

THOROUGHBRED



THEORY BLOCKS

Thoroughbred Theory Blocks
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INTRODUCING DEBATE THEORY: PARADIGMS AND PRACTICE

Issues of theory appear in every debate round and are often decisive to the outcome. Even thirty years ago, debate had its theory controversies. People argued intensely over "the inherent and compelling" need and even more vehemency over that radical new form of argument, the comparative advantage. But thirty years ago, at least, theory disputes were limited to a relatively few stock issues and arguments over how they should be evaluated. Today the range of theory issues is far broader. The evaluation of the stock issues is still a matter of some controversy, especially the questions of topicality standards and the weighing of impacts. But there is a vast array of new theory issues which have come to the center of controversy: questions of affirmative and negative fiat, conditionality, competitiveness and permutations, etc. At the most mundane level, there are disputes over whether counterplans can be run in the second negative constructive and whether counterplans and permutations require a written text. And at the margins of debate theory, there are even claims that the affirmative need not present a plan, that the negative need not defend a policy alternative, and even that counterplans need not be competitive. The result of this theory proliferation is a paradox. Theory argument remains vitally important to successful debating, but most debaters are relatively bad at arguing theory.

Theory argument is both a sword and a shield; that is, it is both a powerful offensive weapon and an essential defensive tool. Good theory debaters possess a decisive edge because they can locate their substantive arguments within the most favorable evaluative framework. Often, therefore, arguments which might not seem on face to be decisive become voting issues. Weak theory debaters, on the other hand, are continuously vulnerable. Theory argument can work either for you or against you, but one way or another it will be at work in every debate.

The main purpose of this handbook is to increase the sophistication with which debaters can argue theory. While debaters often make theory arguments, they frequently fail to make the best theory arguments pertaining to a particular issue. Or they may make that argument in a superficial and unpersuasive fashion. This is sometimes a function of time pressures, but often it reflects a lack of sound theoretical understanding.

The bulk of this volume is made up of almost 150 briefs pertaining to over 70 different aspects of contemporary debate theory. Though not totally comprehensive, it is at least a relatively thorough treatment of the range of theory issues which arise in contemporary policy debate. But while specific

theory arguments are important, and while they can stand to some extent in isolation, such arguments will make far more sense when seen in the broader context of debate theory as it has developed over the past several decades. In this introduction, therefore, I intend to discuss the nature of debate theory in somewhat broader terms than it is discussed in the particular theory blocks. Following this more general discussion of the nature of theory, there will be a more specific discussion of the particular theories which this book addresses.

THEORY AS A META-ARGUMENT

What is debate theory? One answer to this question is that debate theory is "meta-argument," that is, argument about argument or the standards for evaluating arguments. This might seem like an academic and esoteric preoccupation, but in fact it is practical and even mundane. For example, in a topicality debate, each side will commonly offer a definition of a key terms. The question then arises of which definition should prevail in the particular round. Resolving this requires a theory argument--a standard of evaluation which is found on a somewhat higher plane of abstraction than is the initial argument which it is seeking to resolve. Thus, one team might argue that its definition is better because it is more limiting and the other might argue that its definition is preferable because it is more field contextual. But if both teams respond with different standards, then once again an impasse seems to have been reached. How do we resolve the competing standards? The result, often, is an appeal to "meta-standards" -- that is, standards for standards, arguments which are at a still higher level of abstraction. So, for example, one team might appeal to the value of debatability as a key to evaluating topicality standards and another might appeal to the importance of linguistic precision. In theory, this process of appealing to ever higher levels of abstraction could continue indefinitely. In practice, teams usually run out of intellectual ammunition (or at least out of speeches) long before we have arrived at this infinite regress. Sometimes one team will be able to go a step beyond its opponent, offering a more comprehensive framework within which they evaluate the particular issue.

Sometimes each team will be able to clash at an equally high level of generality--in that case the judge will simply have to decide which theory construct is more compelling. Often, of course, issues can be resolved at the lower levels of abstraction. For example, the affirmative might be able to argue that it meets the negative's definition, in which the case the whole debate over standards can be shortcircuited. This process of developing

standards for arguments occurs in many areas other than topicality. If a negative counterplans with action by a foreign government, the affirmative is likely to argue that this is not a legitimate position. The result is arguments about the limits of negative fiat. If the affirmative argues that its advantage outweighs because it has a shorter time frame, the negative may well respond by arguing that the negative impact is larger or more probable, even if further off. The result is that a theory of risk analysis needs to be developed. If the affirmative runs two plans or the negative two counterplans, a theory of conditionality is likely to be called for. The examples could be pretty much indefinitely multiplied. One thing interesting to note about all of these examples is that in each case debate practice (a specific argument situation or a specific form of argument) serves to drive debate theory. The theory emerges in order to deal with recurrent situations of argument controversy.

PARADIGMS

As was noted in the topicality example, theory arguments have a way of rising to ever higher and more abstract levels of generality. At the highest level of generality are those very broad theories about the nature of debate which are called "paradigms." The term "paradigm" was popularized by a 1962 book called *THE STRUCTURE OF SCIENTIFIC REVOLUTIONS*, by philosopher of science Thomas Kuhn. Kuhn was particularly concerned with how one general scientific theory replaces another, for example, how Einstein's views of physics replaced Newton's. Paradigms, according to Kuhn, are general frameworks within which questions can be coherently asked and which can direct further research. In a broad sense, a paradigm is a world view, a general way of looking at things. Paradigms are usually internally consistent, but they will rest on certain ultimately unprovable assumptions. When one paradigm replaces another, it is not necessarily because the newer paradigm offers a more accurate view of the world so much as that it offers a more useful way of thinking about the kinds of questions which researchers want to ask.

As applied to debate, paradigms are said to be general models or conceptions of what debate is and should be all about. When David Zarefsky of Northwestern introduced the idea of paradigms into debate, around 1970, there were said to be three basic models of the debate process which enjoyed broad support: the stock issues model, the policy making model, and the hypothesis testing model. Each of these "first generation" paradigms was based on an external model of the debate activity. The stock issues framework modelled debate on the courtroom, especially the criminal trial. The policy making perspective modelled the policy process itself, especially Congressional policy making. Hypothesis testing was based on a loose analogy to

social science, but it also appealed more broadly to a concept of debate as a scholarly activity involving social criticism and social philosophy. Debate paradigms, Zarefsky argued, function as follows. Participants in the debate activity begin with a set of core values concerning what debate should be like. Based on those core values, they then select an external model, for example, the courtroom, the Congress, or social science. Then, from that model, they derive particular theories, such as topicality standards, requirements for counterplans, and views of conditionality. This process of theory generation, it should be noted) is rather different from the process that I described earlier. The paradigm-derived view of theory is basically a deductive process, a process of reasoning from general principles to particular practices. The alternative way in which theory can be seen to develop is what might be described as inductive, or bottom up. A certain practice inspires controversy. A theory is developed to deal with that controversy. And eventually so-called "grand theories" or paradigms emerge to systematize the total body of theory. Actually, these two methods of theory generation are not mutually exclusive. There is, I would argue, an ongoing dialectic of debate theory and practice. Theories inform practices, but practices also shape theory.

