

**DEBATE 101:**

**Everything You Need To Know About Policy Debate: You  
Learned Here**

**By**

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## Chapter 1: Debate Tournaments.

Competitive High School Debate involves preparing for, and attending Tournaments, where you debate against teams from other schools about the merits of a National High School Debate Resolution. This year, the Resolution is: ***Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially increase its economic engagement toward Cuba, Mexico, or Venezuela.***

At Tournaments, you will have 4-8 rounds of competition. You will “switch sides,” so that if in Round 1 you are Affirmative, in Round 2 you will be Negative. A round involves two opposing teams of debaters making sound, quality arguments about some aspect of the National Resolution (called the Affirmative Case and Plan) and whether or not a judge should vote for the Affirmative Team or for the Negative Team. The competition is intense, and success requires adaptability, fearlessness and the ability to think on your feet and not let the other side, or the judge, see you sweat. More than native smarts and fearless verbal acumen are needed, however, since becoming a successful debater requires work, and a willingness to keep learning. The essential tools required to be successful include the ability/willingness to:

- ▶ READ
- ▶ WRITE
- ▶ REMEMBER
- ▶ LISTEN
- ▶ ORGANIZE
- ▶ MULTI-TASK
- ▶ UNDERSTAND
- ▶ SPEAK
- ▶ THINK
- ▶ BE TECH SAVVY

**Reading** involves both the willingness to research subjects related to the debate topic before the season starts and throughout the year as well as the ability to read written materials aloud with fluency and clarity during competitions.

**Listening** skills encompass hearing and understanding pre-tournament instructions, your partner and your opponents in each round. ***The best debaters are the best listeners.***

**Understanding** requires critical thinking and comprehension of both the written and spoken word so that the advancement of arguments and positions are accomplished with consistency and a strategic sense of how individual arguments interact.

**Writing** is vital both to construct arguments, cases and briefs, and also to take notes, or “flow” the debate round and the arguments made in the round.

**Organization** and **multi-tasking** are essential to presenting understandable arguments so a judge can see the big picture of your arguments making you better able to listen, locate your files and prepare positions that represent a series of logical responses to opposing positions.

**Speaking** is the essence of the game and clarity of presentation and command of the audience will help you win debate rounds and procure high speaker points during the competitions.

A talent for **multi-tasking** and a good **memory** will serve you well as you continue to improve argument quality and your speed developing responsive arguments.

**Critical thinking** skills are essential to achieving success: in debate, in school and in life. In most high school tournament settings, Policy Team Debate involves learning about, and discussing, real world problems (significance) and solutions (plan), essentially boiling down to: why problems exist (inherency) and how an example of the Resolution called the AFF Plan, can solve the problems (solvency) without creating new ones (disadvantages).

**Being technologically savvy** relates to computer skills that have become more important as teams employ “paperless” debate models. No longer do the vast majority of high school or college debaters carry “tubs” of files to tournaments. Instead, the files and arguments of the modern debater are carried on laptops into the rounds and speeches or evidence citations are “flashed” between opposing teams during the round, typically before each speech.

Levels of Tournament competition include: (1) Novice Division, typically reserved for students in their first year of competitive debate; (2) Junior Varsity, where students usually having one year or less of debate experience participate in competitions against similarly situated opponents from other schools; and (3) Varsity, where competitors will customarily have two or three years of attending tournaments under their belts, and frequently will also have attended summer institutes held at various college campuses around the nation.

Variances exist in the types of tournaments any given high school program will attend during any given year. For most schools, Local Tournaments are held where teams from many different schools in one’s local area participate in competitions held under the rubric of Local League organizations. One competitive step up from Local Tournaments will be Regional Tournaments in which schools from a wider geographic area than one’s locality will participate. Heading upward in terms of the degree of difficulty in the spectrum of competition that can be faced are Invitational Tournaments, in which various competitive programs are invited by Colleges or Community Colleges, and sometimes high schools, to attend tournaments involving teams from neighboring states. Finally, at the most intense competitive levels are tournaments associated with the Tournament of Champions (the “TOC”), affiliated with the University of Kentucky, and various National Championship Tournaments associated with organizations like the National Forensics League, the National Catholic Forensics League and the National Debate Coaches Association. These latter events are large, highly competitive contests offering national competition.

Bottom-Line, Policy Debate is about arguing about problems, solutions and more problems. Tournament Competition varies with the levels of experience involved, and your degree of interest. High school programs compete at local, regional and national levels. At every level, debates are about making arguments. The importance of making arguments means that you need first to understand the component structure of arguments. Creating a cogent argument, and responding to someone else’s argument, demands knowing the elements that distinguish your “complete,” “persuasive,” “meaningful,” or simply, “valid” arguments, from the “incomplete,” “unpersuasive,” “meaningless,” or simply, “invalid” points that will be made by your opponents. Moreover, since the issues raised in debate rounds are complex, sometimes you will find that there are two, three, or maybe even more "sides" to pretty much every issue that is raised, and even to every component of the debate process itself.

## **Chapter 2: The Rudiments of Rhetoric.**

Keeping these preliminary thoughts in mind as to what Tournament Debating is about, what follows is an attempt to first explain the composition of arguments (what some people call “Rhetoric”) and then to try to put argument development processes into a debate round context. Effective debating involves successfully processing both components of a two-step process. First, you must be able to develop good, sound, well-organized and complete arguments. Second, you must be able to present your arguments to a judge in such a way that the judge understands what you argue and believes in the validity of your arguments.

### **I. ARGUMENTS.**

Arguments are the building blocks of debate. Learning about making arguments the right way is the essence of being well spoken in any walk of life, whether in the classroom, workplace or at the kitchen table. Every complete argument consists of three components, CLAIM, WARRANTS AND PROOF.

First, a CLAIM is the specific point being made. Second, WARRANTS are the reasons for the claim. A claim without WARRANTS, or reasons, is not much of a claim. Finally, proof or evidence is used to validate, or prove an argument and comes in the form of “cards,” or quotations from published authorities “qualified” to render opinions or otherwise validate the claim or warrants. Sometimes, evidence or proof offered to support a claim or warrants comes in the form of statistics obtained from published sources like newspapers, magazines, books, journals or internet sources. Other times, the proof consists of basic, elementary logic. In debate, arguments that use logic or reasoning as the basis for their PROOF (as opposed to “cards” or “quotes”) are called ANALYTICS. Evidence and proof is a complex subject occupying an entire year for law students. However, categories of “proof” or “evidence” in a debate round can be simplified as “Opinion,” “Fact” and “Analytic.”

Since making arguments is one thing, but winning debates is another, knowing the component parts of an argument is only half the battle. The other half concerns responding to/defeating the arguments made by your opponents. To be successful in that enterprise requires you to “CLASH” with the arguments that are made by the other team. It is not enough to merely “make” your own arguments. Very successful debaters respond to the arguments that are made by the other side. However, CLASHING successfully requires that you make RESPONSIVE ARGUMENTS as a rejoinder or rebuttal to the specific arguments that are raised by the opposing debaters.

To return this discussion to where it began, CLASH involves nothing more than making ARGUMENTS that respond to your opponents’ arguments. Since every ARGUMENT consists of a CLAIM, WARRANT and PROOF, the best debaters understand that responsive argumentative CLASH involves making a CLAIM about your opponents’ argument, providing reasons or WARRANTS to support the CLAIM you are making, and PROVING to the satisfaction of the judge that your CLAIM and WARRANTS about the other side’s argument defeat the opposing team’s argument.

## **II. CLASH, RESPONSIVE ARGUMENTS, REBUTTING YOUR OPPONENTS . . . DEBATING.**

The subject of “Rhetoric” with a capital “R” is as old as human communication. Rhetoric is persuasion. From the earliest days when one human wanted to build a fire by rubbing two sticks together and another wanted to strike two stones to make sparks, people have had “differences” of opinion and conflicting or opposing ideas about just about everything. Convincing the other person that you were right, and they were wrong; or convincing some third person or group of people that you were right and the other person was wrong, is what Rhetoric is all about. Academic, Policy Team Debate is Rhetoric . . . frequently about the merits of the Resolution, or even about debate itself.

To have a good debate, there must be **CLASH** between the arguments each side makes about a particular issue. Responses must be made by you to arguments made by the other side. **CLASH** consists of making arguments that oppose or respond to the opponents' arguments. In clashing with an opponent's argument, you can attack the **CLAIM**, the **WARRANTS**, or the **PROOF** that they use in making their argument. Simple, right? Just wait.

How do good debaters **CLASH**? Five methods can be employed to attack specific **CLAIMS** or **ARGUMENTS** from the other side makes about any issue or sub-issue in a debate round.

1. Direct Denials or Direct Refutation. They say: “Black;” You say: “White.”
2. Challenge the Relevance of the opposition's **CLAIM** to the issue being debated.
3. Attack the Warrants or reasons stated for the **CLAIM**.
4. Attack the Evidence or Proof used to support the **CLAIM**.
5. **TURN** the opponents' **CLAIM**, **WARRANTS** or **PROOF** to your **ADVANTAGE**.

What techniques are involved in setting up effective **CLASH**? At the TOC level debaters have become more argument making machines than persuasive persuaders. Making arguments is like being a good baseball pitcher. You must have good mechanics to throw a strike every time you need to throw a strike. In debate, you need good mechanics to make a quality, understandable argument to respond to your opponents' argument. So, here are the steps used by the best debaters in the argument presentation process, or in the mechanics of making responsive, **CLASHING** arguments during a debate (called “embedded clash” by those who know):

1. Identify briefly the argument you are responding to;
2. Signpost, or preview, how many responses you have to that argument;
3. Give a Label or a TAG to Your Argument;
4. Perhaps (sometimes, but not always) explain your Argument;
5. Identify the **SOURCE** & Date of your evidence;
6. Read your evidence;
7. Impact or explain why your Argument matters, or beats their argument; and
8. Move on to your next Argument.



### **III. WHERE DOES THIS FIT IN A ROUND?**

Typically, the First Affirmative Constructive (the "1AC") presents the entire Affirmative case, which is a pre-scripted 8-minute speech that outlines the problem areas that the affirmative is addressing (SIGNIFICANCE), identifies the reasons why the problem exists and cannot be solved in the *status quo* (INHERENCY), presents the Affirmative Plan and then demonstrates or proves how the plan solves the problem (SOLVENCY).

The 1AC's that will be written on the topic this year will be many and diverse, for the number and nature of the scientific, financial (and other) problems facing the nation are not easily catalogued into a few discreet categories.

The 1AC is followed by a 3-minute cross-examination period during which the 2nd Negative Speaker will ask questions of the 1AC. The First Negative Speaker will be preparing for their 1NC, which is why the 2NC asks the questions of the 1AC.

After the Cross-Ex is done, the 1NC begins the clash component of the debate by presenting arguments that respond, answer or otherwise attack the Affirmative Case and Plan. The presentation of negative arguments or negative positions is anything but simple. Just as good lawyers take complex facts and make them simple for a jury to understand, however, the best debaters understand the basics, and see through the complexity by knowing that at the end of the day, arguments in policy debate, whatever they are called, boil down to: CLAIMS, WARRANTS and EVIDENCE.

The materials that follow accomplish three objectives. First, they explain a little bit about the many and varied sub-components and sub-parts of SIGNIFICANCE, INHERENCY and SOLVENCY. Second, they demonstrate the concept of CLASH, meaning that people can look at the same concept, idea or issue and see white, black or gray. Finally, they speak to issues involving the EVIDENCE or PROOF that is collected and used in a debate round.

What is not accomplished here is any in-depth analysis of the topic itself, or of specific arguments that will be made in debate rounds this year. Many sources of topic specific evidence and arguments are readily available on the internet. The best debaters will perform their own research as to the arguments and case areas that will be debated on this year's topic. Indeed, developing high quality research skills (both over the internet and in libraries, is one of the very best skill sets that involvement in policy debate produces for competitors at all levels of the activity.

There is no substitute for researching your own arguments, and particularly your own affirmative case. The more you deal with the original sources of your evidence, the better, since the authorities that you will be referencing in the round have reasons and meanings behind their written words that create nuances which may not become apparent from the excerpted portions of the cards read during the debate round. Accordingly, those debaters who perform their own research into the literature base of the topic will generally outperform those who do not.

### Chapter 3: The Policy Debate Process.

There are two teams in a room: The Affirmative Team and the Negative Team. Two people are on each team. Three different types of speeches (Constructives, Cross-Examinations and Rebuttals) take place. Each debater gives all three speeches. The Constructives (8 minutes) start with the 1<sup>st</sup> Affirmative Constructive (1AC), which is followed by the Cross-Examination (3 Minutes) of the 1AC. Then, the 1<sup>st</sup> Negative Constructive (1NC) is presented, and the 1NC is Cross-Examined. After all 4 speakers conclude their Constructive Speeches and are Cross-Examined, Rebuttals (5 Minutes) begin. The 1<sup>st</sup> Negative Rebuttal (1NR) leads off, followed by the 1AR, 2NR and, finally, the 2AR.

Since the AFF has the “burden of proof” to establish a need for a change, just like a prosecutor or plaintiff at trial, the affirmative team speaks first (the 1AC) and last (the 2AR) in the debate round. In the 1AC, the affirmative presents a speech with evidence (usually quotes from a qualified source) to prove that a significant problem exists (SIGNIFICANCE) and that the present system (*STATUS QUO*) cannot solve the problem (INHERENCY). Then, the 1AC will present a PLAN, which is an example of the resolution (TOPICALITY), to solve the problem, and finally will present evidence the proposed PLAN can and will solve the problem (SOLVENCY). The presence of a proven, significant problem, that the present system cannot solve now, along with a plan that is proven to solve the problem usually constitutes a *prima facie* (complete) affirmative case in any particular debate round.

The negative has many options to counter the affirmative case and debate the affirmative team in any particular round. We will relay the world of potential negative options to you in stages, but for now, the simplest way to organize and understand how debates work, and to identify the possible negative options for how arguments get joined in a debate round is to outline and explain what are called the STOCK ISSUES. The five STOCK ISSUES are: Topicality, Significance, Inherency, Solvency and Disadvantages. In any individual debate round at any tournament, the negative team can debate any affirmative case they meet by attacking the significance, the inherency (or that the *status quo* cannot or is not solving the problem), and the solvency of the affirmative case and plan that gets presented in the 1AC.

These types of attacks (against significance, inherency and/or solvency) are called ON CASE arguments. However, the negative team can ALSO adopt a strategy to deal with the other two Stock Issues, called Topicality (the plan is not within the resolution) and can present Disadvantages, or reasons why the plan should not be adopted. These types of arguments (Topicality and Disadvantages), along with Counterplans, Kritiks and theory arguments (discussed later), are called OFF CASE arguments or positions.

So, to summarize and give you a more detailed preview of what is to follow, after the 1AC presents the affirmative case, the negative team gets to argue against the affirmative. Typically, in local tournaments, novice debate and most JV debate competitions, Stock Issue debating is the bread and butter of what happens in most rounds. Knowing the Stock Issues, and how they work, will help novices and JV debaters achieve success as they begin their debate careers, or compete at local tournaments or state or district qualifying events.

## Chapter 4: Debating . . . Negative Options and Approaches, or, THE BIG 6.

Boiled down to the essence of the debate process, the negative team can approach the debate in 6 different ways, or in any combination of these ways, by making arguments that are generally categorized as ON CASE or OFF CASE.

1. **TOPICALITY**, or T (OFF CASE), by arguing that the affirmative plan is:
  - ◆ non topical;
  - ◆ extra topical;
  - ◆ effects topical.
2. **ON CASE** attacks, by refuting or challenging the:
  - ◆ Significance claims of the case;
  - ◆ Inherency claims of the case;
  - ◆ Solvency claims of the case.
3. **DISADVANTAGES**, or DISADS, by arguing that adopting the affirmative plan would create bigger problems than it solves, and on-balance, should not be adopted.
4. **COUNTERPLANS**, which are also OFF CASE, by arguing that something other than the plan, and/or the present system, should be adopted that would solve for the problems isolated in the affirmative significance claims, and would create a "net benefit" beyond that generated by adoption of the affirmative plan.
5. **KRITIKS**, also OFF CASE, by arguing that the rhetoric, language, assumptions or underlying basis expressed to support or advocate the affirmative case and plan are flawed and fatally destructive.
6. **THEORY**, by arguing for example that, among other things that the:
  - ◆ Plan is too vague (called ASPEC or Agency Specification);
  - ◆ Plan is too specific (called OSPEC or Over Specification);
  - ◆ Plan text is somehow flawed (the AFF is careless and deserves to lose).

Usually, a negative team will argue SOME combination of the above strategies in opposing an affirmative case. There are benefits and burdens to each approach, and sometimes it happens that the approaches taken in any given round are internally inconsistent. What a really good negative team tries to do is prepare "Strats" or strategies in advance of the Tournament as to HOW they will approach a particular case if that is what they meet in any given situation.

The advantage of early, pre-tournament preparation is that the negative team will be better able to avoid the contradictions that might crop up, and will also save themselves their "preparation time." In debates, teams are given 8 or 10 minutes of "prep time" (sometimes less) to use to organize their thoughts and speeches. Thus, a negative team that has their Strats prepared in advance will save huge amounts of in round prep time for their rebuttals.

## **I. TOPICALITY: DOES THE PLAN MEET THE RESOLUTION?**

In general, Topicality asks the question whether the affirmative plan is within the Resolution. Simple enough, but the whole concept of: "Is an affirmative plan topical?" occupies volumes of pages in books, articles and other written materials. The 2013-2014 TOPIC is:

***Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially increase its economic engagement toward Cuba, Mexico, or Venezuela.***

Understanding Topicality or "T" is where you need to start in getting ready to debate this year's Resolution. When assigned to debate on the affirmative side at a tournament, if your opponents present a T argument, you need to establish that your PLAN is topical in order to win. When assigned to debate on the negative side, for most judges, raising topicality as a negative argument, and winning the argument, usually can win you the debate round outright. A number of topicality arguments can be made by the negative team and potentially will apply to the various plans that affirmatives might present. Being able to make, and defend, a Topicality argument on the negative usually will always give you a chance to win any debate round. Typically, structuring a topicality argument on the negative requires 4 steps:

**A. DEFINITION/INTERPRETATION.** The A Step supplies a definition of a topic term.

**B. VIOLATION(S).** The B Step supplies reason(s) why the AFF plan violates the definition.

**C. STANDARDS.** The C Step supplies standards to explain why your definition is reasonable, or a rational way to define or interpret the topic, and includes such things as fairness, limits on discussion, better for education and other rather arbitrary ideas relating to: "Is it fair to debate to require us to debate the affirmative PLAN, as presented in light of a reasonable definition of the resolution's terms?"

**D. VOTERS.** The D Step supplies reasons why Topicality is a voting issue, such things as topicality is a stock issue, the judge will be exceeding their "jurisdiction" to vote for the PLAN that exceeds the resolution, or it is bad for debate, competitive equity or education that the affirmative plan presents a non-topical alternative to discuss and evaluate in the round.

