of teaching drama.

4. A comparison of qualifications of teachers teaching drama in the high schools of Kansas.

A study of this type might be associated with the study suggested in number three. It would show that these teaching drama either were or were not better prepared to do the job they were assigned to do.

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**APPENDIX A**

Morse Hall  
Room 411--K.S.T.C.  
Emporia, Kansas  
July 2, 1964

Head of the Speech Department  
Baker University  
Baldwin, Kansas

Dear Sir:

I am a graduate student at Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia and am doing a thesis on "Events and Organizations which contributed to the Growth and Development of Drama in Kansas High Schools: 1938-1964."

If you could give me information dealing with events, sponsored by your department, such as workshops for high school teachers and students, which may have contributed to the furtherance of drama in Kansas high schools, I would be most grateful.

Please find enclosed a stamped, self addressed envelope for your reply.

Sincerely,

(Miss) Luella Siebrands

Any information you could give Miss Siebrands would be appreciated. Thank you.

Karl C. Bruder  
Head, Speech Department



**APPENDIX B**

**TIMELINE OF EVENTS ASSOCIATED  
WITH DRAMATIC ACTIVITIES**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>KANSAS STATE ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION</b>	<b>KANSAS SPEECH ASSOCIATION</b>
1938	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Speech activities became a part of the Kansas State High School Activities Association.</li> </ol>	
1939	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. H. G. Ingham recommends district speech and drama festivals to the Kansas High School Activities Association.</li> <li>2. Kansas High School Activities Association establishes district speech and drama festivals.</li> </ol>	
1940	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Delegate Assembly passes a motion that speech events, except debate, be rated, not ranked.</li> </ol>	
1941		
1942		
1943		

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<b>KANSAS STATE ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION</b>	<b>KANSAS SPEECH ASSOCIATION</b>
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- 1944
1. Delegate assembly urges emphasis on speech activities.
  2. A one-day speech clinic is held at Parsons and at Wichita North drama was included.
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1945

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1946

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- 1947
1. Speech clinics at Lawrence, Dodge City, Wichita, and Hays, include drama.
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1948

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- 1949
1. Speech Clinics at Lawrence, Dodge City, Wichita, and Hays, include drama.
  2. Consideration given to getting more district speech and drama festivals centers.
  3. Spring of 1949--First state speech and drama festival is held at Kansas University, Lawrence, on April 8 and 9.
  4. A list of "approved" plays is compiled by the Kansas High School Activities Association
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YEAR	KANSAS STATE ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION	KANSAS SPEECH ASSOCIATION
1950	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Consideration is given to the possible addition of centers for one-act play festivals.</li> </ol>	
1951	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recommendation is made for modification of the regulations governing selection of one-act plays for festivals.</li> <li>2. Recommendation is made for two state speech and drama festivals.</li> </ol>	
1952	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Kansas State High School activities Association urges care in selection of one-act plays.</li> </ol>	
1953		
1954		
1955	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Clinics held in the fall include discussion of one-act drama.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. A drama loan service is established through Kansas University Extension Division.</li> <li>3. Drama Workshop for teachers is offered by the University of Wichita.</li> <li>4. Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia begins summer theatre.</li> </ol>

YEAR	KANSAS STATE ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION	KANSAS SPEECH ASSOCIATION
1956	1. The last year debate clinics attempt to include drama	2. Kansas University of Lawrence adds a high school drama camp to their midwestern music and art camp.
1957	1. Speech and drama clinics for sponsors and students interested in second semester speech activities are held.	2. Beginning of the High School Service Center at the Kansas University of Lawrence. 3. Beginning of the Bulletin of the High School Service Center.
1958	2. Critic judges of one-act plays are required to present an oral critique of each play judged. 3. A one-act play receiving a I rating two years in a row shall be removed from the approved list for one year. 4. No school may present the same play two consecutive years for speech and drama festivals.	1. Kansas State University offers a High School Speech Institute during the summer.
1959		1. The University of Wichita offers a summer workshop in speech, including drama.

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YEAR	KANSAS STATE ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION	KANSAS SPEECH ASSOCIATION
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| 1960 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Discontinuance of the one-act play list.</li><li>2. Approval is granted by the Kansas State High School Activities Association for substitution of duet acting for a one-act play or two readings.</li><li>3. Published guide for teachers in choosing one-act plays.</li></ol> |  |
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| 1961 |  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Kansas State College of Pittsburg starts Language in Action Conference during the second semester.</li><li>2. Kansas University, Lawrence, offers a speech education workshop.</li></ol> |
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| 1962 |  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Kansas State College of Pittsburg hold speech program workshop.</li><li>2. Kansas State College of Pittsburg holds a one day speech conference in connection with the speech program workshop.</li><li>3. Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia offers a two day session "Contact One Hundred."</li><li>4. Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia offers a workshop in creative dramatics.</li></ol> |
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1963

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YEAR	KANSAS STATE ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION	KANSAS SPEECH ASSOCIATION
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| 1964 | 4. District and state speech and drama festivals will be classed and held separately. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="310 266 414 957">1. Oral Interpretation Workshop is offered by Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia.</li><li data-bbox="414 312 509 957">2. Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, offers acting class conducted by Karl Malden.</li><li data-bbox="509 362 576 957">3. Tenth anniversary season of Emporia Summer Theatre.</li></ol> |
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