For example, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, debate topics became significantly broader. This led to the theory that the negative should be able to offer a topical counterplan. The acceptance of topical counterplans led eventually to the widespread use of plan-inclusive counterplans, and this in turn led to a new body of theory relating to whether or not plan-inclusive counterplans are legitimate. One result of this dual process of theory building is that many judges fail to have totally consistent theory beliefs. Indeed, this has become more and more often the case as debate over debates grand theories, its paradigms, has receded.

The period of the 1970s and early 1980s was the era of "paradigm wars" in debate. Significant chunks of debates were spent in making long lists of arguments about why hypothesis testing was better than policy making or vice versa. It was eventually decided that this was a fairly futile endeavor. The problem is that the dispute over paradigms is so abstract and involves so many ultimately unprovable assumptions about questions both of fact and of value that it can never really be resolved. Thus, at least for a while, people stopped trying to debate on this basic a level. This was, for the most part, a beneficial trend. But even if paradigms are not directly debated in rounds, they are important to understand because of their implications for specific debate theories. As anyone who has been in debate for awhile will realize, a fairly limited set of core disputes arise time after time in terms of particular theory debates, questions of plan versus resolutorial focus, advocacy versus

analysis, and policy realism versus the broad normative investigation of alternative futures.

Of the three first generation paradigms, only one, policy making, still enjoys popularity among college debate judges. Hypothesis testing has been influential in numerous ways, but in its original form it has few contemporary defenders. Stock issues orientation, though rare among college judges, still is influential in many parts of high school debate. But even beyond their direct continuing influence, these paradigms are important because they have helped to shape the overall repertoire of theory arguments which are made in terms of specific theory issues. Understanding these paradigms is important, then, both because it helps to predict how certain judges will respond to particular theory issues and because it helps to determine how important or unimportant certain less abstract and more frequently argued theory positions may be. In what follows, I intent to outline what I see as the major assumptions and theory conclusions of each of these paradigms.

THE STOCK ISSUES PARADIGM

1. Views debate as a public advocacy event. This may imply that debaters should make arguments appropriate to an audience of laymen. In this view, the prime purpose of debate is to produce analytical skills of the type relevant to law, like those that would be needed in arguing before a jury.
2. Sees debate as modelled on a criminal trial. The focus of debate is the guilt or innocence of the present system. Guilt is established by proving, as in a court, each of a set list of stock issues.

The stock issues the affirmative needs to sustain are topicality, significance, inherency, solvency, and relative freedom from disadvantages. Each of these burdens must be met independently. Losing any one of them is sufficient reason to vote negative.

3. Concept of presumption. The status quo is innocent until proven guilty. Establishing guilt may require proof beyond a reasonable doubt. At least it is a threshold issue, requiring a certain level of significance to overcome.
4. Concept of significance. To prove significance the affirmative must show a compelling need for change. This implies a relatively high threshold.
5. Inherency. Proving this involves showing barriers that prevent a status quo solution to the problem. Again, it is an absolute issue.
6. Solvency. The plan must provide a probable solution to most or all of the affirmative harm. Again, an absolute issue.
7. Disadvantages. One way to beat the affirmative but not necessary to do so. Very old fashioned judges tend to view disadvantages as less important than the case debate.
8. Topicality. Generally is viewed as a jurisdictional issue or in terms of division of ground. Tends to support "common sense" topicality standards such as the spirit of the resolution or the common man.

9. Counterplans. Stock issues judges sometimes describe these as strategies of desperation, rather like the insanity defense in a criminal trial. A counterplan probably means that the negative loses presumption. To be competitive, a counterplan must solve all of the affirmative harm and have an added advantage. Counterplans can't be topical.

10. Conditionality and consistency of position. Affirmative conditionality would probably be rejected, but the negative need not defend a consistent position--they can engage in straight refutation of the affirmative. Justification arguments are also legitimate negative arguments.

11. View of theory. This tends to be rules oriented. Each team has stipulated proof burdens, so theory debate is discouraged.

THE POLICY MAKING PARADIGM

1. Views debate as a specialized advocacy event. Academic debates are seen as the type that might emerge in Congress or executive proceedings. The purpose of debate is seen as useful in real world policy formulation. Because the audience is seen as more expert, more highly technical arguments are acceptable, but considerations of policy realism are still important.

2. Debate is seen as modelled on the policy making process. Usually Congress is seen as the closest analogue, but the executive or even the Supreme Court could be viewed as the relevant policy making body. Focus shifts from the status quo to the policy under consideration--the affirmative plan. Usually the plan can be justified simply by proving a comparative advantage. In effect, this model collapses the stock issues as independent burdens; a little significance, a little inherency, and a little solvency is still enough to vote affirmative if there is no disadvantage.

3. Presumption. Tends to be with least change and grounded in the risk of the unknown. In practice, this argument seems to have little weight within this paradigm; it usually counts just as a tie-breaker.

4. Significance. A relative concept, not a threshold issue. All the affirmative needs is one iota more than the disadvantage.

5. Inherency. Probably this is most often understood as the likelihood of a status quo solution to the affirmative harm, absent the plan. As such, it is rarely absolute by itself.

6. Solvency. Basically this means the probability of the plan's solving some or all of the harm. Again, it is rarely absolute.

7. Disadvantages. Usually the negative needs to win one to win (or at least to turn the case).

Disadvantages, like advantages are usually evaluated probabilistically, that is, in terms of risk.

8. Topicality. Commonly this is seen in jurisdictional or division of ground terms. More recently, topicality has been seen more as a way of setting limits or initiating debates.

9. Counterplans. They are viewed as competing policy systems. Competitiveness is judged in terms

of net benefits. Topical counterplans are often accepted. Negative fiat tends to be limited.

10. Conditionality and consistency. Conditional argument is generally rejected; both teams must defend a consistent position.

11. View of theory. Debate theories should be derived from the logic of policy dispute. This makes theory more debatable than it is in the stock issues framework, but still fairly limited.

THE HYPOTHESIS TESTING PARADIGM

1. Views debate as a scholarly intellectual inquiry of the type found in academia. Debate is a search for truth. Debate should teach skills which will be relevant to broadly normative social criticism.

2. Debate is modelled on social science. Debate is a form of truth seeking like social science. More broadly, this paradigm probably sees debate in terms of social criticism and even social philosophy. It relies to some extent on the language of formal logic. The focus of debate is the resolution--it's truth or falsehood--rather than the plan or the status quo.

3. Presumption is always against the resolution.

4. Significance tends to be qualitative. Is an important value being violated? Hypothesis testing is usually less concerned with quantification of advantages and disadvantages than policy making.