Essentially, the NEG argues the plan is Not-Topical. The AFF responds that the plan is Topical, and the debate within the debate about Topicality will then occupy a large portion of the in-round discussion that follows. AFF answers to Topicality arguments generally require the submission of responsive arguments consisting of both offensive arguments and defensive arguments. Typically, the 2AC will have prepared answers to the various potential T arguments that a negative team can make. Customarily this involves having definitions at the ready for EACH TERM of the Resolution, an explanation of why the AFF plan meets the AFF definition or interpretation and other pre-scripted arguments as to why the AFF interpretation/definition of any particular resolution term is better for the judge to use to decide T in the AFF'S favor.

Responses to T, like most arguments in debate rounds can be divided into DEFENSE and OFFENSE. Defense meaning the other team's arguments are not correct and do not win them the debate. Offense meaning we have independent reasons why we WIN the T-debate. In this context, 2AC affirmative responses to T would typically look like the following:

- ▶ We Meet (explaining how the AFF plan MEETS the NEG interpretation). [defense]
- ▶ Counter-Interpretation: (the AFF'S OWN definition/interpretation of the term that the NEG found fault with in analyzing the plan in relation to the resolution). [offense].
- ▶ We meet our interpretation; (the AFF plan meets or satisfies or fits within the AFF'S interpretation). [offense]
- ▶ Standards: (giving reasons why the judge should prefer the AFF interpretation). [offense].
- ▶ NEG Standards bad: (the way the NEG presented T is unfair, bad for debate, inconsistent with the resolution's context or makes grammatical nonsense). [offense and defense].
- ▶ No Voter: (meaning in this round, T should not be a voting issue, or is not a voting issue for various reasons, the plan is fair, the plan is predictable, we are having a good debate, plan related issues are easily found in the literature of the topic (shorthanded to: Lit Checks Abuse), an/or the plan is REASONABLY topical. [defense].
- ▶ In certain rounds, a Kritique of Topicality may appear (meaning T is bad because it is censorship, arbitrary, or stifles the affirmative's voice). [offense].

The Topicality debate will proceed throughout the round as a mini-debate and usually the teams and the T arguments will CLASH through the rebuttals on the "We Meet" and "Counter Interpretation" arguments, as well as over which competing interpretation supplies better standards or limits for education, research and debate-ability. Whole books have been scripted about Topicality, the theory arguments related to topicality and the wisdom and validity of making strategic challenges to Topicality in any round. That Topicality is viewed by most local judges and old time coaches as a Stock Issue makes it important for ANY novice debater to be prepared to argue topicality on the negative, and most particularly to also be prepared on the AFF to defend the Topicality of their plan should their opponents raise the Topicality issue during the round.

Even as a varsity debater, knowing and understanding the T debate is crucial for use as a strategic argument on the NEG or as a round winner if you catch an AFF team unprepared. However, because of the potentially terminal impact of the T argument for Win-Loss success on the AFF, all novice debaters should be prepared to defend the Topicality of their AFF case and plan based on every word or term in the resolution. That said, a number of sub-issues fall under the general parameters of "topicality." The AFF needs to listen carefully to the NEG SHELL (meaning the entire NEG T argument) and must understand that the NEG might be making a subset T argument, rather than a straight T-argument.

One sub-issue is Extra Topicality (the plan does MORE than is allowed by the Resolution). Extra-T might be implicated if the plan engages both a topic designated nation and a different nation and claims advantages from so doing. Since the plan does MORE than the Resolution allows, the plan is arguably EXTRA-TOPICAL. The result could be that: (1) the Extra-Topical features of the plan text should be jettisoned, or, (2) the plan text itself, by extending beyond the resolution's bounds should be rejected as being NON-TOPICAL by including TOO MUCH. The AFF should not be permitted to sever (or eliminate) parts of their plan since that unfairly skews or disrupt NEG strategy and time allocation in the round.

A second sub-issue Effects Topicality ("FX"), or the plan achieves a topical result only indirectly, not directly. The problem is that the FX plan takes too many steps to reach a topical result, and because too many steps were taken, the plan should be rejected as being too unpredictable and hence, unfair, for the NEG to meaningfully or educationally debate.

Standard theory arguments or responses exist for all aspects of the T-debate. Understanding the nature of the T-argument being made, requires LISTENING to the NEG and sometimes reading the NEG shell to answer the argument. T, in all of its many aspects, is a big deal. Debaters at all levels of experience must be ready to debate T and sound convincing and knowledgeable when confronted with the argument in any given round.

## **II. ON CASE DEBATING: THE ON CASE STOCK ISSUES.**

Debate is about problems, why problems exist and how an example of the Resolution can solve the problems without creating new ones. The problems are called SIGNIFICANCE. Why problems exist is called INHERENCY. How the Plan prevents or solves problems is called SOLVENCY. The question about not creating new problems is called DISADVANTAGES. You best protect yourself on the AFF by having a solid, well-evidenced IAC that covers each stock issue with well warranted, fully evidenced positions addressing the SIGNIFICANCE, INHERENCY and SOLVENCY of your plan and case.

◆ **SIGNIFICANCE** includes, generally, two elements: (1) a widespread problem (quantitative significance); with (2) serious impact or importance (qualitative significance).

◆ **INHERENCY** includes four components:

1. A problem exists and the present system IS NOT solving the problem;
2. WHY the problem exists and WHY the present system cannot solve the problem;
3. The present system, even with minor modifications, will still not solve the problem; and
4. A linkage or a nexus exists between problem and systemic barriers, so that causation can be shown between the problem and the reasons why the problem cannot be solved now.

INHERENCY DEBATES happen very infrequently on the TOC Circuit, but in your LOCAL AREA, if you know INHERENCY, and the other team does not, you can pick up a couple of ballots that otherwise might go the other way, since if you can show that the *status quo* has CHANGED since the date of the affirmative's harms evidence, then it might well be ballgame over for most local, regional or coach judges.

◆ **SOLVENCY** somewhat mirrors **INHERENCY** in reverse.

To establish **SOLVENCY**, the **AFF** typically will have a solvency advocate or advocates, who will publish a position that explains that, if implemented, the proposed plan mechanism **CAN** solve the problems; **WILL** solve the problems, and **WHY** (**WARRANTS**) this will happen. Frequently, the **NEG** will have a solid block of pre-set reasons **WHY** the plan will not, or cannot, solve case area problems. Each **ARGUMENT** here will be accompanied by evidence explaining an alternate reason **WHY** the problem exists, or **WHY** the **AFF**'s proposed solutions **WILL/CAN NEVER** work.

Attacking solvency happens in **ALMOST EVERY ROUND**. Attacks range from exploring alternate causalities, to establishing alternative barriers to the creation of an effective affirmative solution. Most frequently, the solvency attack is labeled: **TURN**. Typically, in more advanced rounds, the solvency issues being debated arise from Critiques, or **K**'s, in which the implication of the criticism is that the plan cannot solve the case harm areas.

In general, you should develop case specific strategies for the most common cases that are likely to be presented in your area. Frequently, **NEG** teams are so intent on presenting their own favorite generic strategies and arguments that they ignore the **ON-CASE** debate and the **1AC** harm areas. The trend in college debate has shifted to debating the case, as well as presenting generic **NEG** strategies. The idea is to get a feel for the likely cases and harm areas that will be presented by the teams you are most likely to be debating during the year and then researching the **AFF** evidence sources to find areas in which you, as a **NEG** team, can use the **AFF** team's evidence sources against the **AFF** in arguing against the case itself.

Successful **NEG** teams mitigate or eliminate the **SIGNIFICANCE** of the **AFF** case, attack the **AFF**'s **INHERENCY** claims and challenge **AFF SOLVENCY** through well researched and well-reasoned arguments opposing the **AFF** Case claims. The more specific the **NEG** is in answering specific **AFF** advantages the better, since judges like to see debates in which clash is direct and specific. **NEG** teams which have better evidence (or more recent evidence) about the **AFF** advantages or solvency mechanisms than the **AFF** are typically rewarded. Moreover, if on the **NEG** you know the nuances of the **AFF** case and evidence because you have researched the subject area in detail, then cross-examination of the **1AC** will be more detailed and devastating than simply shooting in the dark in the questions that you pose.

Detailed research of specific **AFF** advantage areas, or of plan mechanisms, will yield specific **On Case** arguments that many **AFF** teams may not be able to answer with specificity, leaving the **NEG** with a huge advantage in rounds where the **AFF** has not prepared for a pointed and directed attack on their own case. If the **NEG** has an on case attack strategy that it intends to pursue throughout the debate, the **AFF** may well be placed in jeopardy of a loss because the **NEG** will simply have too many specific and unanswered on case arguments.

By the same token, **2AC**'s are cautioned not to simply give lip service to the **On Case** arguments presented by a **NEG** team. **AFF** teams should be prepared in advance (blocked out) to "add on" to their **SIGNIFICANCE**, **INHERENCY** and **SOLVENCY** in the **2AC**.

### **III. DISADVANTAGE DEBATING.**

Presented as "shells" in the First Negative Constructive, Disads basically argue that adoption of the affirmative plan causes more problems than it solves. Again, simple, huh? BLOCKS of arguments going back and forth on issues and sub-issues exist and there any number of theory positions, as well, that can apply to Disads on both sides of the many issues and sub-issues generated through Disad debating.

Cutting through the maze, a Disad shell is simple to create, and a complete Disad usually contains 3, or sometimes 4, elements.

**SUB-POINT A. UNIQUENESS.** Uniqueness is always the A Sub-point. What the negative shell must argue and prove is that the expected problem is NOT happening now, or will not likely be happening if the world continues as-is.

**SUB-POINT B. LINKS.** Link(s) is/are always the B Sub-Point of a Disad. A link argument is basically causation. The plan does something, which CAUSES a result that is not anticipated by the AFF.

**SUB-POINT C. INTERNAL LINKS.** Internal Links are sometimes/most often the C Sub-point of a Disad. Rarely will a plan directly cause a bad result or outcome. Most often, the plan will cause something to happen, which triggers the bad impact. When this happens, the Disad will need to include INTERNAL LINKS.

**SUB-POINT D. IMPACTS.** Impact(s) are the final element of the complete Disad, and become the C or D Sub-point of the shell. Usually, the impacts are claimed to be so severe that the NEG argues that the Disad's IMPACTS "outweigh" the affirmative's significance claims or harms as presented in the 1AC.

Basically, the NEG will be arguing that there is a very good reason to NOT ADOPT the AFF plan. Something is or is not happening now. The plan stops or causes that something to happen. By causing the thing to happen or stop happening, the plan causes other results to happen, creating big time and widespread devastation or harm.

Preparing against the Disads you will hear during the year, and preparing to defend the Disads you will be arguing on the negative during a round, requires PRE-TOURNAMENT preparation, and the construction of 2AC Answer Blocks, as well as 2NC or 1NR Reply Blocks. Naturally, anticipating the Disads you are likely to face when you are affirmative will serve you well as a 2AC, so that you will never (again, for most of you) experience the sinking 2AC feeling of "Oh my goodness, what do I do now?"

However, the staple of affirmative teams in responding to Disads is to create ARGUMENTS along the lines of: NON-UNIQUE, NO LINK, NO INTERNAL LINK, LINK TURN, NO IMPACT, AND IMPACT TURN. Advanced affirmative TOC Squads sometimes critique the Disads, which effectively is a disguised form of TURN.



On the AFF, 2AC Disad responses will obviously depend on the nature and type of Disad presented in the 1NC. Usually, the weakest point of a Disad is in the link to the plan. Most link claims are generic, or extremely attenuated. Since you will need to debate AFF at least half the time at a tournament, you will need to be prepared to ANSWER Disads, even those you do not yet know about and have not yet heard. Responding to Disads in the 2AC by being confident sounding can sometimes scare NEG teams off of the Disad that you are afraid of losing. Having a ready block of smooth sounding answers to throw at any Disad sometimes helps win the argument as NEG teams will “kick out” of some arguments in the rebuttals. Here are some possible answers to the Disad about which you know NOTHING, and have NOTHING. These will not work every time, and they may not work any time, but having some answers, and sounding like you know what you are talking about, will at least earn you speaker points for trying.

- 1. CASE OUTWEIGHS ON IMPACT.** We access 100% SOLVENCY from case and the NEG Disad is totally RISK based. The CERTAINTY of case solvency outweighs the low probability or “risk” possibility of the DA actually happening.
- 2. CASE OUTWEIGHS ON TIME FRAME.** Widespread harm is happening NOW, every minute of every day. The terminal impact of the DA ONLY happens IF and well AFTER the link and multiple INTERNAL link scenarios occur.
- 3. NO LINK.** The negative link story is hopelessly generic, whereas the case solvency evidence is plan and impact specific.
- 4. NON-UNIQUE.** The uniqueness card says NOTHING about the projected continuation of the uniqueness claim or warrant.
- 5. NO INTERNAL LINK.** By solving for the case impact we access the link to the terminal Disad impact first by generating STABILITY, thereby eliminating the conditions that lead to the most likely scenario for [NUCLEAR WAR] [ECONOMIC COLLAPSE] [TERRORISM]. The case solvency cards from the 1AC go stone cold conceded which trumps their internal link in the POST-PLAN world.
- 6. NO POST-PLAN IMPACT.** THE DA ASSUMES THE WORLD OF THE STATUS QUO, NOT THE PLAN. The Plan changes the framework for effective foreign engagement to occur, meaning the Disad impacts will not follow plan approval.
- 7. TURN.** PLAN causes increased access to greater employment and investment benefits everywhere which eliminates the probability of the terminal impact from the Disad.
- 8. PERFORMATIVE CONTRADICTION.** The DA BITES THE [Counterplan] [K-ALTERNATIVE] harder than the PLAN because [Counterplan] [K-alternative] CANNOT access 100% CASE SOLVENCY. Thus, the DA is more of a reason to vote against the NEG’s approach, rather than against the PLAN.

The disadvantage is an extremely valuable negative weapon. Affirmative teams must anticipate potential disadvantages and prepare 2AC responses (called blocks) to the likely disadvantages they might face. Certainly, if you as an affirmative team face a disadvantage for which you are not ready in one round, you must research that disadvantage and be “blocked out” to respond to the same disadvantage if you ever face it again. **Never lose to the same argument twice.**

#### **IV. COUNTERPLANS: DEBATE THEORY AND PRACTICE.**

What is a COUNTERPLAN? Easy, a COUNTERPLAN is a proposal offered by the negative that solves the significant problem(s) that the affirmative claims to exist and that creates some “net benefit” making it better at the end of the debate if the judge votes negative and prefers the COUNTERPLAN to the affirmative plan. Understanding how to debate COUNTERPLANS is immensely more complicated than the simplicity of the term’s definition.

In order to effectively understand what a COUNTERPLAN does, and how it can be advanced, attacked and/or defended, there are a couple of debate concepts that you will need to understand first. We have waited to present the concepts until now, because while you need to understand the concepts, you can better grasp their meaning and application in the context of the role that the COUNTERPLAN plays in Team Policy Debate. If you read the earlier section on the BIG 6 Negative Strategies (Topicality, On Case Attacks, Disadvantages, Counterplans, Kritiks and Theory), then you know that a Counterplan is one of the OFF CASE methods that the negative team (in the 1NC) uses to attack the affirmative case that is presented in the 1AC.

##### **A. Important Underlying Counterplan Concepts To Learn.**

The four underlying concepts that you will need to learn now, before you learn about the basics, and some of the nuances, of Counterplan debating, are embodied in the terms: ***Status Quo***; **Division of Ground**; **Presumption**; and ***Fiat***.

###### **1. *Status Quo*.**

The ***Status Quo*** is a Latin term that, literally translated, means: “the state as it is,” or “the state of things as they are,” or, as most debaters know it, the “present system.”

###### **2. Division of Ground.**

**Division of Ground** means, that as applied to all things in the world in any given debate round, the affirmative team’s “ground” is bounded by the terms of the Resolution, while the negative team’s “ground” is everything other than the Resolution. As visual thinkers, we best understand the concept like this: Imagine that the debate world of alternatives is a giant pie. Going into every debate round, the affirmative team owns that slice of the pie that is the

Resolution. The negative team owns the rest of the pie that is NOT the Resolution. In the context of COUNTERPLANS, what this means is that the negative team when faced with an affirmative plan and case may choose to defend the *status quo* as its chosen “ground;” may join the affirmative in rejecting the *status quo* by proposing a COUNTERPLAN that is different from the plan and *status quo*; or, and this might seem tricky, may do both because, as the **Division of Ground** concept explained above suggests, the negative team has all of the pie “other than” the slice that is the Resolution, meaning, the negative can both defend the *status quo* and offer a Counterplan.

### 3. Presumption.

**Presumption** is easy to understand for lawyers, and not really so different in debate than it is in the law. You have all heard that in the United States, a Criminal Defendant goes into EVERY TRIAL “presumed innocent until the prosecutor proves that the defendant is guilty, beyond a reasonable doubt.” This is called “the PRESUMPTION of innocence.” In a civil case (not criminal, but civil), the civil defendant goes into every civil trial presumed to not be liable to the civil plaintiff until the civil plaintiff proves that the civil defendant is liable, by a preponderance of the evidence.

In most every debate round, the negative team goes into the round armed with the presumption that the *status quo* should be maintained until the affirmative proves a *prima facie* case for change to the plan. A *prima facie* case is one that establishes all of the stock issue elements required to move the judge to vote for the affirmative team . . . that there is a significant problem [or some compelling ADVANTAGES that would be generated by adopting the affirmative plan] (SIGNIFICANCE), that the *status quo* is not solving and cannot solve the significant problem, [or is not generating or cannot generate the substantial advantages] (INHERENCY), that the affirmative plan can solve or prevent the significant problem, [or can generate or create the substantial advantages] (SOLVENCY), without creating any disadvantages that would be worse than the problems being solved [or the advantages being created] through adoption of the plan.

So, if the AFF proves that a significant problem exists, but does not prove that the plan can solve the problem, then the NEG would win because of the **presumption** that until the AFF proves a complete *prima facie* case for change, the *status quo* is and should remain the best policy alternative. Since the *status quo* is a very important part of the negative team’s pie going into the debate round, if by the end of the debate round the *status quo* remains the best policy option, then the negative wins the debate round on **presumption**, which the negative team possesses until the affirmative team overcomes the negative team’s **presumption** by establishing a *prima facie* case for change. Differently phrased, the question in nearly every debate round for the judge to answer is whether or not the affirmative team has proven in the debate round a *prima facie* case for change, and that the change should be made to the affirmative plan. If the judge feels that any element of the affirmative team’s *prima facie* case has not been established in the debate round, then in a typical, stock issues debate model, **presumption** would dictate that the judge should vote negative.