5. Inherency asks why the resolution is necessary to solve the harm. To show this, the affirmative must prove that there is a core motive precluding non-resolutional solutions. Inherency is an absolute issue and one which the negative can frequently win. The question of inherency--the question of causal necessity and sufficiency--is central to hypothesis testing.

6. Solvency asks whether the resolution is sufficient to obtain an advantage. While hypothesis testers commonly accept partial solvency, they may require a higher level of affirmative proof than policy makers.

7. Disadvantages are another way to prove the resolution false, but they are not necessary to vote negative. Hypothesis testers are commonly less persuaded by low probability arguments than policy oriented judges.

8. Topicality. Hypothesis testers still commonly borrow the language of policy making and refer to topicality as a jurisdictional issue. It seems truer to the paradigm to see the resolution as the central hypothesis being debated.

9. Counterplans. For hypothesis testers they are simply inherency arguments, intended to show that the resolution is unnecessary. They retain presumption and can be competitive by mutual exclusivity, net benefits, or redundancy. Negative fiat standards tend to be liberal-international and even private fiat may be accepted.

10. Conditionality. Tends to be accepted in all forms, both affirmative and negative--alternative justification, plan amendment, intrinsicness, multiple conditional counterplans, etc.

11. View of theory. Presumably, hypothesis testers think of theory within the logic of scholarly discourse. They also seem sensitive to the difficulty of resolving paradigm disputes and the need to translate arguments across paradigms.

PROBLEMS WITH THE EXTERNAL MODEL PARADIGMS

By the late 1970s, all three of the first generation, external model paradigms had begun to be subject to a great deal of criticism. One argument was that they are based on poor analogies. Policy debate isn't really that much like social science or a criminal trial, and the actual arguments made in policy debates don't much resemble those made in Congress. Second, each paradigm tended to generate inconsistencies. Considering multiple policy alternatives is a part of policy making, but most policy making judges have remained militantly opposed to all forms of conditionality. Hypothesis testing appealed to social science as a model, but then focused on the kinds of qualitative issues that are often viewed as too "soft" for scientific investigation. Third, it became clear that sometimes the overall model doesn't provide clear deductive guidance with regard to specific theories. An example is intrinsicness arguments. Intrinsicness arguments could be said to show that the disadvantage is not a necessary outcome of the resolution or that the resolution is not sufficient to generate an on balance advantage. Fourth, it has become increasingly the case that one's ostensible paradigm doesn't accurately predict one's particular theory views. In particular, it has become clear that there are intermediate positions along a continuum extending from stock issues to hypothesis testing which many people occupy. Fifth, these paradigms may not, at the most basic level, be mutually exclusive. One might say, for example, that debate is a search for truth, but that it is a search for truth about public policy, and that it employs the stock issues as the main intellectual tools for finding that truth. There are, of course, still some "paradigmatic" differences between the models, such as plan versus resolutional focus, but in principle it might be possible to unite the three paradigms into one overall paradigm.

Sixth, it may be the case that the external model paradigms overly complicate theory. Steve Mancuso has suggested that it makes more sense to reason from debate's core values directly to specific theories and that the whole stage of a specific external model can be left out. Finally, seventh, it came to be seen that all of these paradigms of debate left out of overt consideration one of the most important aspects of contest debating--precisely the competitive factor.

THE RISE OF INTERNAL MODELS

The result of these criticisms was a general

disenchantment with external models and a movement towards so-called internal models of the debate activity. The distinction here is that while the external models appealed to something outside debate as the source of debate theory, the internal models referred to the nature of academic debate in itself as a source of theory.

The two major internal models of debate are the gaming model, most fully articulated by Alfred Snider of Vermont and the educational model, developed by Robin Rowland of Kansas. Some of their assumptions and conclusions are worth briefly reviewing.

THE GAMING PARADIGM

1. Views debate as an intellectual competition. As such, fairness considerations became especially important.
2. Debate has no external model. Debate doesn't even simulate another activity; it employs its own principles.
3. The substantive aspects of debate theory--presumption, significance, inherency, solvency, disadvantages and counterplans--are all debatable. This paradigm does not, in principle, propose answers to how these issues should be evaluated prior to the actual debate.
4. Topicality. Since external analogues are less important, it might seem that this theory would stress debatability as the key standard for evaluating topicality. Actually its tabula rasa view of judging tends to make topicality a more prominent issue.
5. Conditionality. This view seems open to all perspectives on this issue, from the position that conditionality is legitimate to the position that it is automatic grounds for a loss.
6. Negative fiat. Again, this is debatable, but judges with this orientation tend to be more liberal on fiat and more open to arguments about the need to investigate alternative futures.
7. View of theory. Theory should derive from the internal logic of debate. All theory is open to argument.
8. View of judging. Games oriented judges tend to be highly tabula rasa. That is, they try to function as a blank slate, simply evaluating the issues in the round based on the debaters' arguments.

THE EDUCATIONAL PARADIGM

1. Views debate as primarily an educational activity.
2. Again, there is no external model; debate generates its own rules.
3. Substantive issues are debatable, but within narrower parameters than in the gaming paradigm. Though debatability is sometimes explicitly said to be more important than policy realism within this perspective, implicitly, this paradigm seems to largely incorporate the policy making view of the substance of debate.
4. Conditionality. As in policy making, this perspective seems strongly opposed to

conditionality.

5. Negative fiat. Again, like policy making, the tendency here is to be more conservative with regard to what the negative can propose.
6. View of theory. Compared to gaming, this paradigm takes a much more prescriptive view of theory; it is much more rules oriented.
7. View of judging. Since the judge is viewed as an educator first and foremost, the anything goes tendency of the gaming paradigm is strongly rejected. The judge is generally viewed as a critic of argument. That is, s/he is expected to evaluate arguments in terms of preestablished standards of proof, not just to accept whatever the debaters argue. At its extreme, the judge within the educational model can become a kind of censor of argument, rejecting certain positions as beyond the pale.

EVALUATION OF THE INTERNAL MODELS

Though these are not the only internal models of the debate process, I think that they are the most important. In contrast to the external models, they share a common emphasis on debate as an autonomous activity, one which should develop its own rules and procedures. In many of their particulars, the two theories differ, yet I wonder if in principle the two positions are mutually exclusive. If most people were asked to name the two main values associated with debate, they would probably list good competition and education. And presumably proponents of gaming would claim that their perspective maximizes education, whereas proponents of the educational model would assert that it produces good competition. The difference here seems more a matter of emphasis than a matter of kind.

Yet the very fact that a games model can be opposed by an educational model may point to a problem with both. It seems unsound to place one of debates values as invariably higher than the other. To always stress competition seems to overly neglect education. But to always stress education may just turn debate back into a classroom, undermining the motivational forces associated with competition. It seems clear that both values need to be recognized. But there are many aspects of education in debate, and there may well be multiple dimensions to a good game. In principle, all of these values and value dimensions should be recognized. But if debate recognizes multiple values, theory argument becomes increasingly ad hoc and unprincipled. It will always be possible to find some point of appeal in debate's universe of values to refer to in justifying a theory. But one's opponent will also be able to find another value to justify the opposite theory. With neither a clear value hierarchy nor an explicit external model to appeal to, theory becomes indeterminate to the point of chaos.