In the COUNTERPLAN context, believe it or not, **presumption** actually gets a little bit trickier. Here is why: Beginning with the idea that going into the round the negative team has “**presumption**” on its side, the 1AC Speech, if it is on target and complete, creates the *prima facie* case that overcomes **presumption**. Thus, if the debate were to end *before* the 1AC were given, the negative team would win based on **presumption**. If the 1AC is completed, and establishes a *prima facie* case for change, if the debate were to end after the completion of the 1AC, but before the beginning of the 1NC, then the affirmative would win because **presumption** has been overcome with the presentation of the affirmative’s *prima facie* case in the 1AC.

In a COUNTERPLAN debate, the negative team admits that a significant problem exists, and that the present system is not solving and cannot solve the problem unless changes are made to the *status quo*. However, the negative team argues that the changes should be completed through the COUNTERPLAN, not the affirmative plan. Since Counterplan ground is part of the negative’s team share of the pie (that really big part of the pie that is not the Resolution as exhibited in the affirmative’s plan), but that is also not the *status quo* piece of the pie, and since according to the negative team’s arguments the COUNTERPLAN can solve the affirmative team’s problem areas as well or better than can the affirmative plan, and/or will offer net benefits or advantages of its own that go above and beyond the benefits created by the affirmative plan, the negative team should win not because of the **presumption** which the negative team possessed coming into the debate round, but rather because the COUNTERPLAN is a comparatively better solution for the problem area than the solution offered by the affirmative plan.

Some people say that when a negative team presents a COUNTERPLAN defense, **presumption** is abandoned, and others even argue that **presumption** is actually reversed in a COUNTERPLAN round. The reasoning used is premised upon the notion that going into the round, the negative team owns the **presumption** that the *status quo* is always supposed to be the default option for the judge in the event that the affirmative team fails to establish a *prima facie* case, or in the event that the judge cannot make up her/his mind and believes the debate round has ended in a tie. Just like in a civil trial, where the judge or jury thinks the evidence is “even” on some essential element of the civil plaintiff’s case in chief, California Jury Instructions require the jury to find for the DEFENDANT because the Plaintiff did not meet its burden of proof, so too in a non-Counterplan debate round the judge should vote negative based on **presumption** in the event of a “tie.”

However, in a situation where the 1AC presents a *prima facie* case for change, and the negative team agrees that the *status quo* has a problem that cannot be solved, then the default option on the “victory in the event of a tie” is no longer **presumption** (part of the negative’s piece of the pie that says keep the *status quo* in place should a tie occur), but rather, the default option in the event of a tie after the affirmative team has presented a *prima facie* case, logically, should revert back in time to the conclusion of the 1AC, where as you will remember, the affirmative team would win if the debate were to end following the completion of a *prima facie* 1AC.

For purposes of understanding how COUNTERPLANS fit into the **presumption** picture, just think of COUNTERPLANS as something that takes **presumption** and arguably sets it aside in any round that the negative team argues a COUNTERPLAN defense to the 1AC.

#### 4. *Fiat*.

*Fiat* is another Latin Term that in the debate context means that the mandated adoption of the plan is assumed, regardless of whether or not the plan will be enacted. Traditionally, *Fiat* serves the very important function of making sure that team policy debates are focused on discussions about whether the plan **should** be adopted, rather than whether or not the plan **will** be adopted. *Fiat*, in the Counterplan context, means that if the affirmative plan can be *fiated* into existence, then so can the negative's COUNTERPLAN. Essentially, the whole *Fiat* debate also occupies books and books on theory, and framework, and customarily arises in the context of both the Counterplan AND the critique debate.

At its most basic, understandable essence, *Fiat* is simply that the debate should NOT be about whether or not the plan (or Counterplan, or critical alternative) WILL Be adopted, but rather, about whether or not the plan, Counterplan or critical alternative SHOULD be adopted. In an effort to avoid endless squabbles in a 2 hour round about whether, for example, enough Congress people or Senators WILL vote to enact the plan, Counterplan or critical alternative, or whether the President WILL sign it (them) into law if enough Congress people or Senators vote for the plan, Counterplan or critical alternative, the concept of *Fiat* allows for the debaters in a round to focus the arguments on those questions relating to SHOULD-Type, policy related concerns.

OK, enough underlying debate term(s) and concept explanation(s). We hope you are glad that we waited to explain this stuff so none of you got scared away before you read this part. To debate Counterplans, and understand what you will be covering during the year, knowing what follows is to know enough, for now, to understand basic COUNTERPLAN debating.

#### B. The Counterplan Shell.

Counterplans have become a fairly common method of negative advocacy where negative teams can soak up or moot (meaning SOLVE) the affirmative case harms while at the same time generating net benefits which make the Counterplan more desirable as a policy option for the judge. The Counterplan is presented in the 1NC as a shell which recognizes that:

First, COUNTERPLANS are a form of negative advocacy in which the negative team pretty much abandons the *status quo*, and sacrifices **presumption**. Second, COUNTERPLANS admit the existence of a problem, and of the present system's inability to solve the problem, but argue that the negative team's proposed solution is somehow better than the affirmative's plan. Third, COUNTERPLANS swing the debate from a debate ABOUT the affirmative 1AC case area issues (Harms/Significance/Advantages, Inherency), to a debate about the plan-Counterplan area issues (Solvency, Disads/Net Benefits).

Finally, 1NC COUNTERPLAN Shells contain four essential elements:

**1. Text.** A written text: Though many theory debates surround this element, it is ALWAYS better for the negative team, and the judge, if the COUNTERPLAN is written down, like (typically) the affirmative plan is written in a TEXT.

**2. Theory Contention(s).** A Theory Contention or two is presented. Customarily, these contentions are, depending on your location and style of judging, labeled:

▶ (1) COMPETITION (meaning that the Counterplan competes with the Plan to SOLVE the harm areas, in a fair and somewhat predictable manner); and/or

▶ (2) NON-TOPICALITY (meaning, for some judges, that the Counterplan is somehow not topical). The topicality theory issue is typically not really a big deal in TOC or National debating because most experienced judges believe that for the given round, the PLAN becomes the Resolution and the NEG need not worry about presenting a Counterplan which is otherwise topical. This accepted TOC-level convention regarding topical Counterplans may not hold true for local judges, or in Novice or JV debates, so if you advocate a topical Counterplan on the NEG, be prepared to explain why topical Counterplans are OK and not a reason to vote AFF. If you are AFF and someone runs a topical Counterplan, they may not be ready/prepared to defend against an argument which says if the judge likes the Counterplan, because it is TOPICAL, and the affirmative team should win if the resolution is proven to be a good idea, then the judge should still vote AFFIRMATIVE if the judge likes the topical Counterplan because a vote for the topic means a vote for the affirmative.

**3. Solvency Contention(s).** A Solvency Contention, or two: Meaning that the Counterplan DOES SOLVE the 1AC case harms, either as well as, or (preferably) better than the plan.

**4. Net Benefit(s).** This part of the shell establishes WHY the COUNTERPLAN should be preferred by the judge OVER the plan. Adopting the Counterplan is net beneficial: Meaning, the COUNTERPLAN provides an advantage(s), or a result, which exceeds the scope of benefits supplied by the AFF in the plan. Typically, the concept of NET BENEFITS is how the Counterplan is argued by the NEG to be competitive with the plan. The argument goes: Vote for the Counterplan because it solves case harms AND creates the NET BENEFIT(S) (or the Counterplan does not carry with it certain disadvantage(s) to the plan, so as a result the Counterplan is comparatively NET BENEFICIAL).

Particularly in Counterplan debates and critique debates, you must understand that TWO potential areas of contention may require your response. We call the two divergent areas: Theory and Substance. The Substance Debate on Counterplans involves comparative plan versus Counterplan case solvency, the net benefits, the net detriments to the Counterplan and, generally, the substantive issues relating to the merits or demerits of the Counterplan itself as a POLICY OPTION in relation to the plan. Theory issues and debates are trickier, but can prove to be game-over arguments if the theory argument is not understood, not answered well, or simply dropped by either team.

## **C. How Counterplans Really Get Debated.**

Counterplan debates typically devolve into debates about substance and theory. From the substance side, debates boil down to arguments about the core Stock Issues of any debate, under any rubric or judging paradigm. Substantive ARGUMENTS concern:

◆ Solvency Disputes (Does Counterplan Solve Case Harms? Does Counterplan Solve or Create Net Benefits?)

◆ Turns: (Does Counterplan Create Net Detriment or Hinder Case Solvency?)

◆ Perms: [What a doozy this one is] (Can the Plan and Counterplan BOTH be done?). Theory ARGUMENTS concern a welter of ideas stretching from: Competition, Topicality, Perm-Ability, and Theoretical Legitimacy to whole debates about Presumption and Theoretical Nuances relating to Fiat and Ground Loss/Capture. Since the devil is in the details, reading this might help you know what to do in a Counterplan debate. Hard work and experience will help you understand far better HOW to do, that which you now know you CAN DO, in debating the Counterplan.

Counterplan theory, like topicality and virtually every other element of the BIG 6, is discussed in countless books and articles on debate and is the subject of many profound thoughts expressed by many really thoughtful and scholarly debate coaches. Since this little missive is not meant to be as detailed (or confusing for novice debaters) as the deep thinkers' deep thoughts happen to be, for simplicity sake we will confine the theory side of the Counterplan discussion to the arguments you will need to know how to respond to for maximizing success in your Novice and JV years.

Much like preparing a 2AC response block of arguments to Disads, the affirmative team (usually the 2AC specifically) should anticipate potential Counterplans that might be argued by the negative team, and prepare a series of responses BEFORE the debate tournament even begins. The arguments contained in the 2AC response blocks will dictate how the Counterplan is debated during the round because it is typically off the 2AC response blocks that the remainder of the Counterplan and Disads debate progresses.

Again, both THEORY and SUBSTANCE comprise parts of the affirmative arsenal in building 2AC response blocks to the Counterplan. Two critical factors dictate which elements of either Theory or Substance are relevant in responding to the Counterplan (and sometimes, though very infrequently, Counterplans) that get presented in any given debate round. First the AFF must know what TYPE of Counterplan is being advocated by the NEG. Second, the AFF must know HOW the Counterplan is being run.

### **1. Types of Counterplans.**

In general, the types of Counterplans that get run by Negative Teams fall into 8 categories that we (and very few, if any, other people) loosely label:

- (1) PIC (Plan Inclusive Counterplans with a minus option (everything but a certain part of the plan is implemented or attempted));
- (2) AGENT (a specific branch of the Federal Government different from the agent branch selected by the AFF does the Counterplan or the 50 States do the Counterplan instead of the US federal government—this year in particular, the 50 States Counterplan will be frequently debated);
- (3) ACTOR (another country, private group or institution does the Plan);
- (4) CONSULT (another country or some organization is “consulted” by the federal government about the Plan and through genuine binding consultation, the actor is given veto power over the US federal government’s decision to implement the plan);
- (5) METHOD (plan action is implemented through a National or 50 State Referendum or a Constitutional Convention);
- (6) PLAN FLAW (the plan text contains a mistake in its wording and the Counterplan corrects the error to generate pragmatic solvency and better in round education about a variety of things stretching from grammar to how the US federal government works).
- (7) OPPOSITIONAL (actions opposite or contrary to plan mandates should be undertaken).
- (8) OTHER (The minds of debaters and debate coaches know no limits).

While this list may tell you what you can expect to hear the other side arguing when you are affirmative, or what kind of Counterplan you can present when you are negative, merely listing the types of Counterplans that are out there does not help with processing response blocks absent knowing how the negative is running the Counterplan.

## **2. How the Counterplan is being run.**

Like all things theory, debate wonks can pretty much find miniscule quibbles over labeling and categorizing any type of argument. For us, Counterplans are run either:

- (1) UNCONDITIONALLY (meaning this is our NEG policy option for the judge to consider at the end of the round); or
- (2) CONDITIONALLY (meaning under certain specified conditions, the negative will “kick” or abandon the Counterplan before the end of the 2NR).

Some NEGS like to say they are running the Counterplan “Dispositionally,” rather than “Conditionally,” but the reality is that a dispositional Counterplan is nothing more than a kickable Counterplan capable of being “disposed of” by the negative team during or before the 2NR based on some certain triggering events which would merit the abandonment of the Counterplan. The triggering events, however, are simply conditions under which the Counterplan can be “kicked” and that makes “dispositional” Counterplans merely conditional Counterplans dressed up under another name.



### 3. How do arguments about Counterplans get debated?

By knowing the type of Counterplan being debated, and how the NEG is running the Counterplan, you can craft an AFF 2AC response strategy to answer the Counterplan. Knowing both the type of Counterplan and how it is being run will enable the AFF to select that series of substance and theory responses that will help you better debate against the Counterplan. Presented as blocks in the 2AC, typical SUBSTANCE Counterplan responses from the AFF include:

- ▶ Case Solvency Challenges (the Counterplan does not solve the case harm area or areas at all, or as well as or as fast as the AFF plan).
- ▶ Straight Turns or Net Detriments (the Counterplan has disadvantage type problems of its own which would justify rejection the Counterplan in favor of the plan).
- ▶ Net Benefit Solvency Challenges (the Counterplan has a flaw that does not allow the Counterplan to access the claimed net benefit).
- ▶ Impact or Net Benefit Turns (the impact arising from the net benefit or the net benefit itself will create more harms than good).

Also potentially included in the 2AC response blocks are THEORY challenges to the Counterplan. Novice or JV Debaters who understand offense and defense implications presented by Counterplan theory will win more rounds on theory than substance during Novice and JV careers. In general, Theory can be debated and applied with respect to both the various types of Counterplans that are run and with respect to HOW the Counterplan is run in any given round. Examples of Theory arguments you might hear (or want to argue) speaking to the TYPE of Counterplan being run includes:

- ▶ COUNTERPLAN TYPE BAD (meaning PICS BAD, INTERNATIONAL ACTOR BAD, CONSULT BAD, PRIVATE ACTOR BAD, FOREIGN FIAT BAD, AGENT COUNTERPLANS BAD, NEG FIAT BAD, *etc.*)

The theme here is that for a variety of reasons, primarily related to fairness, predictability, education, fair debatability or real world practicality, a specific type of Counterplan chosen by the NEG is unfair, unpredictable or bad for debate).

Examples of Theory arguments about HOW the Counterplan is being run include:

- ▶ CONDITIONALITY BAD (meaning it is unfair, a time skew, a strategy skew, bad for debate, bad for education to have a conditional Counterplan).
- ▶ DISPOSITIONALITY BAD (same).

In general, there are countless specific theoretical reasons WHY any given Counterplan is bad, and good debaters will have pre-prepared blocks that give reasons why they should win the theory debate (offense) AND (why they do not lose the theory debate (defense). LISTENING so that you know what Theory has been argued by the other side, or argued by you and dropped by the other side, will win you lots of Counterplan debates over the course of your career.

Perhaps the greatest area for Counterplan theory debating concerns the many arguments that relate to the concept of the Permutation, or PERM. The PERM is essentially a theory-based argument raised by the 2AC in responding to a Counterplan (or to a critique alternative). Essentially, in raising a PERM in the 2AC, the affirmative team's argument says to the judge: "Hey, the Counterplan (or critique) is not COMPETITIVE with the plan, meaning there is no problem with doing both the PLAN and all or some portion of the Counterplan (or critique alternative)."

The question presented by a PERM is: Is the plan mutually inconsistent with the Counterplan (or critique alternative)? If BOTH can (or should) be done, then: (1) the Counterplan (or critique alternative) is NOT a reason to reject the plan; and (2) the plan and Counterplan (or some parts of the Counterplan or critique alternative) should be done; so (3) the judge should vote AFF because the PERM means that the plan and the Counterplan together are better than the present system, but the Counterplan by itself is NOT a unique reason to reject the plan.

Theory issues relating to debating about the PERM include a number of areas of argument and include such concepts as:

- ▶ Severance (meaning it is unfair and a time and strategy skew for the affirmative team to sever (cut out or delete) any part of their Plan).
- ▶ Intrinsicness (meaning it is unfair and a time and strategy skew for the affirmative team to ADD to their Plan Text to gain a strategic advantage in the round after the negative team presented its INC).
- ▶ Functional Competition (meaning, the Counterplan must be practically or pragmatically inconsistent with the plan in the way that the plan and Counterplan would actually FUNCTION in the real world);
- ▶ Textural Competition (meaning the Counterplan text must be different from or dissimilar to the plan text so that a clear division of ground can be discerned by the judge and the debaters as to which team is advocating what solution to case harms).
- ▶ Test of Competition or Policy Advocacy (meaning, if the Counterplan or critique alternative is straight turned by the AFF and is a horrible idea, then if the perm is also subject to the straight turn, and if so, should the NEG be allowed to abandon the Counterplan and advocate the present system instead, or should the AFF be able to abandon the PERM and rely on the plan alone as being better than the present system).

The point here is not to take you through all the twists and turns of Counterplan theory debating, because each of these theory arguments has multiple offensive and defensive positions that can apply in any given round for the AFF and NEG. The point is to make you aware that these Theory arguments exist; if you drop them you can lose; if the other team

drops them you can win; but you need to LISTEN to the response (if any) that the other side makes so in a big Counterplan round you can win the debate on THEORY (if argued correctly) and not be surprised by theory arguments raised against you in your debates.

The use of Counterplans has become so common in policy debate that it would behoove you to get a firm grasp on how you as an affirmative team want to respond to a Counterplan well in advance of the first tournament starting. This year, Counterplans which call for “consultation” with foreign governments before engagement is commenced will be exceedingly common. Thus, all debaters would be well advised to prepare both theory and substantive 2AC (and rebuttal) Blocks to “consult” Counterplans. The idea in many debates you will have this year is for you as an Affirmative Team to be able to defend your plan against Counterplans which require that the United States federal government first “consult” with another country or perhaps an international actor like NATO or the UN before commencing engagement. To be prepared to answer this type of Counterplan before the year begins will help you in many of your early season AFF debates.

## **V. CRITIQUES. THE K-WAY.**

Critiques (“K’s”) happen later, rather than sooner. K’s typically occur in Varsity competition. No debate primer would be complete without a basic explanation of the K.

### **A. A “Koverview.”**

A Criticism, or K (because calling it a Kritique spelled with a K makes the argument sound foreign and the debater most erudite and cosmopolitan), presents a challenge to the ASSUMPTIONS raised by the 1AC. The range of available K’s that either the AFF or NEG Team can draw upon is enormous, but like all ARGUMENTS, every K boils down to: Claim(s), Warrant(s) and Proof.

Old school debate scholars categorize the K as a disadvantage without Uniqueness, since the Criticism applies now, as well as to the affirmative team and also to the negative alternative. Other old-traditionalists perceive the K as a Counterplan without Fiat, since the K generally (but not always) offers an alternative without a concrete policy-related plan of action.

To say that K’s challenge the assumptions of the 1AC says a whole lot, but also does not quite say it all. In general, the assumptions that CAN be challenged include:

- ◆ Assumptions about the structure of the system being indicted by the opposing team, and how simply using the system will compound the problems under discussion.
- ◆ Assumptions about asserted reasons for change advanced by the opposing team, and how continuing to reinforce or reassert those reasons will create more problems than it will solve.
- ◆ Assumptions about the debate process itself, and why advocacy in the context of traditional debate processes is claimed to be counterproductive or futile.

◆ Assumptions about the language used in the opposing speech that are in some way hurtful, vile, contemptible or misspoken, and why allowing the advocacy in the language used by the AFF will create more problems than the plan solves.

You will eventually need to understand K-Debating regardless of how your coach at home perceives K-Debating, and you should ALWAYS follow the approach that the squad takes in analyzing or advocating K's since part of what your coach at home will teach you is HOW to deal with K-Arguments if the OTHER TEAM presents them in JV or Varsity Rounds. If you intend to debate at ANY major, regional or national invitational tournament, there will be no getting around the certainty of YOUR NEED TO KNOW about Kritical Debating. Not only has the debate game proceeded in that direction, but also this year's topic, in particular, is replete with the literature of Kritical Thought and Kritical Thinking.

Once again, even if you do not wish to run Kritiques, or if your coach is opposed to your presentation of Kritiques, you still must understand the essential elements of the Kritique in order to debate against the Kritiques that are presented by other teams. In that vein, what follows is a very rudimentary presentation of the essential elements of the Kritique debate.

## **B. The “Kshell.”**

A 1NC K Shell will typically include four essential components:

**1. The Criticism Itself**—An explanation of the Criticism, usually supported by a *very* long card containing *very* big words typically written by some *very* exotic sounding author.

**2. The Links**—An effort at connecting the challenged assumptions TO the Criticism itself, usually with evidence suspiciously similar to, and sounding remarkably as important as, the *very* long, *very* big, *very* exotic mold of card as identified above.

**3. The Implications**—The end of the world as we know it, absent the alternative, of course.

◆ Customarily, the Implications of every critique lead to a CASE TURN, meaning absent the alternative, the plan will REINFORCE or RETRENCH the case harms.

◆ Moreover, global destruction, planetary extinction, something worse than the end of life, or the creation of some holocaustian nightmare will usually be argued as a secondary implication arising from the Criticism.

**4. The Alternative**—A counterproposal of some sort, usually *sans* any implementation through any form of a formal plan-type structure. Here, virtually every K author proposes some form of alternative, which she/he claims will generate the *nirvana* of the moment, or at least for the moment of the round.

### C. The Kdebate.

As with Counterplans, K debates swarm with substance and theory. Judges are left, typically, to deal with myriad choices upon which their “ballot” can be based, and multiple overclaims for which their “ballot” should compensate. In general, here is what you should anticipate learning in order to deal with the K debates that are sure to come your “Kway.”

◆ Substance:

- ◆◆ Debate the Criticism “Kitself,” the Links, the Implications, the Alternative
- ◆◆ Debate the Perm (Co-opt the Alternative and Do Both, or Delay Do Both)

◆ Theory:

- ◆◆ Debate the Fiat Debate (Why Policy Debate Is Good)
- ◆◆ Debate the Perm Debate (Why Doing Both Is Better Than Doing Alternative, Alone)
- ◆◆ Debate the Legitimacy of the K Process in the Policy World.

The secret to being a competent Novice or JV debater, when confronted with a Kritique is to remain calm and LISTEN to the Kritique. You need to UNDERSTAND what the Kritique is claiming, trying to decipher how the Kritique LINKS, if at all, to your 1AC. Finally, remember to THINK about WHY the importance of your 1AC, and the pragmatic POLICY implications of your 1AC are more important than the K’s political or psychological theories. **IN EFFECT, JUST DEBATE, BY CLASHING & MAKING BETTER ARGUMENTS.**

### VI. DEBATING DEBATE THEORY.

Today, Policy Team Debate inevitably involves more than merely arguing about the merits of the Resolution. To be competent, High School Debaters must know, or at least not be frightened by, the nuances of various aspects of Debate Theory. Those components of the debate world that can be labeled “Theory” are many and diverse, but essentially, all boil down to a debate about one central issue: Is what the other team has done (or you if challenged) FAIR?

Like beauty, fairness is typically seen only through the eye of the beholder.

#### A. Acronym Theory.

The names on the theory games are filled with stern-sounding acronyms, but every single one, regardless of letter-choice, can be synthesized down to: **FAIRNESS**. At a generic level, theory debates relate to two-sides of the **FAIRNESS** coin:

- ◆ Does the other team provide enough information? or,
- ◆ Does the other team provide too much information?

The acronyms are, for want of any real organizational division:

- ◆ **ASPEC:** That plan is too vague, usually in relation to the AGENT of action.
- ◆ **OSPEC:** How dare you specify who your agent of action is in the plan?
- ◆ **FSPEC:** Show me the money, or How dare you show me the money?

There are more, but customarily, Acronym Debates arise in the context of Agent Specific Counterplans, or Plan Inclusive Counterplans that accept virtually the entire Plan, but PIC (or parcel) out of one component of the Plan.

### **B. Fiat & Game Theory.**

A second form of theory debate centers on “Debate Debating.” Usually, the primal forces in these debates concern FIAT, or relate to the practicality, utility, meaning or purposefulness of Policy Debate as an activity for creating, effecting or stimulating social or political change.

Typically, NEG teams trying to advance some form of Criticism, or K strategy run Fiat or Game Theory arguments. The reasoning becomes, when the AFF argues that the K alternative has no meaning or practical utility, the NEG can blast back by saying that: “Neither does the Plan.” Again, two paragraphs do not do justice to the universe of Theory Debating you need to be prepared to understand, eventually.

Theory debate involves little mini-debates over specific types of arguments relating to debate itself. Teams can sometimes get cheap Theory wins when one side or the other “drops” the theory arguments. The way to accomplish this type of “win” is to develop and explain a cohesive and coherent story about WHY what the other team has done, or not done, is UNFAIR to your team and has HARMED your chance to fairly debate or prepare to debate.

### **C. Performance or Alternative Debating.**

What happens when, after you have presented your wonderfully manuscripted, thoroughly *prima facie* 1AC, the other team stands up and reads a poem, or tells a story about the oppression they (or their parents, or their high school, or their pets) have suffered at the hands of society, or reads a narrative passage from “The King and I,” and claims that their message is more important than the 1AC, so vote negative?

What happens? Well, unless you know what to do, and how to do it, the poem, story or passage might be enough to earn your opponents a W, and you, your exasperated partner and your wonderful 1AC, an L. Taking umbrage at what has been done may not be enough to earn you a victory either before a college debate wonk, to whom off beat might be the better beat (but a bad beat for you); or to the parent or community judge, who simply votes on the nice sounding story. Listening to the performance, presenting specific responses grounded in both Theory and Topicality and advocating a FRAMEWORK as to why your case and plan are more important or meaningful and relevant as the basis for decision is what will carry the day. Simply calling the alternative approach some bad names typically will not work.

#### **D. Theory Debates That Happen Too Often.**

On last year's Transportation Topic, we judged a total of 52 high school policy debate rounds. In 45 of the 52 high school rounds, some form of theory argument was made by one team or the other. In 25 of the 45 rounds, the theory argument was extended through the 1AR. In 5 of the 25 rounds, the theory argument was extended into the 2AR.

From the AFF side, the primary theory argument being mentioned in the high school rounds was "conditionality bad," meaning that a NEG team which urges a conditional advocacy position for a Counterplan or a critique alternative (we can kick them at any time if we want to) has done the AFF team and the debate round a disservice by skewing the 2AC's time allocation, stealing AFF ground or hurting the debate round's educational value through a necessarily abbreviated discussion of the "real issues" which the AFF team advocated.

From the NEG side, the principal theory argument raised was some version of an acronym theory argument (which was quickly abandoned after the 2AC) or a Framework-type of challenge to an alternative AFF case or plan.

We are not here to proselytize about the use or abuse of theory arguments in specific debate rounds, but in general, as a debater or debate coach, you must know that dropped theory arguments can mean the difference between winning and losing a debate round. One should not obsess about theory debating; but in a competitive activity where wins and losses are awarded, no one should feel comfortable about completely ignoring theory arguments.

#### **E. The Framework Debate.**

No discussion of debate theory or practice would be complete without some mention of the concept called "Framework." Generally speaking, the Framework is the lens or perspective that the judge uses or applies in the judge's own mind, after listening to the arguments presented by both sides, to make a decision about who wins and who loses the debate round. The Framework concept actually encompasses a number of potential sub-sets of arguments that can be made in any given debate round.

In the simplest and probably most frequently applied "Framework" for Novice or JV debates or in Local Tournament competitions, the judge will typically use the Stock Issues Framework to judge the debate round and determine the winner. Remember, in the Stock Issues paradigm, the affirmative team must win all 5 of the Stock Issues to win the round because presumption would mean that the negative should win if the affirmative case and plan is not topical, or has no Inherency, no Significance, no Solvency or would create more (bigger) disadvantages than advantages.

Another frequently applied Framework concept in Novice and JV Debate is the "policymaker" framework. The judge views the debate as a rational policy maker and if the judge is convinced that the better public policy option is the plan, then the judge would vote

affirmative. If the judge saw the Counterplan or *status quo* as the best system to either solve the problems of the AFF case, or the most desirable policy option, then the judge would vote NEG. Roughly 85-90% of Novice and JV debates will be decided under the Stock Issue and/or policymaker frameworks.

In more advanced debate divisions and certainly on the TOC Circuit, the Framework Debate takes on a whole new level of meaning. Particularly in rounds involving K's or performance, squarely presented is the question: "How does the judge "evaluate" and compare the claims made during the round?" This issue essentially evolves into a question of which Framework, or lens, should the judge use to decide the debate round. Much like comparing apples and snowshoes, the clash of debate styles makes for a difficult decision making PROCESS when the debaters do not cogently and clearly explain why their proposed Framework is good (offense) and not bad (defense) AND why the other team's proposed Framework is bad (offense) and not good (defense).

In general, when both teams are policy oriented (case harms, inherency, solvency on the AFF and Counterplans, Disads, insolvency attacks on the NEG); Framework will be less of an issue, if it becomes an issue at all. When one team is policy oriented and the other team offers K arguments, then Frameworks are usually engaged as the primary focus of the round. Similarly, for performance teams facing either policy oriented teams or K teams, the framework debate also becomes a central feature of the judge's decision making process. Typically, as if there is anything typical about K, performance and policy styles merging and melding in debate rounds, the Framework arguments center on:

► Fiat Good vs. Fiat Bad (meaning policy teams will say the fiat model/framework is good and the round should be decided based on whether or not the plan should be enacted rather than on whether the Plan WILL be enacted. Advocates of non-policy approaches will argue that fiat is illusory and since nothing will actually happen in the real world if the judge votes AFF, it is better/more meaningful/more likely to make a real world difference if the judge considers the performance or the K and is moved to personal action or is simply educated by the approach taken by the non-policy oriented team).

► Utilitarianism vs. Consequentialism (meaning which should the judge value more deeply or more importantly, typically involving debates which pit lives saved versus rights lost. Examples of these clashing philosophical Frameworks would be government monitoring of private phone calls without warrants or the use of harsh interrogation techniques bordering on torture to obtain information about terrorist threats. The framework debate is joined over the question as to which is the more important value to use to decide the outcome of the round. Possible lives lost through potential terrorist attacks, or possible rights lost through warrantless wiretaps and the use of torture).

► Competing Impact Claims like: (1) death vs. racism; (2) environmental destruction vs. famine; (3) patriarchy vs. nuclear war; (4) colonialism vs. HIV/AIDS or malaria spread; (5) genocide vs. national security; and the lists go on, and on, and on, and on.



The point is to highlight for you that of all the things that debate can do for you the best thing it can do is make you think. Thinking about issues like these, and thinking about how you would advocate one Framework or another or urge the judge to adopt one impact claim as being more important than another, will enable you to prepare for the Framework debates that you are certain to face at some point in your careers, but more importantly preparing for these arguments and discussing these value choices will help define and shape your views toward life and living.

As a debater, you need to understand that the primary object of participating in the activity is to learn. The activity is competitive and one very important element of debate competition concerns getting a judge to vote for your team at the end of the round. How you FRAME the debate, or the decision making calculus for the judge will be very crucial to you achieving a successful result in any given round of competition. Understanding debate theory and focusing the Framework to guide how the judge should compare and consider favorably your best arguments and not the arguments of the opposing team will help you in both the competitive aspects of the activity and in acquiring the fundamental learning benefits which the activity can provide.

## **Chapter 5: Step By Step, Or, It's My Turn & What Do I Do Now?**

All of this debate teaching is helpful in aiding your understanding of what debate is all about as a theoretical matter. For Novices, and even for JV debaters, the first time stepping up to a lectern or the front of the room to actually debate a team from another school is not theory . . . it is reality. Thus, what follows is a step by step rendition of WHAT YOU SHOULD DO to actually debate in a tournament.

### **I. BEFORE THE TOURNAMENT BEGINS.**

Before the tournament you can ease your burdens by knowing what debate is all about. Understand the speech times and the jobs of each speaker. Work with your partner and coach to become familiar with the topic and the type of Affirmative case you will be running. Discuss the potential affirmative cases you might meet when you are assigned to debate on the negative. Get ready to EXPLAIN your Affirmative case and Plan as well as to read it if you are the 1AC. Knowing what and why your case is important and how your Plan works will help you immeasurably. As a practical matter for the Affirmative get written or put together a 1AC that takes 8 minutes to deliver and also pre-prepare 2AC answers to:

► Topicality Arguments based on every term of the Resolution. You should know HOW and WHY your plan is topical under all of the Resolution before you START speaking at your first tournament. This means knowing what each term in the Resolution means, having a definition from a source of some kind (a dictionary or an author in the field) to support your interpretation, understanding how and why your plan fits within (meets) the definition and having some general answers to why and how your case and Plan are reasonably and predictably TOPICAL.

- ▶ Potential disadvantages that other teams might argue.
- ▶ Potential Counterplans that other teams might advance.
- ▶ Potential reasons as to why your plan might not solve the case harms.
- ▶ Claims that your harms are not significant or that your case is not inherent.
- ▶ Questions about your case and plan that might be asked in cross-examination.

In general your AFF pre-tournament preparation should be focused primarily on having a solid, persuasive and evidence filled IAC that tells a story about big problems that cannot be solved in the *status quo* but can be solved uniquely and efficiently through your plan. UNDERSTANDING your own case will help you more than anything else you can imagine when you have to deal with that first cross-examination question.

Pre-tournament preparation on the NEG should consist of getting a feel for what cases are being run by other schools in your community. One way to gather this intelligence is to read the case-lists that get published by the bigger Tournaments like the Greenhill (<http://greenhilldebateourn.wikispaces.com/>) and St. Mark's (<http://www.joyoftournaments.com/tx/stmarks/register.asp>) tournaments. Many schools from all over the country attend these tournaments and a great deal of preparation and hard work goes into compiling case lists (of both AFF and NEG arguments). You can learn a whole lot about the topic from reading other team's case outlines. Other sources of information about the topic and cases on the topic can be found at the National Debate Coaches Association "Open Evidence" project website or at [www.planetdebate.com](http://www.planetdebate.com).

Rather than get overwhelmed trying to get ready for everything on the NEG, try to build yourself three or four really solid disadvantages, have a Counterplan or two that you might be able to use and understand how to argue against the solvency of basic harm areas, like nuclear proliferation, local wars, conflict escalation, economic collapse or political instability. The idea is to work as a team to be ready for categories of cases so that you can always have something to say when you are NEG. If all else fails, then also have a couple of Topicality arguments that you can use in the INC and extend in the rebuttals, remembering that T is a powerful weapon for the NEG and if the AFF mishandles the argument you can pick up a good ballot or two by winning the Topicality challenge.

The other method of preparing for tournaments is to look at the evidence resources that are available on the internet. Many of the highest quality summer debate institutes have uploaded the evidence produced at their institute over the summer and have made it available FOR FREE at: <http://ndca.debateteams.net/EvidenceProject/tabid/173/Default.aspx>

Truly, you can become overwhelmed by the sheer volume of materials that are out there, but synthesizing, organizing and supporting the arguments that you can UNDERSTAND and EXPLAIN is much better than collecting dozens upon dozens of arguments that you do not understand and cannot explain. FOCUS your pre-tournament preparation on ***your own research*** by developing argument positions that are consistent with one another, and that you can UNDERSTAND and EXPLAIN in order to win a debate round. There is no shame in looking at other people's research, or at pre-packaged case outlines or arguments. There is

much greater benefit, however, to doing your **OWN WORK** and developing your own arguments and strategies on the topic.

Finally, PRACTICE speaking and reading your 1AC, 2AC Blocks and NEG positions OUT LOUD to your partner, your coach, your parents or the school janitor. Doing so will enable you to avoid the awkwardness of stumbling over a word because you cannot pronounce it. Read your materials with a dictionary at your side and if you are not sure of the meaning of a word, then PLEASE look it up so you can at least expand your vocabulary. Remember, you might be asked a question in cross-ex about what a word means, so it will help you avoid embarrassment if you look up the meaning of the words that you do not know.

As you become more experienced, you will understand that many arguments are repetitive, and REMEMBERING how you answered a similar sounding argument before may very well enable you to answer a new twist off the old argument. Crucially, you must LISTEN to each argument carefully so you can understand where there might be differences between the argument you previously debated and the argument you are now debating. The more reading and preparation that you do before the tournament starts, the better able you will be to adjust on the fly and always have something good to say in every round you debate.

Do not get so caught up in researching debate positions that you ignore your school work. In the big picture, grades matter more to you than winning a debate round. Time management and prioritizing are keys to your success as a debater and as a high school student. There will ALWAYS be more to do in preparing for debate tournaments than the time available. Making SURE you are ready on the AFF will solve at least half your problems at tournaments. Having a couple of well developed NEG Strats that you understand and can explain should make you ready on the NEG.

## **II. ON THE WAY TO THE TOURNAMENT.**

One week before the tournament, if you will need to miss school, please talk to EACH of your teachers and get your assignments done EARLY, before you leave. In the week before a tournament GET ENOUGH SLEEP because tired debaters make mistakes.

Two DAYS before you need to depart for the Tournament, pack what you need. Don't forget your 1AC in the car or at the house or on the airplane. Take paper to flow on rather than borrowing some from the other team. We recommend 8 1/2 by 14 legal size paper that is colored (light blue, yellow, light green) so you do not get your flows mixed up with your other 8 1/2 by 11 papers that you use for your blocks. Take pens, lots of pens. You and your partner should each invest in a timer so you can time the speeches and the prep times yourselves. If you have a laptop that has some of your evidence on it, or if you use your computer to flow the debate, remember to pack the battery charger and a flash drive.

Know where you are going so if the parents or the coach get lost YOU can direct them. Finally, don't be on time . . . **ALWAYS BE EARLY.**

### **III. ARRIVAL.**

At tournaments you will see many confident looking people. Don't worry, you will be one of those people sooner than you realize. At most local tournaments your school is given a CODE. Find out your code number (something like G101, the G being your school code and the 101 being your team number). At the bigger tournaments your code will be your school name plus the first letter of you and your partner's last name.