The internal models were invaluable for reminding us that academic debate is unique. It has a unique form and involves a unique combinations of purposes and practices. Since debate's goals are different from those of scholars or members of Congress, it shouldn't formalistically emulate any other activity; its own internal dynamic is important. But what the internal models risk forgetting is what debate has in common with other activities. In every forum in which policy questions are discussed, there will be certain commonalities to the logic employed. Each forum will have its own way of approaching problems, but the common subject matter they consider also has its own logic, in this case the logic of policy discourse. In the end, the internal and external models may not really be competitive because they ask two different sets of questions. The external models focus on the substance of debates, that is, on the logic of its subject matter. The internal models, instead, focus on the procedural aspects of debate, especially philosophies of judging. The two, of course, are interrelated, but they are not really mutually exclusive.

THE ERA OF IMPLICIT MODELS

Since the mid-1980s, the debate over debate paradigms has waned. This may have been because, at least on some issues, a working theory consensus was reached. (Counterplan competition seems to be an example of this.) Also, as focus on topicality and utopian counterplans diminished, there was simply less occasion for theory argument. Paradigm disputes probably remained, but they were able to remain unarticulated most of the time. By and large, extremely literal appeals to external models have vanished. And a working, pluralistic, internal model of debate may have prevailed.

That is, debate was seen as generating its own rules, and both education and competition were accepted as important, commonly held values. But, with the rise of the kritik in the early 1990s, as well as the increasing popularity of international and plan-inclusive counterplans, theory arguments have once again become more prominent. These contemporary theory disputes have certainly been heated, but they have not been particularly satisfying. This is mainly because, I think, they have been conducted without clear reference to paradigms--that is, to clearly articulated general theories of debate. This has begun to change. Brian Lain, for example, has written in a recent paper that the legitimacy of the kritik follows from a new, "assumption questioning" paradigm.

But despite moves to more systematically ground contemporary theory in basic paradigmatic conceptions, for the most part present theory argument continues to occur in a kind of paradigmatic vacuum. Actually, I believe that paradigms are still in play, perhaps even more than

ever, but that they have become implicit paradigms. And being implicit, they are more difficult to evaluate and counter. Certainly the controversy over the kritik shows every sign of being a paradigm war. Neither side really understands the other very well (or for the most part even wants to understand it). There are clearly different fundamental assumptions at work and perhaps essentially incommensurate world views.

Debate theorists and practitioners have begun to cluster around one of two poles. The first I will call "policy advocacy," and the other I will term "assumptional gaming." It is somewhat dangerous to outline implicit paradigms, especially when the paradigm being described is not one toward which a great deal of sympathy is felt. Still, I think that to understand the contemporary status of theory in debate, it is necessary to delineate these two dominant views. Having done that, I want to outline a third alternative, debate as "competitive policy analysis." This perspective is less popular than either of the first two, but it occupies a middle position and represents, I think, a desirable way of approaching theory.

Placing the first and second generation paradigms on a continuum from the most conservative to the most radical would produce a spectrum ranging from stock issues to policy making to hypothesis testing to gaming. (The educational paradigm is, I think, essentially a recasting of the policy making paradigm into the language of an internal model; thus, I don't assign a distinct position on the spectrum. If I did, it would be close to policy making anyway.) My argument is that the new, implicit paradigms tend to fall in between these four established paradigms, drawing in most cases substantially from at least two of the earlier models of debate. Actually, all contemporary paradigms have been influenced by gaming, in that all tend to give more weight to competitive dimensions than did the earlier paradigms. All current paradigms are to some extent hybrids, but each seems to draw most strongly on two of the older paradigms.

POLICY ADVOCACY

This paradigm draws most heavily on the old policy making paradigm, but it also seems to have reverted to some of the perspectives associated with the even older stock issues framework. The basic positions of most judges operating within this implicit framework are as follows.

1. Emphasis is placed on policy realism. This leads to restrictive views of fiat, opposition to kritiks, and at best limited openness to radical and controversial ethical perspectives.
2. A qualified plan focus characterizes this viewpoint. Though the plan is still commonly said to be the focus of the debate, it seems more accurate in this view to say that the debate focuses on the comparison of affirmative and negative policies. Among some members of this group, there is still

some resistance to topical counterplans, a wider opposition to plan-inclusive counterplans, and ambivalence about extra-topicality.

3. The stock issues are viewed as essential categories of policy analysis. Stefan Bauschard has even gone so far, in a recent article, as to label uniqueness a "sacred" concept.

4. This group of judges tends to be liberal on topicality, largely because they find it less interesting than nonsemantic policy issues.

5. A strict limitation to two policy comparison is insisted on. This school tends to be militantly against conditionality in any form and also tends toward restrictive views on the affirmative use of permutations. (Permutations must either function as tests or as new plans, not as options along with the plan.)

6. The view of judging associated with this perspective seems very similar to that proposed by the educational paradigm. This leads to a rather rule-bound view of theory and a willingness, at least at the extreme, to let the judge play the role of intellectual censor.

7. Debate is understood in terms of practical politics. Thus, arguments such as the Clinton disadvantage tend to be very popular with this group.

ASSUMPTIONAL GAMING

This perspective, I think draws most heavily from the gaming paradigm and the tabula rasa view of judging. But it also bears marked affinities to many aspects of hypothesis testing (and even bears a few signs of the stock issues framework). What it stands most in opposition to is the conservative version of policy making which I've labelled policy advocacy.

1. Emphasis here tends to be placed on the pursuit of alternative futures. Core assumptions should be questioned, and the more basic or buried the assumption may be, the better. This leads to very expansive theories of fiat, an enthusiasm for kritiks, and a general openness to all kinds of moral and political perspectives.

2. In this view, the focus of debate can be on anything: the plan, the resolution, the language of the resolution, the language of evidence, the rhetoric of each team, even the behavior of individual debaters. Still, the preferred subject matter of this paradigm is pretty clearly underlying assumptions--thus, the kritik is its preferred instrument.

3. In this perspective, the stock issues seem to be seen pretty much as artificial conventions. Certainly there is nothing "sacred" about uniqueness. In general, the forms of argument seem much less set and are seen as much less logically necessary than in other perspectives.

4. The approach to topicality here tends to be technical. Basically, it seems to reflect the tabula rasa view of judging, but it probably also expresses a greater interest in language.

5. Direct policy comparison is rejected. The kritik

need not offer an alternative. Recently, proponents of this view have begun to focus on the idea of "rethinking" as an alternative. At minimum, this is not a very specific alternative.

6. The judge is seen as a blank slate. This leads to a highly opened view of theory, and at its extreme it leads to a view of the judge as a kind of referee.

7. Debate is seen in terms of oppositional politics. Kritiks are often seen as means of disrupting business as usual, both inside and outside debate. Arguments such as the Clinton disadvantage which focus on practical politics are deemed not particularly worthy of attention.