Before each round either a list will be posted or a handout will be passed around. The pairing list or handout will identify:

- ▶ WHICH ROUND is being posted,
- ▶ WHICH SIDE you are on (AFF in the LEFT column, NEG in the RIGHT),
- ▶ WHO you are debating,
- ▶ WHO is judging you, and
- ▶ WHERE (which room) you are supposed to debate.

Get the handout or look at the list. Identify WHERE you are supposed to be debating and which side. Talk to your coach and partner. Go to your assigned room as a team. When you get to the room, in some places (but not all) you may need to wait for the judge before you can enter. If the judge is already there, or if there are no limitations on going into the room without the judge present, go in the room and set up your stuff.

When you set up, make sure you can access all of the files you might need. Also be certain you and your partner can observe the judge from where you are sitting so you can read the judge's reactions to various arguments being made by your partner or the other team. Based on your Coach's instructions and your squad's rules and regulations, without being annoying or terribly inquisitorial, ask the judge questions. Be personable. Find out the judge's experience level and preferences for arguments or the type of debating that the judge favors. Similarly, depending on your school's policies and your coach's rules and instructions, when you are NEG, ask the AFF; "What is your plan text?" Don't ask: "Do you disclose?" They might say no. Just assume they will disclose and get a copy of the plan text as soon as the AFF gets to the room. Then ask "What are your advantages?" Hopefully, they will hand you the plan text, but if not, no big deal. Be personable. Once you know the plan text and advantages, talk to each other about which of the BIG 6 arguments and strategies you want to run. The 1NC should have the BIG 6 arguments you will be running ready to roll once the 2NC cross-ex of the 1AC finishes.

When you are AFF, the NEG might ask you if you disclose. If your squad's rules and your coach's policies permit, by all means say yes and hand them a copy of your plan text. If they ASK for your advantages just tell them (don't hand them) what the advantages are and prepare to debate. Make sure you get your PLAN TEXT back before the 1AC begins and make sure the 1AC script is all there and IN ORDER before the 1AC stands up to start speaking.

People may ask about your feelings toward “tag team,” which is any speaker can ask or answer CX questions at any time. Depending on your Coach’s instructions, say it is fine with you, and then debate.

#### **IV. DEBATING AT LAST . . . FOR FIRST.**

The time for debating is at hand. What do you do now? The 1AC is ready, the teams and the judge are ready. All that work and nervous energy is over and the fun is set to begin. Have your timers ready, and if you are negative, your pens poised and flow paper set to write down the 1AC’s presentation of arguments.

##### **A. The Round Proceeds Thusly.**

###### **1. The 1AC.**

###### **a. Before it Starts----**

Before the 1AC is given, some fundamental operating procedures need to become known to both teams and some basic ground rules regarding the exchange of evidence and how prep time will work need to be established. First, is the debate round a paper debate or is it “paperless?” Second, what are the evidence-argument disclosure expectations of each team? Third, how will the exchange of evidence and/or speeches take place, if at all? Finally, what are the judge’s or the Tournament’s “rules” regarding the use of Prep time to “flash” speeches or exchange evidence? Flashing itself has its own protocols, including at times not permanently retaining the materials you are flashed to be used by your own team in later rounds.

The answers to each of these questions will change as your experience and the experience level of your opponent’s increase. It is BEST to establish the ground rules on the above topics BEFORE the round starts.

In more advanced paper debate rounds (quickly becoming the exception rather than the rule) , the 2NC will be handed (or will simply take the text of the 1AC) after each page has been read. The reason for this seeming rudeness centers on the rapidity with which the 1AC is delivered. Persuasion and smooth delivery are not the hallmarks of 90% of 1AC’s delivered at the TOC level. This is a mistake in our opinions for the best of the TOC and nationally successful 1AC Speakers we have heard over the years manage to MAKE the 1AC a pleasure to listen to and not merely an ordeal to be suffered through.

However, when you are NEG and the debate is NOT “paperless,” you should ALWAYS ASK before the 1AC starts for the 1AC to either hand you or place their 1AC text where the 2NC can read it and understand what is being argued. Local tournaments, and some inexperienced or old fashioned judges, may not allow this practice but obtaining the written 1AC text whenever you can is a good idea so that you can actually read the cards and flow off the 1AC text as well as off the speech itself.

In a paperless round (and world) the “flashing” or emailing of evidence before a speech is given has pretty much become the TOC-level community norm, certainly at the college level and pretty much everywhere that a TOC-type tournament or major invitational tournament is being conducted. Many higher level debaters flash their full speeches [evidence as well as analytics] before giving every speech. Some only flash evidence, not analytics . . . which is why the best debaters still remain the best listeners.

Paperless debating has a couple of pragmatic implications for debaters at all levels of experience. First, have the RIGHT technology at your disposal. You will need to remember to take your laptop or notebook to the Tournament. You should also remember to take your power cord for charging your computer and we recommend that you also pack a power strip so that in rooms with a limited number of outlets you do not have to fight your opponents, the judge or your partner for access to the outlets in the room. Finally, have two or three EMPTY thumb drives or flash drives available for you to use during the tournament. You should ERASE the thumb drives or flash drives after each round.

Second, you need to understand WHAT is being flashed to you by the other team and WHAT the other team expects you to flash to them. Is it: (1) All evidence you intend to read and arguments you intend to make---or merely the evidence? (2) What is the Preparation Time impact of flashing? To answer this question, the Judge must also be consulted.

Finally, what happens when you are paperless and the other team is papered and without a laptop? There are really no “rules” in this regard, but in college debate it is customary for teams to carry a third “viewing laptop” onto which they flash their evidence and then allow their opponents to use the viewing laptop to see their flashed materials.

Beyond having the right technology and knowing the answers to some fundamental ground rules questions, you also need to develop an ability to instantly access your files ON your laptop or tablet and be able to find them DURING the round. Technology can be your friend, or your worst enemy. If you are a paperless team, you must also become a Tech Savvy human being who is capable of dealing with crashes, inadvertent deletions and “lost” files. Technological recovery skills have become a must on the national circuit level.

#### **b. After it Begins----**

Circumstances will dictate how you approach the round and what you do during the debate itself. In Novice or JV rounds, during the 1AC both NEG speakers will primarily need to listen and flow the 1AC carefully, with the 1NC pulling out those of your potentially relevant BIG SIX Blocks that you may want to use in the 1NC. From the first moment you learn of the AFF’S plan text and potential advantages, the 2NC should be figuring out cross-ex questions to ask to set up the particular BIG SIX STRATS you intend to use. Multi-tasking here is key to success because the NEG speakers will need to be listening and flowing as they pull their own argument packages, organize the 2NC cross-ex questions and get ready to speak themselves. Do not sacrifice LISTENING to and FLOWING the 1AC, however, on

the altar of talking between yourselves or looking through files to grab your own arguments during the 1AC.

If you are the 2AC, you should have already pre-flowed your own 1AC. Copy machines allow you to take a number of pre-flowed 1AC's with you. The 2AC should be watching the judge for clues about whether the judge is flowing or nodding in agreement with the points being made in the 1AC presentation. The 2AC should also be listening to the other team's discussions. If the 2AC can discern potential arguments that might be coming during the 1NC, then the 2AC can get a head start on pulling the 2AC blocks that might be relevant.

## **2. The 1AC Cross-Ex & the First Prep-Time.**

When the 1AC finishes, the cross-examination of the 1AC speaker by the 2NC begins. Start your timers set for 3 minutes once the first question gets asked. Later, I will supply some cross-examination hints and suggestions, but the reason why the 2NC does the initial cross-ex of the 1AC is so the 1NC can use the 3 minute cross-ex period to ORGANIZE and PREPARE the 1NC without using NEG PREP TIME. Here, too, however, the 1NC must multi-task by both pulling and organizing arguments and LISTENING to the 1AC's answers to the cross-ex questions. The answers should set up various links or other conceded components of your shell arguments, which should be referenced during the 1NC speech. If you are not LISTENING to answers, you cannot USE the answers to your benefit in a 1NC.

The cross-ex concludes and the 1NC should be ready to present the 1NC speech. Sometimes, especially in the Novice Division, the 1NC will need to take "Prep Time." Once the last question cross-ex question is answered or the timers beep at the three-minute mark, you should again start your timers and BEGIN timing the prep time being used. Before beginning the 1NC speech, TEAMWORK happens. The NEG team members should discuss the arguments being presented and before the 1NC starts, BOTH NEG debaters should know what the arguments will be, and what the strategy for winning the round will or can become by the time the debating is done.

Depending on how the applicable "flash" rules affect prep time, once the 1NC is ready to speak, the 1NC should say: "stop prep please." The prep time used should then be announced and written down and the flashing or exchange of evidence or other materials should then commence.

## **3. The 1NC.**

After getting fully ready to speak, the 1NC should tell the judge **how many** OFF CASE positions (T, Disads, Counterplans, K's, theory arguments) will be argued and then where the NEG will be arguing on case. This is called "road-mapping" and is a task that each speaker should perform before every subsequent constructive and rebuttal speech. The reason for road-mapping is to allow the judge and your opponents to pull out and order their flows on that particular argument so they can understand what arguments you will be discussing in which order during the constructive and the rebuttal. There is no need to tell (road map) the

judge and the other team the specific KIND, TYPE or NATURE of the arguments that you will present, only give the NUMBER of off case arguments you intend to run in the round. After being completely ready, and having all of the arguments that will be presented in the 1NC organized in front of you and ready to present in lock-step with the road map, the 1NC then delivers some form or combination of the BIG 6. While this is happening the 2NC and both AFF debaters should ALL be flowing the 1NC. Each separate off case argument should be flowed in the far left column of the page on a separate piece of flow paper and the argument name (T-INCREASE, DA-SPENDING, CP-STATES) should be put at the TOP of each flow page so you can locate it EASILY during the round and while you are speaking.

In structuring and delivering the 1NC speech, reference should first be made to the TYPE of BIG 6 argument being presented (T, Theory, Counterplan, Disads, K, ON CASE), then the shell of the argument should be delivered in an outline fashion for the judge to easily recognize the organizational prowess of the NEG (for example),

#### FIRST OFF—TOPICALITY- ENGAGEMENT

- A. Interpretation
- B. Violation
- C. Standards
- D. Voters

#### SECOND OFF—DIPLOMATIC TRADEOFF DISAD

- A. Uniqueness
- B. Links
- C. Internal Links
- D. Impact

#### THIRD OFF—CONSULTATION COUNTERPLAN

- A. Text
- B. Competition
- C. Net Benefits

#### ON CASE—SOLVENCY OF ADVANTAGE 1

1. Alternate causality.
2. Expanded engagement is unnecessary to achieving economic growth.
3. AFF 1AC evidence is outdated.

#### ON CASE—ADVANTAGE TWO

1. Turn: Increased US GOVERNMENTAL engagement is counterproductive.
2. 1AC Evidence lacks warrants or reasons why the problem exists.
3. No Internal Link to the terminal impact.

While this seems to make debate a cookie-cutter process, our advice to you is to do your own thing, meaning do what you and your coaches feel comfortable in doing on the



NEG. The purpose in providing this 1NC sample is to familiarize you with how most 1NC speeches are structured so that when you get in a debate round and hear a 1NC speaking in this kind of lingo with the judge nodding in approval and understanding, you won't be surprised.

In most Novice and JV debates, there is NOTHING this well organized or complete that will be argued by the NEG. In fact, most 1NC's may use the debate buzzwords without any explanation, or may just stand up and ask questions. Your job in structuring a 1NC, however, will be to LOOK like YOU know what YOU are doing. For most judges, structuring a 1NC in a form similar to the above illustrated example might at least make it at least appear to the judge that you should win. For some AFF teams that are not similarly equipped or knowledgeable by delivering this kind of a *structured* 1NC (presented with your OWN selected arguments to run, arguments that YOU understand and feel comfortable running), may make the debate round become a cause for a fast retreat from the debate itself.

During the 1NC speech, however it is structured and presented, the 2AC needs to multi-task, LISTENING and flowing, while at the same time locating and organizing the 2AC response blocks to save prep time. The 1AC needs to multi-task by flowing the 1NC and thinking of cross-ex questions. The 2NC needs to multi-task by flowing the 1NC and anticipating 2AC responses. In Novice and JV debating, the primary task is to LISTEN and flow. Later on, the primary task should stay the same, LISTEN, but your talent at multi-tasking should improve to the point where you can also start flowing your own 2AC RESPONSES to those arguments as the 1NC argument shells are presented.

As with the 1AC and the seemingly rude transfer of pages and cards to the opposing team, once the reading of a page is completed by the 1NC, in higher level competitions, IF ASKED TO DO SO, the 1NC should provide/give to/make available to the 1AC each page of the 1NC shells delivered by the 1NC. Again, this is to facilitate understanding in rounds where the speed of delivery is so rapid that comprehension of the spoken word becomes next to impossible. Again, if you are AFF, before the 1NC starts speaking, ask the 1NC to either hand you (typically the 1AC) or place the 1NC shell texts where the 1AC can read, understand and more easily flow the 1NC shells, prepare cross-ex questions against the arguments being made by the 1NC and help the 2AC get ready.

#### **4. The 1NC Cross-Ex and the Second Prep Time.**

After the 1NC is completed, the 1AC will cross-ex the 1NC. This is to allow the 2AC the benefit of the 3 minute cross-ex period to prepare the 2AC speech without cutting into AFF team prep time. During the 1AC's cross-ex of the 1NC, the 2AC should multi-task by organizing the 2AC blocks and arguments and by listening to the 1NC's answers to the cross-ex questions. If the 2AC is not clear about the nature of the 1NC argument, then the first objective of the cross-ex should be to help the 2AC UNDERSTAND the argument that the 1NC presented. The second purpose of this cross-ex should be to set up the 2AC responses that are to come, and to highlight weaknesses in the links or evidence read by the 1NC.

The 2NC should listen to the cross-ex and anticipate where the 2AC may head with respect to responses to the 1NC's BIG 6 shells. The more you anticipate what the other team will say, and the earlier you can start preparing to respond to what they do say, the better.

Cross-ex should focus on arguments made and the evidence presented in the 1NC. Where the 1NC's cards are incomplete or do not link to your case, ask questions that will point out and highlight the flaws, omissions or irrelevancies that you, as the 1AC, have detected. In every Counterplan or K debate, your FIRST QUESTION should ALWAYS BE: Are you running the Counterplan [K] unconditionally or conditionally? If they say conditionally, then follow up with: OK, under what conditions can you kick the Counterplan [K]?

## **5. The 2AC.**

More debates are lost in the 2AC than in any other speech. The 2AC must answer the arguments presented by the 1NC. Sometimes, the 2AC misses an argument, or runs out of time and cannot get to all the 1NC arguments. If the 1NC argument that is missed is solid, fully warranted and contains all the essential elements of a T, Disads, Counterplan, K, net benefit or Theory argument, and the 2AC does not answer the argument, then the AFF will/should lose in 90% of the debates where this happens. Thus, the 1AC cannot fall asleep during the 2AC, but must flow 2AC responses and where the 1AC notices that the 2AC has "missed" something, the 1AC needs to let the 2AC know during the 2AC that the 2AC needs to answer the missed argument.

Flashing happens and then the 2AC speech begins. Both NEG team members should flow the 2AC responses to each 1NC shell positions. Again, on the NEG make sure you ask the 2AC to make available/hand you the 2AC blocks/cards after they are read during the 2AC. In addition to flowing, the 1NC should collect the 2AC blocks and cards and look them over for mistakes or potential holes or weaknesses that can be exploited in cross-ex. All debaters should flow the 2AC responses on the separate Flow Page devoted to that particular argument. The 2AC arguments should be written in a column immediately to the left of the 1NC shell argument. You should leave yourself enough room between each separate 2AC response so that you can tell from a glance on your Flow Page how many arguments the 2AC made and be able to tell when separate arguments were, in fact made in the 2AC. Vertically all of the 2AC responses should fit on the Flow Page devoted to the argument, or if there are a lot of 2AC responses, then flow the additional responses on the back of that Flow PAGE (and do NOT FORGET the responses are there).

In structuring the 2AC, the 2AC should present all the AFF responses to a specific NEG position and then move to the next NEG position. By using embedded clash, described on pages 6 & 7, the competent seeming (and more often than not, successful) 2AC will deliver AFF response blocks to the 1NC BIG 6 shells, usually in the same order in which they were presented. A 2AC needs to have both BREADTH (respond to ALL the NEG positions) and DEPTH of coverage (make more than one or two or three answers to each NEG position).

The best 2AC blocks:

- ▶ Begin with a one or two word DESCRIPTIVE IDENTIFIER (No Link, We Meet, Non-Unique, Empirically Denied, Turn, Perm) for easy reference in later speeches.
- ▶ Have a concise, understandable, brief (one sentence or two at most) TAG.
- ▶ Follow the TAG with a CARD that PROVES the TAG LINE argument, including author, date, source and qualifications before the text of the card.
- ▶ If the TAG is for an analytical or theory argument, the TAG is followed by a brief explanation of the analytic and is impacted for the judge to understand how the argument wins an issue and how winning that issue affects the outcome of the round.

## **6. The 2AC Cross-Ex and the Third Prep Time.**

Following completion of the 2AC, the 1NC will cross-ex the 2AC so the 2NC can use the 3-minute cross-ex time period to prepare to deliver the 2NC. Again, questions should focus on holes or perceived weaknesses in the evidence or analytical positions that the 2AC read or be of the type that will set up responsive arguments about to be presented.

If the 2AC DROPS (does not answer) any of the 1NC positions, DO NOT ASK the 2AC if they dropped the argument(s), or what their response was to the position. You already know the 2AC did not answer the argument because you were LISTENING. Asking questions like that gives the 2AC the CHANCE in cross-ex to atone for the mistake that was made in the 2AC.

If you and your partner do not know what one of the 2AC answers were to one of your arguments, however, or what the 2AC answer might mean in the context of the round, then ask about it so you can understand the argument and prepare your responses.

The 2NC should multi-task both by preparing for the 2NC AND by LISTENING to the 2AC cross-ex answers. The 1AC should also be listening to the questions and answers to pick up hints as to where the NEG might be heading in their next speeches.

## **7. The 2NC.**

After the cross-ex ends, the NEG BLOCK begins after flashing of the 2NC speech and then the presentation of the 2NC commences. The 2NC is followed by the cross-ex of the 2NC by the 2AC, which is followed by the 1NR. This series of two consecutive NEG speeches is called the NEGATIVE BLOCK. The AFF has the advantage of getting to pick its AFF case, and speaks first and last in the round, which is a really big advantage for the AFF team. To compensate for these seeming competitive advantages, the debate structure gives the NEG a pretty powerful weapon, the NEG BLOCK.

The NEG gets 13 consecutive minutes to make arguments and respond to the arguments asserted in the 2AC. If used properly (no duplication, effective segregation of argument coverage and thorough responsiveness to the positions advanced in the 2AC, plus persuasive advocacy of NEG arguments either dropped by the 2AC or not answered very well), then the

BLOCK can effectively be used to put extreme pressure on the AFF, especially on the 1AR, who only gets 5 minutes of speech time to answer 13 minutes of NEG arguments. Teamwork and communication between the NEG debaters are essential for the NEG team to make maximum effectiveness of the BLOCK. Before the 2NC starts, the NEG debaters should communicate about WHICH of the NEG positions or BIG 6 arguments the 2NC will extend and which arguments the 1NR will extend.

TO REPEAT: DO NOT REPEAT. The 2NC extends some of the BIG 6 arguments from the 1NC and the 1NR extends OTHER BIG 6 arguments from the 1NC. The 2NC and the 1NR do NOT extend the SAME BIG 6 arguments from the 1NC unless the 2NC has missed or left open a crucial position on the BIG 6 argument(s) that the 2NC was extending. In that case, the 1NR should cover the MISSED or OPEN component of the BIG 6 argument that the 2NC did not address.

Thus, before the 1NC's cross-ex of the 2AC begins, in structuring the 2NC step one in the process is to TALK TO YOUR PARTNER about which of the BIG 6 arguments YOU will be extending in the 2NC and which of the BIG 6 arguments your partner will be extending in the 1NR. As the cross-ex of the 2AC proceeds, PREPARE your responses to the 2AC arguments directed against those components of the BIG 6 shells from the 1NC that you will be taking in the 2NC. The NEG MUST have argument separation, not duplication, in the BLOCK. Thus, if the 2NC takes the Disads and Counterplan, the 1NR should take the T and ON CASE arguments.

After deciding which argument(s) the 2NC will take, the 2NC should begin to prepare the 2NC speech during the 1NC's cross-ex of the 2AC. The best approach to take in developing the 2NC speech is to think about debate in its most elementary form, by preparing to present a CLASH of responsive arguments. The 2NC and the 1NR need to be very good at answering every responsive argument which the 2AC made to each 1NC BIG 6 position during the BLOCK.

During the 2NC speech, LISTENING and multi-tasking becomes extremely important for the 1AR. The AFF team should ask for the papers/cards/blocks to be set where they can be accessed and read. The LISTENING function is crucial because many times, the responsive arguments made by a 2NC will not be on the blocks or the shells or the cards. Thus, the AFF team MUST listen and flow the 2NC very carefully.

The multi-tasking job for the 1NC/1NR during the presentation of the 2NC is really difficult. Remember, the 1NC has the next speech to give. The 1NC/1NR and 2NC have agreed that the 1NR will be covering different BIG 6 arguments than those covered by the 2NC. So, should the 1NR be preparing for the 1NR rebuttal speech, be flowing the 2NC or both? No fixed answer here. Doing both is outstanding if it can be effectively accomplished. However, the principal job should be to thoroughly prepare to present the 1NR both while the 2NC is speaking and during the cross-ex period following the 2NC speech. Since the 1NR will be covering argument packages and issues that are different from those being addressed during the 2NR, and since the 1NR needs to present a thorough and well organized

responsive (to the 2AC) rebuttal speech, the priority for the 1NR during the 2NC constructive speech should be to prepare a masterful 1NR.

However, there will be occasions when the 2NC misses something big in the BIG 6 argument(s) that the 2NC is taking, or times when the 2NC loses track of the arguments being made in the 2NC, and on those occasions, the ONLY person who can help the NEG Team is the 1NR, who needs to LISTEN to the 2NC as well as prepare the 1NR.

### **8. The 2NC Cross-Ex and the Fourth Prep Time.**

After the 2NC finishes, the 2AC will cross-ex the 2NC. Reason: the 1AR needs the time to prepare for the rebuttal speech. For the 1AR, multi-task requirements here include the 1AR listening to answers that may be relevant for the 1AR prep as to the issues covered during the 2NC. Also, if the 1AR is unsure or unclear about any specific 2NC responses, then the 1AR must communicate with the 2AC about the 1AR's confusion before the 1AR has to speak.

During this cross-ex period, the 1NR should be making sure that the 1NR is ready, is complete and is primed for starting as soon as possible. Also, once the cross-ex finishes, the 1NR and the 2NC should COMMUNICATE with each other and make sure there is NOTHING that the 2NC missed or needs the 1NR to cover on the BIG 6 issues/arguments extended by the 2NC.

Here, too, is another place where lots of debates can be lost on the NEG. It is very important to pay attention to 2AC arguments on any flow which deal with THEORY and claims of ABUSE or INDEPENDENT VOTERS. Additionally, where the 2AC TURNS a Disad, or Straight Turns a Counterplan or a K, making sure on the NEG that the theory OFFENSE from the 2AC or the TURN(S) coming out of the 2AC get answered in the BLOCK is crucial to NEG success. The 2AC Theory offense or TURN offense which can beat a NEG Team is sometimes missed when the NEG Team decides to KICK a particular argument, or when one NEG speaker thinks the other NEG Speaker has the responsibility to cover the 2AC's offense positions on an issue.

Bottom-Line here for the NEG, make SURE before the 1NR starts speaking that ALL or the 2AC's Theory and Turn OFFENSE on every flow has been answered by the 2NC or WILL BE answered in the 1NR. Since the NEG has the BLOCK plus a cross-ex period following the 2AC, for a NEG Team to miss any offense coming out of the 2AC is inexcusable, but it happens all the time, and dropped 2AC theory and turn offense in the BLOCK happens all the time, and lets AFF teams get cheap, but preventable, wins.

### **9. The 1NR.**

The 1NR has two jobs. First, the 1NR must be the defensive backstop against any AFF offense that can win the debate for the AFF and lose the debate for the NEG. Second, the 1NR must be the offensive responder to those element(s) of the BIG 6 positions that the NEG wants to extend through the block. Each job is crucial to a successful NEG ballot. The

1NR is the most underrated speech in the debate, because frequently 2NC's fall in love with what 2NC's extend and simply dump the 1NR offense into oblivion. Moreover, the AFF team, aware that the 2NC has a love affair with the 2NC's arguments, understands that the 1NR is going to become irrelevant to the 2NC, and as a result, the speech becomes less than important to the AFF, as well. Seriously, however, a quality 1NR can provide instant, impact laden offense, but if there is no round saving defense, the 1NR can cost the NEG many, many ballots.

The defense portion of the 1NR is crucial to guarding against a NEG defeat. Typically, NEG teams will "kick" something of their BIG 6 positions during the block, or certainly in the 2NR. The danger in kicking argument positions is that the AFF might have offense on the kicked position flow which, if left unanswered will generate an AFF ballot independent of the kicked argument itself. The standard AFF offense about which the 1NR must first be concerned can be summarized as: (1) turns; and (2) theory. If the 2AC TURNS a Disad or straight turns a Counterplan, for example, then the NEG team must beat back the turned position, or somehow get defense against the turn that moots or minimizes the impact of the turn.

An illustration would be the early in the year (pre-November) Politics-Election Disad. Say the NEG argues in the 1NC that right now (Uniqueness) President Obama will win re-election, but the election will be close. Next, the 1NC argues (Link) that plan passage will alienate a crucial segment of the voting public against President Obama, which in turn (Internal Link) will mean that the President cannot get re-elected. Finally, the 1NC argues (Impact) that the President's re-election will be good for some reason (say, to negotiate with North Korea or Iran thereby preventing North Korean or Iranian aggression and that therefore the President's re-election will prevent warfare which will go nuclear.

In response, the 2AC link turns the Disad. The 2AC argues that Plan passage will actually increase President Obama's re-election chances because the Plan will jump start the economy and lower unemployment. Thus, the AFF argues, Plan passage makes the re-election of President Obama MORE LIKELY, rather than less likely, thereby TURNING the Disad in favor of the AFF. Pass the Plan, says the AFF because it will mean that President Obama will more likely be re-elected, thus preventing (or at least reducing) the risk of nuclear war.

In response during the block, the NEG says, oops, we want to kick this Disad but says nothing about the TURN. The AFF does not play nice and throttles the NEG by claiming the Disad as an add-on advantage. The lesson here is that the 1NR's primary job for any "turned" Disad is to make sure that when the Disad gets "kicked" the AFF offense against the Disad gets beaten back as well so the Disad does not come back to haunt the NEG. Now, either the 2NC or the 1NR can kick the Disad and beat back the AFF offense, but if the NEG merely kicks the Disad and does defeat the AFF offense, the 1NR MUST beat back the 2AC offense on the Disad flow because if it is not done in the 1NR, the 1AR will punish the NEG on this issue, and if done right, will win the debate with the AFF link turn offense which is dropped in the NEG block.

The other major category of AFF offense against which the 1NR must supply the last line of defense concerns the theory arguments made by the 2AC. For example, as one of the NEG team's BIG 6 positions, the 1NC argues a Plan-Inclusive-Counterplan (a "PIC"). The 2AC says Perm, do both and then puts out a theory block which says that PICS are illegitimate and that by arguing a PIC the NEG has created in-round abuse amounting to an independent voting issue for the AFF. The 2NC, in response, kicks the Counterplan by arguing that the Perm proves that the Counterplan is not competitive, but says nothing about the PIC theory argument. It is the 1NR's job to make sure that the AFF'S PIC theory offense gets answered or neutralized, otherwise the NEG could lose the debate should the 1AR stand up and go for the dropped theory voter, in addition to other AFF arguments. The 1NR has got to be like the free safety in football, the last line of defense against AFF turns and theory arguments which could win the debate for the AFF if dropped in the block by the NEG.

As for the second job of the 1NR, being offensive about a BIG 6 position or two which were NOT covered in the 2NC, the best 1NR's are solid, quality, line-by-line debaters who answer ALL (not some, not a lot, not many, but ALL) of the 2AC responses to the BIG 6 position(s) that the 1NR is extending. In addition to line-by-line debating, the 1NR has got to also make offensive additions to and provide comprehensible explanations about the BIG 6 position(s) being extended in the 1NR. Making the NEG argument important in the context of the round, impacting the NEG argument for the judge, comparing the NEG positions to the AFF positions and demonstrating the comparative importance of the NEG positions as against the AFF arguments becomes the essence of a TOC caliber 1NR. The 1NR has got to make an impact in the round that is so consequential that the 1AR MUST take precious time to answer/deal with the BIG 6 position(s) being extended in the 1NR. If the NEG wants to win the debate, having a quality 1NR is a great way to achieve victory by putting inordinate pressure on the 1AR.

During the 1NR, the AFF must do three things. First, both AFF team speakers must flow the 1NR very carefully. Second, the AFF team members must observe the 2NC. If the 2NC is NOT flowing or listening to the 1NR, it is very likely that the 2NR will drop the BIG 6 positions which were extended by the 1NR, meaning that the 1AR can spend less time on the 1NR positions (which the 2NR is probably going to drop) and more time on the Big 6 position(s) extended in the 2NR, rather than in the 1NR. Finally, the AFF Team must decide which AFF offensive positions coming out of the 2AC were inadequately handled by the 1NR. If an AFF offensive position was dropped altogether, then perhaps it will be ballgame over, but only by listening and flowing the 1NR can this strategic decision be intelligently made by the AFF prior to the 1AR.

Similarly, the 2NC has got to flow the 1NR, or at least give the appearance of doing so because if the 2NC gives up on the 1NR, then so, too, will the 1AR be likely to spend more time answering the 2NC arguments knowing that the 2NC is not very likely to be extending the 1NR positions in any event.

1NR's must be the last line of defense against 2AC turns and theory, but also must put offense on the judge's flow on those BIG 6 position(s) which the 1NR will be extending. Putting out carded case turns in the 1NR, for example, makes the 1AR a really tough speech to give, and enables the NEG team to achieve maximum effectiveness from the NEG block.

## **10. The 1AR.**

Breadth and depth of coverage make a great 1AR. More debates are won in the 1AR than in any other speech in the debate. By contrast, a poor 1AR is fatal to the AFF chances to win in more rounds than any debate coach could care to count. Breadth of coverage means that the 1AR **MUST COVER** all of the BIG 6 positions that are extended out of the NEG block. If the Block consists of a 2NC which extends a Counterplan, a Disad and case solvency and a 1NR which extends Topicality and a different Disad, then the 1AR must cover/address/answer: the Counterplan, both Disads, Topicality and all of the solvency challenges, or the AFF will very probably lose on the BIG 6 position that gets dropped in the 1AR.

Depth of coverage means that the 1AR must put out enough responses to the NEG block positions that matter such that the 2AR has the ability to point to the answers given in the 1AR and make those arguments important enough for the AFF team to win the debate. Most judges will allow the 2AR some flexibility to work off of the 1AR responses and arguments. Few judges will allow the 2AR any creativity to invent wholly new responses that were never made in the 1AR.

Thus, the 1AR has the most difficult speech to give because a LOT of ground on many flows must typically be covered, and covered well, or the AFF team is likely to lose the debate when the 2NR extends a 1AR dropped BIG 6 argument, or pounds on a 1AR'S poorly extended BIG 6 argument. Breadth and depth of coverage is crucial to a successful 1AR. These twin tasks require word economy, meticulous flowing skills, an appreciation for the big picture of the debate and a thorough understanding of where the AFF team wants the debate to end up both as to the AFF case and as to the NEG Big 6 positions that get extended in the block. A NEG dropped 2AC extension is the 1AR'S best ally.

The 2AR must be flowing the 1AR carefully, anticipating where the 2AR will want to take the extensions being made by the 1AR. Additionally, the 2AR **MUST** listen to the 1AR and must **KNOW** if the 1AR is missing some crucial piece of NEG offense that **MUST** be answered by the 1AR. Just as the 1NR is the last line of defense for the NEG on turns or theory, the 1AR has got to answer/deal with/respond to NEG offense, particularly theory offense or the debate may well be over for the AFF after the 1AR.

Both NEG speakers should also be flowing the 1AR. The 2NR will want to flow for obvious reasons, but the 1NR will also need to pay attention because the 2NR might want to go for the position(s) extended by the 1NR. Particularly where the 1AR does a weak job on the 1NR positions, and a really strong job against the 2NC positions, having the 1NR stay in the game to the end may make a huge difference in the number of NEG wins that any team



can realize during the course of the year. If the 2NR is too predictable about what will be extended in the 2NR, then the AFF can gain a tremendous advantage by compartmentalizing and spending little time on the 1NR but a significant amount of time on the 2NC. The 1AR: A Speech of Breadth and Depth, a tough speech, but one that is oh so important to achieving AFF success.

## **11. The 2NR.**

The 2NR must be strategic and tactical, persuasive and compelling and must guess right about which argument(s) will win the NEG team the debate round. The 2NR must know very, very well the progress of the line-by-line debate on every flow, and must understand where the NEG team has the best chance to win the debate. The most common practice is for the 2NR to “go for” one or perhaps two of the BIG 6 positions in detail during the 2NR, while at the same time performing defense where necessary against any AFF offense (again, turns or theory) that is extended out of the 1AR. Rather than preach about the burdens and benefits of covering too much, or too little, the 2NR is the closer for the NEG. If the NEG is winning only one argument, then the 2NR has got to make that one argument the most important argument in the round. By contrast, if the NEG is winning, or capable of winning more than one of the BIG 6 arguments, then the 2NR has got to do a quality job of selling the arguments on which the NEG will win the debate and make sure that there is nothing out there that the 2AR can use to deprive the NEG of a win. Central to a great 2NR is closing off and closing out NEW 2AR answers.

The 2NR is part line-by-line debater and part salesperson. At the end of the day, the 2NR has got to package the NEG position(s) and make them important in the context of the round itself. Looking at arguments in context, rather than in isolation, creates NEG success. Thus, the 2NR is beset by a unique duality. First, the 2NR must have sufficient specificity to accomplish thorough and complete line-by-line success on the BIG 6 position(s) being extended. Second, the 2NR must also incorporate sufficient generality to “sell” the NEG to the judge in relation to the AFF’S positions and arguments. The 1NR is not done, however, once the 2NR begins. Rather, during the 2NR, the 1NR needs to both listen and watch the judge. Listening involves hearing what the 2NR is saying about the NEG arguments and understanding what is being said. If the 1NR cannot understand the 2NR, odds are great that the judge is not going to comprehend the positions being advanced.

Further, if the 1NR is aware of some unanswered AFF offense that can cost the NEG the round, then the 1NR has got to make sure that the 2NR deals with/answers/responds to the potentially losing argument. As with any other speech, it is best to make this type of observation known to the 2NR BEFORE the 2NR starts speaking. If, however, during the 2NR the 1NR has an epiphany about a particularly crucial AFF offensive position that has somehow escaped the 2NR’s attention, then the 1NR has got to bring this to the attention of the 2NR in the most subtle manner possible, without giving the judge the idea that the NEG thinks the NEG is in trouble and certainly without highlighting the “problem” to the AFF, which may not know of the difficulty.

Both AFF speakers must listen to the 2NR and flow the speech carefully. Knowing what the NEG thinks is important should help the AFF to game plan for the 2AR. If the AFF does not LISTEN to the 2NR, then the 2AR is incapable of responding to the 2NR. People sometimes just do not want to hear the “bad news.” Everything that the 2NR is saying will be “bad news” for the AFF. If the AFF wants to win the debate, the 2NR is one of those occasions where the AFF team has simply got to listen to what is being said and prepare to deal with the details, and the devil, in the 2AR.

## **12. The 2AR.**

Like the 2NR, the 2AR is part argument machine and part salesperson. The general rule of thumb is to beat the argument(s) extended by the 2NR and then sell the AFF case and overall position to the judge, explaining not only that the AFF wins, but WHY the AFF wins. If an AFF offensive argument has been missed by the NEG, then the 2AR has got to drive home the importance of the missed AFF offense. In addition, however, the 2AR must also insure that there is no NEG offense that the AFF team has “missed.” If something has been missed, the 2AR needs to sell the AFF position on that argument, or on something else on the flow, in such a way that the judge CAN vote for the AFF even while the judge is holding her/his nose. While “big picture” 2AR’s might sound nice, the winning 2AR must be sufficiently line-by-line specific (and thorough) to demonstrate to the critic where, and how, the AFF wins the important element(s) of the individual arguments that have been addressed during the debate.

The 2AR must persuade. Thinking strategically, the 2AR needs to compare arguments and positions and help the judge see how and why the AFF’s slant on various arguments is more important to the decision calculus than the NEG’s take on the competing positions made during the round. The art of juxtaposing and comparing positions helps the 2AR win debates.

During the 2AR, the 1AR must listen and observe the judge. If the 2AR misses something BIG, the 1AR needs to make sure that the missed argument gets addressed. Again, subtle is better than blatant when it comes to the gentle “reminders” that sometimes need to get made to the 2AR. If partners communicate with each other effectively during the course of the round, then the AFF’s need to be making “reminders” during the 2AR will be markedly lessened.