COMPETITIVE POLICY ANALYSIS

This last perspective, with which I would associate myself, tends to fall between policy making and hypothesis testing on the paradigm continuum. It derives from policy making the recognition that debate does have a subject matter--questions of public policy--and that subject matter matters. From hypothesis testing, it draws an approach to debate closer to policy scholarship or social criticism than literal policy making.

1. The central focus of this paradigm is sound policy analysis. Theories are evaluated first and foremost in terms of their ability to contribute to the search for the best policy. The framework of our debate topics is seen to be American public policy discourse. This leads to relatively restrictive views of fiat, a general opposition to kritiks, but relative openness to radical moral and political perspectives.

2. This framework employs a consistent plan focus. Since the plan is the focus of debate, presumption is always against the plan. Topical counterplans are acceptable, as are plan-inclusive counterplans and extra-topical plan planks. Debate is seen as having a subject matter, specifically the debate topic, and more broadly, American public policy. Thus, standards of germaneness limit out many kritiks.

3. Though not assuming an attitude of religious veneration, this perspective generally assumes that the stock issues are logical categories of policy analysis.

4. Topicality is viewed as an essential tool for assuring fair competition, and definitional questions are seen as having some value in themselves. The result is a relatively moderate and pragmatic approach to topicality.

5. Since debate is the search for the best policy, and the focus of debate is the affirmative plan, affirmative conditionality is generally rejected, but at least limited negative conditionality may be acceptable. Permutations are viewed as alternatives which the judge can vote for at the end of the round. The negative is given somewhat greater latitude in this paradigm, but they must still articulate alternatives.

6. The judge functions as a critic of argument. It is legitimate to set thresholds for acceptable argument in terms of formal proof requirements, but once that threshold has been crossed, pretty much all

perspectives should be open to argument.

7. Debate is approached from the standpoint of public policy and public philosophy. The perspective of public policy is distinct from the perspective of practical politics in that it focuses more on what should be done in the abstract (or over the long term) and less on the immediate politics of policy enactment. Thus, political disadvantages are at least somewhat suspect because they subordinate questions of what should be to questions of political expedience. Public philosophy is clearly a broader perspective than is practical politics, but it is still more limited than is embraced by many kritiks. Highly abstract questions of metaphysics, ontology, and epistemology have relatively little role in public philosophy per se; the emphasis there is much more on issues of moral and political theory.

As I noted earlier, debate theory has become ever more complex, and it can be daunting to those beginning its study. But the present range of theory beliefs, reflected in very different approaches to judging, is something that every practicing debater needs to confront. There are few more frustrating experiences in debate than to lose to a theory perspective that you don't understand. Understanding can at least reduce the frustration, and often it can avoid the loss.

COMMENTARY ON SPECIFIC THEORY BRIEFS

In this part of the introduction, I want to provide some of the background which will help in understanding the various theory briefs and how best to use them. I will not, for the most part, be recapitulating the arguments for and against the different theories--the briefs themselves do that--but rather will be trying to place them within the broader context of debate practice as it has developed over the past several decades.

TOPICALITY IMPACTS

There is pretty general agreement that topicality is a voting issue; although debaters are fond of arguing that topicality has no impact unless there is in round abuse, most judges continue to think that topicality is an absolute argument. But despite this degree of consensus, there is a great deal of disagreement about why topicality is a voting issue; that is, what is the nature and purpose of the resolution? Understanding the various voting issue rationales is therefore not important so much in terms of the impact of topicality itself as for the implications these various theories have for other arguments.

There are at least five major views concerning the role of the resolution. The first is that the resolution defines the jurisdiction of the judge. Based on the jurisdictional model, topicality will usually be at voting issue. (In fact, proponents of this view probably think that it is always a voting issue.) But

the jurisdictional view, based as it is on a strict policy making model, also provides grounds for saying topicality may not be a voting issue.

In the face of overwhelming impacts, it is arguable that a decision maker should stretch his or her jurisdiction. In effect, topicality becomes a kind of separation of powers disadvantage, in which the impact of unauthorized use of power can be balanced against the potential advantage of such action. Again, proponents of this view probably don't think of it this way, but it seems to follow from the model they suggest. A second implication of the jurisdictional view is that extra-topicality is illegitimate--the judge also lacks jurisdiction to do extra-topical things. And a third implication is that counterplans must be topical. If the resolution defines the judge's jurisdiction, then s/he would lack authority to adopt non-topical counterplans.

The second model states that the resolution exists to divide ground. In this view, topicality would probably always be a voting issue, extra-topicality would be illegitimate, and only non-topical counterplans would be acceptable.

A third model, grounded in the hypothesis testing paradigm, might suggest that the resolution is the central hypothesis being tested in the round. Given this, the affirmative would have to be topical and the negative would have to be non-topical. It might seem to follow that extra-topicality should be illegitimate, but in fact hypothesis testers typically accepted extra-topicality (at least in the form of intrinsicness arguments) as a way of demonstrating that disadvantages are not inherent in the resolution.

A fourth model claims that the sole purpose of the resolution is to provide prior notice. If prior notice has been met and if the negative is ready to debate a particular case, then topicality might not be a voting issue. Proponents of this view tend to favor extra-topicality and topical counterplans, perhaps because they generally prioritize policy issues over issues of germaneness.

The fifth model sees the purpose of topicality as the initiation of debates. In effect, the topic serves as a problem area, a kind of case list generator. By this logic, the affirmative must be topical (they must fall on the list), but the negative need not be non-topical. Since the resolution serves only as the starting point for the debate, extra-topicality is also probably legitimate in this view.

Given all of these argument interrelationships, it is important for the negative to select its topicality voting issue rationale carefully. I believe that the fifth model, based on the idea that the purpose of the topic is to initiate and direct discussion is the most strategic for the negative under most circumstances. The affirmative should also pay attention to the voting issue rationales offered, not

so much to deny that topicality is a voting issue as to use the negative standard in terms of other issues in the round.

The argument that topicality is a reverse voting issue is, in my opinion, a relatively weak one. But it is still heard occasionally. The arguments for and against the theory are pretty much self-explanatory.

TOPICALITY STANDARDS

Topicality standards relate both to the means and ends of topicality analysis. Most standards constitute arguments for why one definition is better than another. Limits, field context, grammar, effects, negative ground, and framers' intent are all standards of this sort. Other standards, notably better (or best) definition and reasonability, relate to the purposes of topicality analysis. The key question here is whether we are looking for the best interpretation of the topic or merely a reasonable one. The reasonability versus better or best debate flourished in the early to mid-1980s. Since then, this debate has been supplanted by a similar debate over the relative priority of debatability versus linguistic precision. Many, if not most, topicality debates come down in the end to a conflict between these two "metastandards."

All meaning is determined by context. The contexts which are most important for determining the meaning of a debate resolution are probably the grammatical or linguistic context of the resolution itself, the policy or field context of the literature surrounding the topic, and the practical context of the debate activity. It is fair to say that all of these contexts are important, but their relative importance in a particular round is clearly debatable.

The value of debating topicality standards varies with the situation. For some judges, the framework of standards established in the round is pivotal in determining topicality. Others have strong preconceptions on topicality which standards arguments are unlikely to dislodge. For them, it is better to focus almost exclusively on the definition offered. Definitions, and whether or not they are met, will of course be important to any judge.

EXTRA-TOPICALITY

A plan is non-topical if none of it falls under the resolution. A part of a plan is extra-topical if it is a non-topical element of an otherwise topical plan. With this understanding, the arguments for and against extra-topicality are not difficult to understand. Extra-topical planks can be a very powerful affirmative tool, as a mechanism for spiking disadvantages, and many judges do seem to find them acceptable as long as the affirmative doesn't claim them as a positive justification for voting affirmative. But enough judges dislike extra-topicality that the use of plan spikes is somewhat risky. At the very least, teams employing such planks need to be well prepared to argue that

the use of such arguments is not a voting issue against the affirmative.

JUSTIFICATION

A justification argument claims that while the plan is topical, each term of the resolution has not been justified. For example, on a federal topic in an area where the states also have authority, it might be argued that the affirmative does not justify federal action. On most circuits, justification arguments have been obsolete for many years, and I am certainly not advocating their revival. They are covered here mainly for the sake of completeness.

TOPICALITY OF COUNTERPLANS

The idea that counterplans can be topical began to be accepted in the early to mid-1980s, and today it is probably the majority view among college debate judges. I suspect that on much of the high school circuit, however, it is still highly controversial; thus, you should use this argument with some care. A slightly less radical version of this argument is the view that counterplans need only be reasonably non-topical. In front of conservative judges, this might be a more acceptable argument.

GENERAL THEORIES OF FIAT

Probably no issue in debate theory is more controversial than fiat. In a way this is odd because the most basic concept of fiat is not particularly controversial. Fiat is simply a shorthand expression for the view that we are debating about what should be, rather than what actually will come about. To say a plan is adopted by fiat is equivalent to saying that it should be done, that we imagine it put into place in order to evaluate its desirability.

Beyond this most basic notion, however, fiat theory becomes controversial. There are two basic conceptions of what happens when the judge votes affirmative. One is that the judge pretends to be an actual policy maker, voting for or against a policy. Within this perspective, there are two variations. One is that the judge acts as the institutional body in charge of adopting the plan. The other is that the judge acts as a single member of that body. In the first instance, the judge's decision guarantees adoption; in the second, the judge only lends his or her political weight to the passage of the plan. Though still discussed in some circles, I believe that this view of fiat as involving the judge actually modelling the behavior of real world decision makers is now somewhat outdated. (Thus, when kritikers offer their "fiat is utopian" argument, I believe that it is this strawman they are attacking.) The more contemporary view is that fiat is an act of endorsement. The judge, acting as a private citizen (or perhaps acting as a debate judge) simply endorses or rejects the desirability of the affirmative plan.

These basic theories of fiat may seem academic, but they do have significance for the specific theories of

affirmative and negative fiat which impact more directly on actual debate rounds.

AFFIRMATIVE FIAT ISSUES

Specific theories of fiat tend to fall on a continuum, based on the degree of realism with which they attempt to imbue the concept. It is commonly said that fiat assumes normal means. If this is taken seriously, then fiat probably assumes attitude change on the part of decision makers, and plan repeal probably becomes a legitimate argument. Other debate judges and theorists tend to reject this degree of realism based on debatability considerations. Realism considerations may also influence one's views on whether the affirmative can advocate the adoption of its plan at some point in the future, but this theory issue is also influenced by the overall view of fiat that one holds. If the judge is trying to literally model policy maker behavior, then delayed fiat is probably illegitimate, but if fiat is simply seen as intellectual endorsement, then delay is probably legitimate--we can intellectually endorse the plan being done at some point in the future.

The agent specification issue implicates both of these broader questions. Fiat realists tend to prefer agents to be specified, and strict policy making modelers would also seem logically committed to specification. (It is hard to model the behavior of a policy maker if one doesn't know what institutional role one is pretending to occupy.) Believers in the "magic wand" theory of fiat, in contrast, as well as believers in fiat as endorsement, may think non-specification is acceptable. A third issue is also at play here--one's attitude towards plan-inclusive counterplans. A major reason for not specifying an agent is to prevent the negative from counterplanning with a different agent. Absent affirmative specification, such a counterplan will probably not be competitive, but if the affirmative does specify, the counterplan may well compete.

All of these issues of affirmative fiat remain controversial, and they tend to arise in a number of contexts. A good grip on this difficult area of theory is therefore important.

NEGATIVE FIAT ISSUES

While affirmative fiat has its controversies, these pale in comparison to the disputes surrounding negative fiat. For the affirmative, the resolution provides at least some check on the scope of what the affirmative can fiat. But the negative isn't bound by the resolution, making negative fiat potentially limitless. Indeed, a common metaphor for fiat was once that fiat involves plan adoption "by act of God." If one took this metaphor seriously, one might imagine the plan being accomplished a kind of metaphysical fiat, where we reinvent the laws of nature. This is obviously an absurdity, but it does illustrate why negative fiat needs to have at least some limits. And even if one didn't think that fiat

could extend to changing the laws of nature, fiat could extend to individuals. We could imagine, for example, that all criminals have been persuaded to forsake their evil ways. Again, this seems absurdly utopian, and indeed I know of no one who would actually advocate fiat in this form. There is a consensus, I think, that fiat, at minimum, is limited to institutions. But beyond that minimum standard, there is really no agreement on how far negative fiat actually goes.

One slightly more restrictive standard would argue that fiat should be limited to public actors. This would rule out fiat through unions, corporations, or non-governmental organizations. An alternative standard would limit fiat to domestic American institutions, either public or private. A third standard, combining the two, would limit fiat to domestic, public actors.

The any public actor standard would allow the negative to fiat through foreign governments. If there are no limits on foreign fiat, this seems to play havoc with American foreign policy topics. If the negative can fiat that China will simply reform itself, the debate over U.S. China policy becomes fairly useless. To try to check this problem, the subject/object standard of negative fiat has been proposed. In this view, fiat can't extend to the object of the resolution (for example, China) because this would be question begging. (One shouldn't simply imagine away the root source of the resolution's harm issues.) But alternative subjects, that is, other nations not specified by the resolution, would be permitted as alternative agents for purposes of counterplan.

One argument against this view, is that the topic assumes that the debate at hand is occurring in the context of American public policy. If this is the case, then foreign fiat, even if limited by the subject/object restriction, is probably not legitimate. It might, however, still be the case that counterplans involving international organizations with U.S. membership are legitimate. The argument can be made that such organizations fall within the realm of discourse surrounding American public policy.