## **B. The Round Ended, Now What?**

Shake hands with your opponents. No need to shake with the judge, just let the judge complete her/his evaluation of the round. In most TOC-type debate tournaments, the judge will deliver an oral critique of the round, including a disclosure of the decision. Listen politely and take notes on your flow concerning the judge’s comments. Strive to get better by learning something valuable from every round. If you have a question about how you or your arguments can get better, ask it, politely. If you won the round, there is no need to ask questions, listen politely and take notes. If you did not win the round, there is no percentage in arguing with the judge, listen politely and take notes.

If there is no disclosure, then make it a point to read your ballots carefully after the tournament to find out what you did right, and where you need improvement. Otherwise, once the round ends your task is simple: Move on to the next round and take steps 1-12 above, again.

## **Chapter 6: Ten Helpful Little Hints.**

► **Hint the First: GET GRADES.** Do your class work, homework and group projects to the best of your ability. Study well and hard for each of your tests, exams and quizzes. The A you get in English I, Algebra or World History will mean more to you, and your future college applications than winning any debate round. Debaters debate best when they are not worried about their grades, assignments and upcoming test responsibilities. **GET YOUR HOMEWORK DONE EARLY**, and then do your debate preparation. Traveling to tournaments is a right, not a privilege. Earn the right to compete by being a student who excels in the classroom, every classroom.

► **Hint the Second: ENJOY YOUR LIFE.** Appreciate your parents, guardians, siblings, grandparents and involve them in your life, and be involved in theirs. Enjoy time spent with friends, at school and at tournaments. Do positive things in areas beyond debate. Run for school office, go to dances, pick up your clothes and appreciate and improve your surroundings. Debate is the means to an end. Debate is not an end in itself. The more you involve yourself in the life that surrounds you, the better able you will be to succeed in school, life and debate. Enjoy your life and live it well and fully.

► **Hint the Third: BE THE BETTER TEAMMATE.** To win in policy debate **TWO PEOPLE** must debate better than two other people. Make your partner better. Communicate with your partner and enjoy their success. Discuss both **NEG** and **AFF** strategies. Work together to work successfully! Communicate **DURING** and **BEFORE** the round.

► **Hint the Fourth: BE PLEASANT.** There is nothing worse than showing intentional cruelty or meanness to another. It costs you nothing to **SMILE**, be friendly and polite to everyone, your opponents, your coaches, your partner, your parents your little brother and sister, everyone. Sure, the heat of the moment creates tension, but if you approach debate and life with a positive attitude, the tensions are less intense and the problems and traumas become less severe. If another team asks you to disclose, then by all means do so, unless your coach, for whatever reason, has some rule or policy against disclosure. Be kind to teams which are new, and always be respectful to your partner and your opponents.

► **Hint the Fifth: LISTEN.** The best debaters are the best listeners. If you and your partner are talking to each other during the 2NC, then the only people in the room hearing the 2NC will be the 1NC and the judge. When your coach talks, listen to what is being said. When the judge gives an oral critique, hear why you won/lost and understand what you will need to do better. You cannot understand the opposition argument, or why you won or lost,

if you do not first LISTEN to the opposition's argument and the judge's post-round reason for decision.

► Hint the Sixth: SLEEP. More debates are lost than are ever won. Mistakes happen during rounds. More mistakes are made by tired debaters than by debaters who have their wits about them. It is crucial to get enough sleep the week of the Tournament and during the Tournament. That means getting to bed early, and waking up refreshed.

► Hint the Seventh: CLASH. Too often during rounds the opposing teams seem to be heading in different directions discussing different subjects. Yes, one should emphasize their own arguments, but part of the task is to defeat/respond to/answer and CLASH with your opponents' arguments. Particularly in those rounds early in your novice career where the other team is more novice than are you, listen to the questions that get asked/arguments that get made by the opposition speaker and then ANSWER the questions/arguments. It is OK to be so enamored of your own arguments, self-impressed by your tubs of evidence and captivated by your wonderful, well-scripted briefs, but please LISTEN to what the other side has said, and ANSWER their points in addition to reinforcing your own.

► Hint the Eighth: ORGANIZE. Part of what makes a debater an effective advocate both in speaking and writing is organizational skill. The ability to compartmentalize your thoughts and thinking into individually segregated arguments is a talent/skill that will set you apart in the classroom, in the business world and in life. Organization is more than merely putting papers in discreet computer file folders or expando-file slots. Instead, organization truly includes seeing the big picture as it is getting painted and sub-dividing the parts of the picture into discreet sub-pieces on the canvas in your mind.

You certainly must see the BIG PICTURE, but knowing how the picture is built, and framed, will enable you to dissect the picture for the judge and transform the view into one which looks more favorable for your side. Having organized files before the tournament starts is a big help. Staying organized during the round (flows, cards and papers centrally located, easily found) will save you prep time. Being organized before you start speaking makes you sound better and will enable you and your partner to recognize potential landmines avoiding big mistakes. Sounding organized in delivering speeches and cross-ex questions and answers will earn you better speaker points paving the way toward outstanding success in policy debate.

► Hint the Ninth: WORK TO WIN. There is no question that YOU need to work at this activity if you want to win at this activity. There are no magic potions, or coaches, who can do it for you. Performing well in any competitive endeavor takes WORK and practice. As you grow older, making choices rapidly becomes a central element in living life. Those who choose to play video games or watch television for hours on end can become first class video game players and TV trivia buffs. But that is a choice they make. Time is finite, and the choices you make will dictate the amount of time you can devote to working on debate. If you want to win at the highest levels, then you need to choose to do the work required to enable you to have a chance to win. Never lose to the same argument twice by working out

newer, better answers to the argument that beat you the first time. Update and upgrade your evidence and do your own research when you are able, especially in putting together your AFF case and plan. Work on your presentation skills by engaging in practice debates, but if you have no second team against which you can practice, then speak your blocks as you walk home or shuttle between classes.

► **Hint the Tenth: IMPROVE YOUR SKILLS.** For even the best debaters there are five skills that are in constant need of improvement. Flowing Skills, Writing Skills, Listening Skills, Questioning Skills and Speaking Skills. Here are some ways to improve each critical skill area:

●● **Flowing:** This a terribly underappreciated skill that requires constant improvement. Our suggestion is that each separate BIG 6 position gets its own separate flow sheet, with the LABEL of the argument placed prominently on the top of the flow sheet for easy access. We also recommend that you use Legal Size (8 1/2 x 14) paper on which to flow. The 1AC gets its own flow(s) with each advantage area having a separate sheet of paper. For both the 1AC and the 1NC, it is crucial that you leave yourself enough room vertically to flow responsive arguments as well as horizontally to flow each of the subsequent speeches which discuss the particular advantage area or BIG 6 argument as the debate proceeds. There are 6 tips to effective flowing.

1. Write LEGIBLY so you and your partner can read what is written.
2. Leave yourself ROOM between the arguments so you can see what you have answered, and how, and what you need to answer.
3. Flow like the debate goes. Don't be rooted to outdated concepts. For OFF CASE NEG positions, you need no more than 6 columns for the speeches that will deal with particular arguments. There is also no sense in flowing 1NC or 2AC topicality arguments and responses on your case flow. Thus, start flowing on the FAR LEFT SIDE of the paper and use separate pieces of paper for EACH OFF CASE and EACH ON CASE attack leveled in the 1NC.

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5	Column 6
1NC Shell	2AC	Neg Block	1AR	2NR	2AR

4. For the ON CASE arguments, you can add a seventh column for the AFF 1AC Case, but we have begun treating (and flowing) the 1NC ON CASE arguments as merely a separate flow concerning each different Case Advantage that is attacked/discussed in the 1NC.
5. Use abbreviations that you can understand and strive to get the TAG, source name and year of the evidence.

In summary, practice flowing skills by TAKING NOTES IN YOUR CLASSES, what a shock that will be for your teachers, but what a double benefit for YOU as you improve your

flowing skills AND get better grades on tests, quizzes and exams with a whole lot less last minute cramming.

●● **Writing:** Debate is a speaking activity, so where do WRITING SKILLS come into play? Simple: You need to write TAGS for ARGUMENTS. You need to write plan and Counterplan texts. You need to write a brilliant and persuasive 1AC. You need to write comprehensible and clear overviews to explain your positions. You may even need to write your administration for more funding. By writing clearly and concisely you improve your speaking efficiency and persuasion. 5 tips can improve your writing:

1. Eliminate prepositional phrases to the extent possible. Rather than prepositions use possessive's to shorten your sentence structure and eliminate wasted words.
2. Use active verbs, not passive verbs. Reduce the number of times you employ any form of the verb "to be." For example, a sentence which starts with the phrase: "This is" will always contain two extra words: "this" and "is." By cutting down on the number of words in every sentence that you write, your writing will be better, and your speaking will become far more efficient.
3. Write (and say) it ONCE. Repetition is the bane of good writing, and hinders effective ground coverage, particularly in rebuttals when time is precious.
4. Sound it out as you write it out. Many debaters make poor drafting/writing lawyers initially because they "write like they speak." It happens as an occupational hazard. One way to improve writing for debate purposes is to SPEAK what you have written after you write it.
5. Re-write, edit and re-write again. The first draft is never the best draft. Edit your work as often as time permits. Put the paper down, get a drink of water and come back to reread your prose. Then edit it again. As you edit your work, make sure you eliminate wasted words and incorporate active sentence structures in your final product.

●● **Listening:** In case it has not yet sunk in, LISTENING STILL MATTERS. Yes, you can and should READ the other team's shells, cards, blocks or 1AC. However, you must LISTEN to what the other team is saying as they speak. Practice listening to your teachers, parents, little brothers and sisters and everyone who talks to you. Hear and understand what other people say. Don't get so caught up in your own message that you miss the other person's message. The more you listen to everyone who speaks to you without thinking about what YOU want to say, the better debater you will become. Half of debate, if not more, involves RESPONDING to opposition arguments. The precondition to responding to someone else's argument is that you KNOW what argument is being made by your opponent.

The best way to figure out the puzzle that is: "What am I responding to?" is to LISTEN to their argument.

●● **Questioning:** Cross-Examination skills are the single least well developed skill for all

debaters, both High School and College. Most Trial Lawyers don't do a very good job of examining or cross-examining witnesses. In policy debate, if you can become a skilled questioner, your name can become a consistent presence in the top speaker awards list at every tournament you attend. Toward that end, here are some cross-ex does and don'ts:

1. **ASK QUESTIONS.** As simple as this suggestion sounds, the failure to ASK A QUESTION is the biggest flaw in novice cross-ex techniques. Do not make statements, and then hope for a response. ASK A QUESTION, get an answer then ASK ANOTHER QUESTION.

2. **PREPARE QUESTIONS IN ADVANCE.** The solution to effectively cross-examining your opponent is to prepare QUESTIONS, short, simple questions, BEFORE the tournament starts. When you are AFF, you should know where you want the CASE DEBATE to go, so prepare some questions premised upon your 1AC and 2AC blocks. For example, if you know that your case will likely be questioned on topicality then have some questions about topicality prepared in advance. On the NEG, you know your likely positions on Counterplans or possible Disads you might run. Have some questions that will set up your NEG positions ready to go before the round starts. Having questions prepared IN ADVANCE is the key to making and scoring points during cross-ex.

3. **ASK LEADING QUESTIONS.** What is a leading question, you ask? Well, the answer is simple, a leading question is any question that does NOT begin with the words: Who, What, Where, When, Why or How. Any other question will be a leading question because it will suggest, or lead, the respondent to a particular answer by filling in the premise of the question with a potential answer. Another way to identify leading questions is by the answer. A leading question can/should be answered only with a YES or an NO. If more of an answer than a Yes or a No is required, then the question is not a leading question.

4. **KNOW THE ANSWER BEFORE YOU ASK THE QUESTION.** If you listen to the 1AC, and perhaps also read the 1AC text, then you KNOW what the 1AC has spoken. You also will know where the flaws, or weaknesses or caveats of conditions are expressed, or not expressed, in the 1AC evidence. The most fruitful source of questions for a 1AC is found in that part of the 1AC evidence that is NOT HIGHLIGHTED. Since you know that the 1AC did not read a part of at least some of the cards in the 1AC, ask about what was NOT read. For example, "Isn't it true that Professor \_\_\_\_\_ actually wrote that: [then READ the part that the 1AC did NOT highlight]? Isn't it also true that you did not read [\_\_\_\_\_ read the non-highlighted part again] during the 1AC?"

5. **LISTEN** to the answers. Too often questioners ask questions but never listen to the answers that are given. Don't just hear the answers; USE THEM in your constructive speeches or rebuttals.

6. **SET UP ARGUMENTS WITH QUESTIONS.** The goal is to have a purpose behind the questions that you ask. Legitimately, there may well be times when you simply do not

understand what the opposing speaker said. In those instances, there is nothing wrong with asking an open ended question to discover information, or gain an understanding of something about which you are confused or uncertain. However, in most cases, you know what has been said, or read, and there is no need to permit your opponents to tell their story again so the judge can better understand the opposing argument. You can maximize the benefits of cross examination by asking questions that have a definite, pin-down, PURPOSE.

7. FOCUS ON THE JUDGE, NOT YOUR OPPONENT. The biggest physical mistake that debaters make in cross-ex is to focus on their opponent, rather than on the judge. You should listen to your opponent, ask questions of your opponent, give answers to your opponent's questions, but you should always direct your attention and eyes to the JUDGE(S). Doing this will help you avoid becoming too aggressive at or toward your opponent during cross-ex. Moreover, focusing your eyes and attention on the judge will enable you to better gauge the judge's reactions to the points being made both by your opponent and by yourself.

●● *Speaking*: Truthfully, speaking is so important that an entire chapter is devoted to speaking. Here, we only emphasize that you must CONSTANTLY WORK TO IMPROVE your clarity, word economy and presentation skills because speaking clearly and well will help you WIN BALLOTS, and speaker points.

Some of these HINTS may not seem directly related to "DEBATE." We assure you, however, that the HINTS are connected with "EVERYTHING" you need to know about Debate. The activity is more than an end in itself. Debate is and always will remain, the MEANS to an end. The big picture of your life should include a vision that is greater than the next tournament or finding the best possible card. Understanding that LIFE is bigger than debate sometimes is a tough thing to do, especially for those who get consumed with the activity, the travel, the competition and the thrill of victory. To really succeed in debate, however, requires that the Big Picture of your life remain in focus. Grades, fun, family, school work and friends matter, and by keeping debate in perspective, you can better appreciate the benefits that debate brings, and better deal with the disappointments that are generated by such an inherently subjective activity. While debate rounds, tournaments and national championships have winners, for every winner in a round there is one team that does not win, for every tournament there are all but one team(s) that will not win and for every national champion, everyone else tried but did not walk away with the title. Here's a real hint: debate well, but live better.

### *Chapter 7: Public Speaking Made Easy.*

When surveys are taken of people from diverse cultural backgrounds, having varying degrees of education, the survey results uniformly reveal that public speaking is the single most difficult thing for people to want to attempt. The fear of speaking in public, before an audience, ranks ahead of walking in a bad neighborhood at night; going to the dentist and having your new girlfriend or wife receive a visit from an old boyfriend. The task of this Chapter will be to try to get you over the hump, by letting you in on a few professional secrets that might help you overcome your initial apprehensions.



Please understand that at the highest collegiate and national circuit levels Policy Debate has become something “other than” a persuasion event in which the side that sounds better always wins. Time constraints, and high volumes of research, have combined to make speed, not persuasion, the hallmark of collegiate and national circuit level Policy Debate.

## **I. BE PREPARED: FOR TO BE READY IS TO BE UNAFRAID.**

Preparation is the key to overcoming your fears about public speaking. If you are only going to do impromptu, for example, then preparation means getting ready to organize your thoughts on the spot by having in mind organizational patterns. It also means giving a number of practice speeches, so you feel comfortable about the process of using your two-minute preparation time to best advantage in creating a 3-5 minute speech.

For Extemp, preparation means knowing about organization but also being well read about current events and comparative events from the past history of our nation and world. Additionally, preparation means developing forms-files for current events so that you can have virtually instant access to information about one of the three topic areas that you are provided in any one round.

For Oratory, preparation involves your personal development of the speech from the idea creation event through the drafting and memorization work that will need to be done on a consistent and repeated basis. Repetition of the Oration that you create, to your parents, siblings, friends and even to the mirrors in your house will make you more confident, and less afraid, to speak for 10 uninterrupted minutes to complete strangers.

In Debate, hard work and practice really pay off. The work comes in anticipating another team’s arguments, researching the merits of and possible responses to those positions and then practicing the delivery of the replies, and counter-replies, to the cases and arguments against which you anticipate you will need to be ready.

In general, as with any competitive endeavor, from archery to yoga, the more you practice and prepare the better (and less stressed) you will become. However, since preparation also includes a focus on the form of speaking as well as the substantive content of what is to be said, being prepared also necessarily involves an appreciation for the mechanics of your presentation. The best speakers, it can be safely stated, are the most confident sounding and appearing speakers. If you know your message, believe in its truthfulness and deliver the message in a manner that is comfortable for you, then you will become an effective advocate and a persuasive public speaker.

## **II. THE MECHANICS OF THE ART OF PUBLIC SPEAKING.**

Speaking to an audience, or a judge, can be broken down into five basic component parts. Just like a pitcher in baseball must have good “mechanics,” so too must an effective and confident sounding public speaker. One way to make a pitcher better is to work on the

component part little things that a pitcher must go through each time he winds-up or delivers a pitch. Similarly, the best method to improve the ability and confidence of a public speaker is to work on the “little things” that separate the pleasing from the annoying, the enjoyable from the awkward and the exciting and interesting from the dull and boring.

By way of overview, the five component parts to work on, and work at, are as follows: (i) voice; (ii) gestures; (iii) movement; (iv) eye contact; and (v) language choice. Each component part will now be addressed simply by highlighting some generic dos and don'ts and by supplying some practical tips to make your mechanics more mechanically sound. Remember, however, until you get up there on stage, are listened to and actually critiqued, and then see and hear yourself on tape, it will be hard for you to understand which of the do's you must put into your speaking effort and which of the don'ts you must work at leaving out.

## **A. Voice.**

The voice component of speaking in public incorporates five separate areas that need to be understood, and practiced. The first and most important component of making a speech concerns taking a breath. Without air in the diaphragm, no words will bellow forth. The second physical aspect to be worked on and adjusted is volume. The third piece of the voice puzzle is the speed at which you talk. Fourth is the enunciation/pronunciation daily double. Finally, speakers must regulate and modulate their pitch, which for 14-18 year old young men and women is sometimes the biggest challenge of all.

### **1. TAKE A BREATH FOR BETTER LIVING AND TALKING.**

You must breathe deeply before you step up to the microphone, the lectern or the podium. You should breathe in when you can; carefully making use of strategic pauses for effect during your presentation. Pause to breathe during transitions (when you progress from one topic area in your speech to another). Pause and breathe when there is laughter or applause (you hope). Pause for a breath **before** you run out of air. Pause for breath when you are about to die from having not taken a breath **before** you did run out of air.

If you learn nothing else, learn to breathe as you speak and pause, quietly through your mouth, so that you can utter words and not be caught short of the air needed to speak those words, phrases and thoughts that will take you to a National Championship.

### **2. VOLUME MUST BE WELL-ADJUSTED AND WELL-REGULATED.**

You must always speak loud enough to be heard, yet not so loud that the listener will want to shut you off. Whenever possible, before your event begins, test the acoustics in the room to which you are assigned by talking to the judge in the room. Ask a question about how the judge's day is going, what time signals are being given, or anything at all; just make sure you know you can be heard.

***Do not be too soft.*** Like a writer with illegible penmanship, a speaker with inadequate volume is simply not going to get their message across to the listener who cannot hear.

***Beware of being too loud.*** When the room echoes (even to you) from the sound of your voice, or you see the listener wincing, putting their hands over their ears or just doubled over in pain with blood streaming from their aural passages (ears), then you can pretty much guess that it is time to ratchet down the volume.

***Use volume adjustments for effect.*** Do not be at the same volume level all the time. Also, understand that volume adjustments for effect go in both directions. Sometimes, you can stress the importance of a word, phrase or argument by raising your voice volume at just the proper moment. Additionally, as you can observe for yourself by listening to the best speakers, you can soften your voice for emphasis, thereby making the listener lean forward **to hang on your every word.**

In summary, the volume at which you project your voice can be a tremendous help or a terrible hindrance to communication. In many respects, the volume at which you speak necessarily will depend on the environment in which you find yourself speaking. In a large room or auditorium, or when the judge is as old as some you will no doubt confront during your career, or wears a hearing aid (or two), you must turn up the volume. In a confined space, or when the judge or listener is sitting close, turn down the volume. If a microphone is made available to you, act like roadie for Blink 182 or U-2 before a concert and do a sound check to test where you need to place your face to be heard, but not overbearing. While not every environmental situation can be predicted, keep four rules of thumb in mind in an effort to begin to feel confident in front of an audience:

- (i) **Always** speak loud enough to be heard by everyone out there;
- (ii) **Never** speak so loudly that you offend anyone in your audience;
- (iii) **Vary your volume** on your own because being monotone in your delivery puts people to sleep; and
- (iv) **Self-adjust your volume up, or down**, in order to make a special point, with emphasis, even more special than your words alone will permit.

### **3. SPEED KILLS - SPEED THRILLS - SLOW DIES - SLOW DRIVES.**

At the elite levels of Policy Debate, the speakers talk so fast that virtually no one can understand them. The reason for doing so relates to the need for the debater to fit the maximum number of arguments into a fixed period of time. In all other events, or in Local League Tournaments, there is **no reason whatsoever to speak too rapidly** so that your words turn to mush and your listener gets confused. Similarly, being too slow when you speak may mean being too boring when others listen to you speak. Either way, experience will help you decide when to speed up, when to slow down, and when you are proceeding just right for your target audience.

As with volume, pace related adjustments in your delivery make an argument or an idea come alive. Your ability to **intentionally regulate** the speed at which you speak will enable you to highlight the points that need to be driven home to the listener. Finally, **strategic**

**pauses**, for breath as well as for effect, make for great transitional devices in a speech and create natural, very effective breaks for your audience members to catch their breath as well.

#### **4. SPEAK CLEARLY AND DISTINCTLY BY CORRECTLY USING INDIVIDUAL LETTERS OR SYLLABLES, OR EVEN WHOLE WORDS & PHRASES, WHEN NECESSARY.**

**Enunciation** is how well you use your air, tongue and lips to speak a word that can be understood. It is the art of speaking the word itself clearly and distinctly.

**Pronunciation** is how well you understand the word you are using by putting the letters of the word together in the proper order, and placing the correct emphasis on just the right syllable so that when you say the word, it sounds like it is supposed to sound.

To be a literate, polished speaker, you must **enunciate clearly** and **pronounce correctly**. Miss out on either of these two “nunciations,” even by a little, and you will not become a National Champion. The secret to the effective use of words is to practice saying a lot of different words. Further, you must acquire and develop a large, post-college, graduate school level vocabulary, knowing what words mean, and understanding how they are correctly pronounced.

As odd as it may seem, one way to practice to achieve enunciation and pronunciation proficiency is to say tongue twisters, lots and lots of tongue twisters. Say some every day. Say different ones, going faster and faster as you get more and more accurate. Make some of your twisters using “S” sounds, some with “R” sounds, others with other vowels as the *object de’ twist*, and still others with other consonants as the twisting widgets. You do not need to practice them in public, in groups, or in front of mirrors, but we **GUARANTEE** to you that if you say two tongue twisters today, three tomorrow and one more every day for the next week, your diction (enunciation and pronunciation) will improve dramatically.

#### **5. PITCH PLEASANTLY, VERY PLEASANTLY.**

Pitch refers to the high and low of the sound that emerges from your mouth when you speak. In many respects, this is the one aspect of your voice over which you have the least control. The Good Lord gave some of you pipes like James Earl Jones, and others will always sound like Steve Erkel . . . on a bad day.

Every so often the sounds you produce will be deep and throaty, yet on other occasions the noise will be high and squeaky. Sometimes, very frequently in fact, the sound(s) may be both, **in the same sentence!**

Three ways in which you can affect how you sound are as follows:

(i) **Breathe before you speak.** If you speak from the diaphragm, with air in there, you will be more likely to sound like a mature, older individual and less likely to shatter a wine glass from the high pitched vibrations of your tones.

(ii) **Speak slowly, rather than quickly.** The slower you go, the less likely it will become that an accidental peep issues when a profound point was intended.

(iii) **Know where you want to go with your next words.** By concentrating on what you want to say, and how you want to say it, you will diminish the possibility of ill-timed, unexpected belch-like sounds. If your mind is in control of the direction that your words are about to take, you will be able to focus more carefully on how you want to say what it is you intend to say.

## **6. SUMMARY.**

Without question, voice is the single most important component of developing correct, and pleasing, public speaking mechanics. You must give “voice” to your words to even get them heard. The “voice” that you use needs air, so you must first breathe in order to speak. If your volume is insufficient, then you might as well not even take a breath, for you may be speaking, but you will not be heard. Go too fast, or too slow, and the listener might be able to hear you, but the listener either will not understand you or will tune you out, and off. Clarity in how you say your words and phrases must be accompanied by accuracy in how you pronounce the words that you speak. Finally, if your pitch remains somewhere down the middle of the tonal range, then you’re speaking mechanics, like those of a star baseball pitcher, will give great voice to your eloquent words and thoughtful ideas.

Use your voice to explain yourself. Give your voice a chance to earn some great praise for the depth and quality of your ideas by breathing well, always being heard, speeding up and slowing down as needed, practicing to achieve constant clarity and working for a sound that is as pleasing to the ear, as your appearance will be to the eye.

### **B. Gestures.**

For the hearing or vocally impaired, gestures are the voice of the speaker. In competitive Speech and Debate events, gestures are a valuable means for communicating a rich, complete message. In general, using gestures wisely, effectively and well often will make the difference between being heard . . . and being remembered.

Gestures are made using the head, the eyes, the face, the shoulders, the body, the arms, the hands, the fingers (we all know that one) the hips, the torso, the legs, the feet and the toes. When you shake your head you can be saying: “Yes, know” or “I don’t know.” When you roll your eyes, you can be communicating the Homeric (Simpson, not the Greek guy) equivalent of “BORRRRING!” Screwing up your face can be a sign that you are confused or puzzled and elongating your face can show sadness or shock. Shrugging your shoulders

demonstrates resignation. Doubling over at the waist might indicate pain or simply that your shoes are untied or your zipper is undone. Thrusting your arms over your head could signal anything from “touchdown” to “I’m sure glad I put deodorant on today.” Every intentional body movement is a gesture that communicates a message.

For a public speaker, the best gestures are married to the message being delivered. In this country, one does not say the word “No” and nod the head up and down, unless a wiretap is strategically recording the conversation component of the speaker’s communication. Also, a speaker does not usually begin to reference his third argument and hold up four fingers, except for those who cannot count or who sometimes referee football games. Open arms suggest inclusion, while an open palm extended in front of you typically means, “stay away” or “stop.”

The litany of effective, communicative gestures is a long one ranging from the Peace Sign to a slap on the behind. Rather than list out the universe of possible gestures that can be used in any given setting, it is best to identify some rules (of thumb) that might help you to meld your words with your physical speech.

1. Gestures should complement your oral message, not conflict with your message.
2. The frequency with which you gesture should make you look like something between a rocket and a helicopter.
3. Expressive speakers use their bodies, faces, hands and arms to good effect when speaking.
4. Like voice volumes not heard, gestures that are not seen communicate no messages at all.
5. Smooth and controlled is better than awkward and random.

If a picture is worth a thousand words, then a well placed, smoothly flowing gesture will make your spoken words full with every syllable that you intend to be understood by an observant listener.

### **C. Movement.**

How you move across a stage will signal how confident you feel about your message. If you are frightened, you will either: (i) tend to stand still and sway back and forth like a palm tree in the beautiful, tropical Hawaiian winds; or (ii) fidget about nervously shifting your weight from one foot to the other.

In general, movement involves three specific components. First, there is the question of posture to always deal with when you are standing in front of a room speaking before a judge or a group of listeners. Stand up straight and tall and communicate both your own personal strength and the self-confidence that you possess in the strength of your message. Keep your weight evenly distributed, hold your head high and your shoulders erect. Do not bend at the waist, but stay vertical keeping your hands at your sides, unless you intend to make a gesture with your arms or hands at an appropriate moment.

Second, for most first time speakers there are always presented difficulties concerning the

elimination of involuntary movements. Shifting of weight, swaying from side to side, bouncing up and down on your toes, pacing back and forth and repeatedly moving your head are all examples of involuntary movements that will interfere with the receipt of your message by a distracted listener. The best way to approach the elimination of involuntary movements is to stay calm, practice in front of people who are not afraid to tell you the truth and speak, on occasion, looking directly into a full length mirror.

Third, knowing when to move, and how to move, becomes the real lesson that needs to be learned if you are to become an effective, accomplished and polished public speaker. Here, a couple of concepts seem to work well. Initially, move for a purpose that is consistent with the message you are conveying at a significant moment in your speech. For example, when your speech is shifting from Introduction to Body, move your physical body to establish the transition.

Further, when you move, please take a step or two. Do not simply “shuffle.” Pick up your feet. Turn your body into the move. Lead your legs and torso into the movement with your arms by gesturing with your lead arm in the direction that you are heading.

The movement of your body in front of an audience is like a dancer in a ballet or Broadway Musical . . . intentional, fluid and undertaken with the idea that the movement itself plays a complementary role in the delivery of your message and has a communication related purpose that will assist you in being heard, seen and remembered. A solid, upright posture accompanied by minimal to non-existent involuntary body or head motions, when combined with timely, meaningful and graceful physical movements will complete the package that begins with voice, and includes gestures.

#### **D. Eye Contact.**

The eyes are the windows to the soul, so said someone famous. Look into the eyes of those to whom you are speaking, observe their reactions and relate to them, and they will hear your message and understand your point. Without question, making effective eye contact is the best possible way to generate feedback from your listener.

In general, eye contact is effective when it is sincere and not overbearing. No one likes to be glared at by the person to whom they are speaking. By the same token, a person who refuses to make eye contact appears to have something to hide. The balance between making effective eye contact and causing unwelcome eye irritation is another tool of the speaking trade that is best learned through practice.

As with the earlier parts of the speech mechanics section (voice, gestures and movement), eye contact is used in cooperation with the message being delivered so that a pleasant, receptive listening environment is created during the communication event. When combined with use of your voice, excellent gestures and effective stage movements, eye contact can be a wonderful device to deliver a complete package to an audience, a package that the audience wants to receive. Here, too, there are three general rules that might help you to make better contact with your audience, regardless of how large, or how small, is your

group of listeners.

First, look people in the eyes when you speak to them, and when they speak to you! Looking away, looking down and looking up distract from and interfere with effective communication in any setting. Be confident and proud enough in yourself and in your message so that you can look past the fear in your inner eye and communicate by looking into the eyes of your audience.

Second, when speaking to a group move your eye contact around the room, but make contact throughout the room. Keeping a fixed gaze on a friendly face is a sure method to turn off other members of a listening public. Further, by including people from all parts of the room in eye contact patterns, you can build up a rapport and synergy with an entire group of people. The energy created will feed upon itself and you will be the ultimate beneficiary of that energy.

Finally, take eye contact breaks, but not overly long ones. Sometimes, breaks can consist of long blinks. Other times, they can be a glance up, above the listeners head, or a slight turn of your head moving your eyes just slightly off to the side. As a bottom line, always remember that whenever you are speaking, you are speaking **TO SOMEONE**. You are not speaking at them, or to their shoes, belly button, ears or hair. For that matter, you are not speaking to your own shoes, to the ceiling, to the floor or to a picture on the wall(s).

**WHEN YOU SPEAK TO ANYONE, COMMUNICATE DIRECTLY WITH THEIR SOULS, BY MAKING EFFECTIVE CONTACT WITH THEIR EYES!**

#### **E. Language.**

A great speech is like a wonderful piece of artwork. The canvas of the speech is the subject matter or the topic selected for the presentation. The brushes and the palette upon which the paint is kept are the voice, gestures, movement and eye contact of the speaker. Words, however, are the paint that the speaker uses to give life to the vision.

Much can be said and written about language. For these purposes, if you desire to become a proficient, successful public speaker you must develop a vocabulary that is second to none, and the wisdom, judgment and discretion to know when to use precisely the right word at just the right time. In general, language is effective when it is used properly, concisely and not to excess.

Build your vocabulary by reading great books, by listening carefully to wonderful teachers, by watching quality movies and, yes, even quality television shows. If when you read Plato or Homer or St. Augustine or Shakespeare or Hawthorne or Emerson or Dumas, you do not know the meaning or pronunciation of a particular word that is being used, look it up (right then) in a Dictionary and find out what it means. Then, look for the word in a Thesaurus and discover other words or phrases that mean the same thing.



You can also increase the language effectiveness of your public speeches by memorizing short, pithy quotes from famous authors or scholars. Resource books like Bartlett's Familiar Quotations and other such volumes can be looked to, and studied, to help you acquire a mental working library of your own.

Additionally, sounds resonate with the ear, so alliteration, repetition and soft language, precisely presented can make you better understood each time you speak. Words will be used, and interchanged, through constant practice in order to build a solid, finished product. Just as you should re-write and re-draft a written essay or paper, so too should you constantly attempt to re-edit and re-draft your speeches and language choices.

Practice will help. Reading and listening will help even more. If you want to become effective, good and competent, work at crafting your language to paint vivid, moving pictures in order to give yourself the best possible chance to succeed. The objective is to create memorable phrases that will capture the imagination and move the listener to act. The means to transform goal into reality involves work, a strong and ever broadened vocabulary and a fundamental understanding that language includes both concepts and sound. Listen to great speeches or great speakers whenever you get the opportunity. The sound you hear will be almost as important as the quality of the message being communicated. Alliteration, the use of rhyme or the stringing together of soft sounds juxtaposed against harder sounds; all contribute to the quality of the whole package and immeasurably improve the quality of the portrait you are painting.

### **III. POLICY DEBATE, NOT EXACTLY PUBLIC SPEAKING, BUT . . .**

Debate at the highest levels of the National Circuit is different from Policy Debate on the State and Local Circuit. However, what often makes the difference between the team that is 4-2 and breaks to the Elimination Rounds, and the team that is 4-2 but does NOT break, will be your speaker points. Another benefit of getting SPEAKS, is that if you have high points, then you will usually be bracketed against teams with LOWER speaker points, making it likely that you might get an easier draw into the next round, or into the elimination rounds.

The best method to procure high speaker points is to communicate your message TO your audience. The judge matters. Your opponents typically do not. You need to be polite, at all times, but you should speak TO your judge. Make the judge WANT to vote for you and your partner by being pleasant, but communicative. To be communicative, you need to be UNDERSTOOD. Practice with your blocks BEFORE the tournaments. Speak every word and syllable clearly, out loud and with pace. An essential element in the communication process is observation. You need to observe what the judge is hearing, and understanding, which requires eye contact with the critic.

Some tongue twister drills each day will help, but there is no substitute for reading your 1AC and blocks out loud, to your parents, your coach, your family pet, or just to yourself in a mirror. An additional suggestion that certainly will assist you is to KNOW your OWN arguments. Try making the arguments WITHOUT notes or blocks a couple of times. If

you understand the elements of each of the big six positions because you have studied and practiced them, then have the confidence to speak each of the elements from knowledge, rather than from paper.

No doubt, Policy Debate will gradually require you to do more and more reading, rather than pure speaking. If you are to avoid running out of time before your best arguments get made, committing the best arguments to paper will certainly help, since you will avoid added words and unnecessary repetition that tends to get in the way of efficient communication. However, at times, particularly with lay or parent judges, you will need to be a SPEAKER, rather than a READER, if you want to win.

The bottom line is that you need to ALWAYS remember that winning a Policy Debate round will require you to be flexible, and to adapt. You will need to adapt the level, type and nature of the arguments that you make. You will be required to adapt the type of speaking that you are required to perform. You also must understand that there are some rounds where you can read, really, really clearly and fast, and most other rounds where you must SPEAK, really, really polished and eloquently, in order to persuade your critic that you DESERVE to win. Like everything else in competitive activities, some are more talented than others. However, hard work and practice turn novices into champions. Since the primary physical skill that you will use in EVERY DEBATE ROUND is your ability to communicate, then the more you improve that skill with hard work and practice, the better you will speak, even in POLICY DEBATE.

## **Chapter 8: Conclusion.**

Just doing a Google search on Debate Theory & Practice will turn you on to any number of theory books, articles, and scholarly writings and journal submissions about debate. Your head can sink, or you can swim, in the debate world, simply by knowing, and understanding, the basics of Debate 101. With the authors' permission, we could send you article after article on Debate Theory and Practice, and each would be good, but like these 64 pages, none would ever be enough.

Our suggestion: If you do have any questions, and well you should, refer to this manual, ask a varsity debater and consult with your coach. That way, when you arrive at your first tournament, you will all be operating from the same base of knowledge. Review this document often, but check out debate websites for specific articles on subjects that may still confuse you. Become a member of Harvard University's sponsored Planet Debate ([www.planetdebate.com](http://www.planetdebate.com)), and try to access their free literature base, or have your school purchase a school subscription to Planetdebate, something which will help you, your partner and your teammates learn about the debate theory and about topic as the year progresses. Similarly, the University of Vermont Debate Team and Coaches do a wonderful job of attempting to make debate an accessible, understandable activity, and the University of Vermont provides a number of free online articles and publications that explain specific aspects of debate theory and practice. Finally, we can also recommend many of the debate theory articles, and evidence collections, found at the [www.cross-x.com](http://www.cross-x.com) and

[www.debatecentral.com](http://www.debatecentral.com) websites.

As you read, and study debate theory and practice, understand one very important rule: No author has all the right answers, and pretty much everything about debate is open to, you guessed it, DEBATE.

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