Another way to limit fiat is to impose a requirement of procedural plausibility on the negative. By this standard, fiat should not be allowed if it violates the institutional nature of the agent being employed. Thus, arguably it is impermissible to fiat that corporations act against the profit motive, that nation states act against their national sovereignty, or perhaps that all fifty states act simultaneously in an identical way.

Still another standard states that fiat should be limited to counterplans advocated in the topic's policy literature. This field context standard can either stand alone or it can act in combination with other standards. Toward the more restrictive end of

the fiat scale, some people argue that fiat should be limited to a single actor. Again, the plausibility of this standard seems to depend in part on whether one is employing a policy modelling or intellectual endorsement meta-theory of what fiat is. The judge as decision maker would probably have to be confined to a single institutional role, but in the fiat as endorsement view, it is easy to imagine multiple decision makers changing their behavior.

An even more restrictive standard is that fiat should be limited to the agent specified in the resolution. Again, this seems to make sense from the policy maker modelling view of fiat, but it would not be required by those viewing fiat as endorsement.

Dallas Perkins has argued for what he calls the "realm of discourse" standard. He means by this that the negative should be able to only counterplan with policies which are at least as politically realistic as the affirmative plan.

The most restrictive view of negative fiat is that there should be no negative fiat at all. Most judges, I think, ultimately reject this view, but it is still an argument which is made with some frequency. Perhaps an even more radical suggestion has been made by David Cheshier. His proposal is that neither side should have fiat. For both plan and counterplan, net benefits (advantages minus disadvantages) would be multiplied times probability of adoption, and the final comparison would be the two products of these calculations.

As complex as these issues are, there is a fairly strong competitive incentive to master these arguments. Many counterplans are difficult to defeat except in terms of fiat abuse, and from a negative standpoint, teams which can successfully defend liberal concepts of fiat are given many more strategic options. It is therefore important to be able to make arguments for and against most if not all of these positions. Strategically, the negative will probably want to defend the most restrictive view of fiat which still allows them to run their desired counterplan. The affirmative, on the other hand, will want to defend, in most rounds, the most liberal standard of fiat which still excludes the counterplan. At the very least, the affirmative should be prepared to defend one or two of the more restrictive standards, such as realm of discourse or resolutorial agent. These perspectives exclude many of the more difficult counterplans on most topics.

AFFIRMATIVE CONDITIONALITY

Conditional arguments take the form of an if-then statement. If one condition holds, then one thing will occur. If the condition does not hold, then something else will result. Arguments of this type are made all the time in debate. For example, the negative might argue that there is no solvency, but that if there is solvency, then a disadvantage will occur. To repeat: such arguments are common and

not very controversial. In contrast, conditional policy positions are very controversial. Those who oppose conditionality in all forms would insist that each team defend and advocate only one policy. In recent years, the tendency has been to increasingly reject conditionality, especially on the part of the affirmative. Probably the most common form of affirmative conditionality still widely employed today occurs when affirmatives offer both their plan and one or more permutations as policy options. The legitimacy of this particular approach is discussed under permutations.

Affirmative conditionality has appeared in at least three other forms. The first is alternative justification. In an alternative justification case, the affirmative presents two or more plans. Each is said to be an example of the resolution, and the argument is that if any of its plans is proven to be a good idea, the resolution is justified. A second form of affirmative conditionality is plan severance.

What the affirmative claims here is that it can choose to drop certain parts of its plan if they prove disadvantageous, as long as they are defending a topical example of the resolution at the end of the round. Severance, initiated by the affirmative, and based on desirability should be distinguished from the excising from plans of planks which the negative has argued are extra-topical. In this latter case, the plan element falls from the round based on considerations of germaneness not of desirability and the affirmative doesn't initiate the severance--it comes about as the result of conceding a negative argument.

The third form of affirmative conditionality is intrinsicness. A disadvantage is said not to be intrinsic if there is a possible minor repair (either topical or non-topical) to the plan which can prevent the disadvantage from occurring. An intrinsicness argument is essentially a conditional plan addition, intended to solve a particular disadvantage. Of these three forms of conditionality, intrinsicness is probably the most common and the most defensible. Nonetheless, most judges seem to reject even intrinsicness arguments, and they should certainly be used, if at all, with considerable caution.

NEGATIVE CONDITIONALITY

Negative conditionality has been one of the longest raging theory controversies in policy debate. This is probably because this issue so directly implicates two major paradigmatic controversies. The first of these is plan focus versus resolutorial focus, one of the basic distinctions between the policy making and hypothesis testing paradigms. (Plan focus implies the rejection of at least affirmative conditionality; resolutorial focus permits it.) The second paradigmatic controversy at work here involves a split between policy advocacy and policy analysis. Those who see debate almost totally in

advocacy terms tend to reject conditionally in all of its forms. Those who think that sound policy analysis is more important than consistent advocacy may be more lenient toward conditionality, at least by the negative.

There is a middle ground in the conditionality debate, although relatively few of the real partisans on the issue may find it an appealing one. In this view, each team is permitted to advance one proposal for change. The judge can then vote for either one of the two proposals for change or for any logical permutation of the two. This means that the judge can vote to do the plan alone, the counterplan alone, both plan and counterplan, the plan and some part of the counterplan, or neither the plan nor the counterplan (that is, the present system). This option of retaining the status quo is sometimes referred to as "dispositionality." In this sense, a counterplan is dispositional if it is the one negative proposal for change but if the status quo is still said to be an available alternative at the end of the round. Unfortunately, the term "dispositional" is highly ambiguous. Some people use the term to refer to a counterplan which can be dropped from the round only if it is not straight turned by the affirmative. (That is, it can drop out of the round based on non-competitiveness or some other theory objection, but not simply because it is undesirable.)

The ambiguity here stems from the fact that both of these options, dropping the counterplan out of the round or sticking the negative with it, are alternative dispositions of an undesirable counterplan. Thus, I recommend avoiding the term "dispositionality." Rather, I think that the negative and affirmative teams should make arguments about the disposition of the counterplan. The negative, for example, might make a disposition underview to its counterplan in the INC, such as: "if both plan and counterplan are undesirable, the judge always retains the option of retaining the present system. This negative permutation of doing neither is reciprocal to the affirmative permutation of doing both." And in the 2AC, the affirmative might make an alternative argument about disposition, perhaps to the effect that if the negative loses the counterplan, they lose, because they can only advocate one position.

BASIC COMPETITIVENESS

I had believed, prior to the spring of 1996 that if there was one area of debate theory which had been settled, it was basic competitiveness. The plan: plan controversy, which will be discussed below, has disrupted this theoretical calm. Still, among mainstream debate theorists and almost all college oriented debate judges basic competition theory remains settled. The consensus view is that net benefits is the ultimate standard for evaluating the competitiveness of counterplans. That is, to be competitive it must be better to do the counterplan alone than to do the plan plus all or part of the

counterplan. If a counterplan is mutually exclusive with a plan and if the counterplan has a greater sum of advantages over disadvantages, then it is clearly competitive by the net benefits test. More commonly, the counterplan will not be mutually exclusive with the plan, but the counterplan will be able to solve some of the harms that the affirmative is claiming as advantages. In this situation, the negative will argue that any advantage the plan has above and beyond the counterplan is outweighed by disadvantages unique to the affirmative (that is, disadvantages which don't apply to the counterplan as well).

Other standards of counterplan competitiveness, such as philosophical or resolutorial competitiveness, are now generally rejected. One minor area of controversy still surrounds the concept of redundancy. It is relatively rare that a counterplan can credibly claim to solve all of the affirmative advantage, but occasionally this may prove to be the case. If so, then the debate becomes an apparent tie, meaning that teams need to make arguments about the location of presumption, since presumption is forced to serve here as the ultimate tie breaker.

PERMUTATIONS

In debate, a permutation is a policy which recombines the various policies proposed by the affirmative and negative teams. Permutations, which developed in the mid-1980s have proved an invaluable means of evaluating the competitiveness of counterplans, and I know of no mainstream debate theorist who would reject the use of permutations entirely.

There are, however, a number of different kinds of permutations, and this confuses the debate over their legitimacy. In what is probably the most common definition, it is said that a legitimate permutation combines all of the plan with all or part of the counterplan. Based on this definition, three kinds of permutation are legitimate. The first is the traditional, "do both" permutation. (Some people, in fact, don't even consider this a permutation, but it would be by the above definition.) Second is the mechanical permutation. This is a permutation which combines the plan with one or more structural components of the counterplan. For example, a counterplan which banned the affirmative and then fed the world could be permuted by doing the plan and the part of the counterplan which gave food aid. A third permutation is the "logical" permutation. In this case, the plan is combined not with a structural element of the counterplan but with a conceptual sub-component. Logical permutations first developed in 1984 on the college space topic. Against affirmative plans to increase the exploration or development of space in a certain way, the negative would counterplan by banning all space exploration and development. This

counterplan had no physical component which the affirmative could capture, but it ultimately proved susceptible to a permutation which argued to do the plan and to ban all other space exploration and development.

These three types of permutation enjoy almost universal acceptance. In contrast, two other forms of permutation, though often encountered, are usually rejected on theoretical grounds. The first of these is the intrinsicness permutation. In this case, the affirmative argues to do its plan and something else not found in either plan or counterplan in order to capture the counterplan's net benefit. In effect, the permutation serves as an intrinsicness argument, and most judges who reject intrinsicness arguments against disadvantages also reject them here. Even more dubious theoretically is the "severance" permutation. Here the permutation eliminates one of more elements from the plan in order to avoid linking to a disadvantage. Again, since most judges reject plan severance, the severance permutation is generally rejected.

A final form of permutation is the time frame permutation. This basically argues that the optimal policy is to do either the plan and then the counterplan or to do the counterplan and then the plan. The legitimacy of this practice depends in part about what one believes with regard to whether or not fiat is time bound. Also, it is arguable that at least one form of the time frame permutation is either a severance or intrinsicness permutation. Alternatively, the time frame permutation might be seen as a logical permutation, temporally recombining plan and counterplan. At any rate, the time frame permutation is probably not a separate form of permutation, but rather a specific case of one or more of the other types.

The types and legitimacy of permutations are not vastly controversial. The real controversy surrounds the disposition of permutations. There are three basic alternatives here. The first is that the permutation is just a test of competitiveness, in which case it is not a policy option available to a judge at the end of the round. A second option is that the permutation becomes the affirmative plan. In that case the judge in voting affirmative can vote only for the permutation. The third option is that the judge can vote affirmative either for the initial plan or for the permutation. At root, the controversy over the disposition of permutations hinges on questions of conditionality. Some judges dislike the third option because they see it as a form of conditional argument. (On the other hand, it is certainly a form of logical conditionality often encountered in the real world.) Options one and two are mainly intended to avoid the affirmative being conditional, but it is not clear that either succeeds. Letting the affirmative shift its advocacy from plan to permutation does still change the affirmative plan, and the idea of using permutations as tests seems

even more conditional. (After all, the core concern of hypothesis testing, the paradigm most committed to conditionality, was with testing arguments.) Perhaps the moral of all of this is that counterplans by their nature require the affirmative to be somewhat conditional--at least if they are going to argue competitiveness.

PLAN-INCLUSIVENESS

The newest major controversy surrounding counterplans relates to their plan-inclusiveness. A counterplan is said to be plan-inclusive if it incorporates some element of the affirmative plan. Actually, plan-inclusive counterplans have a fairly long history. One form they take is the exclusion or exception counterplan. This counterplan appears on topics which include terms like "all." For example, on the resolution calling for stricter academic standards in all elementary and secondary schools, an exception counterplan was to do the plan in only some schools, for example, by exempting the Amish from compliance with the plan. Exception counterplans were not that controversial theoretically as long as they were non-topical. But with the widespread acceptance of the topical counterplan, teams began to be both topical and plan-inclusive. For example, if the affirmative plan called for Congress to adopt and the President to sign a given bill, a counterplan might call for the exact same bill to be passed over Presidential veto.

The arguments for and against plan-inclusiveness are fairly straightforward. Again, one's opinion about this theory is likely to be influenced by more basic paradigmatic concepts. Theorists holding a strong advocacy view of debate tend to oppose plan-inclusiveness because they don't think the negative should be able to advocate part of what the affirmative advocated. Those who stress policy analysis on the other hand, are likely to find plan-inclusiveness acceptable because it is an effective tool for discovering whether or not the plan is the best policy.

It is also worth noting that there is some controversy over just what plan-inclusiveness is. On one extreme, it might be argued that a counterplan is plan-inclusive if it incorporates either the plan's agent or one or more of its mandates. A second view is that plan-inclusiveness relates only to mandates; that is, a counterplan is plan-inclusive only if it annexes one or more of the plan's mandates. (Perhaps a better term for this position would be mandate-inclusiveness.) A third view is that a counterplan is inclusive if it incorporates both the affirmative's agent and one or more of its mandates.

It may also be possible to set standards for plan-inclusiveness. One standard is that plan-inclusiveness is acceptable only if the counterplan is non-topical. A second standard is that plan-inclusiveness is acceptable only if the

counterplan incorporates an explicit structural element of the plan. That is, the counterplan can't carve out conceptual categories in the plan which are not part of the affirmative's plan structure. A third standard might be that plan-inclusiveness is unacceptable if the counterplan could be regarded as a friendly amendment to the plan. If it is so close to the plan that the plan's proponents could easily accept the counterplan as a minor change within the spirit of the original proposal, then arguably the counterplan doesn't provide substantive enough clash to be worth debating. Alternatively, if the counterplan couldn't be construed as friendly, then it is arguably different enough to generate a substantive debate.

PRESUMPTION

Issues of counterplan presumption are now rarely debated, but I believe that this is a mistake. More often than debaters realize, agent or plan-inclusive counterplans do end up as ties. In this case, the team that can claim presumption will win, and it is better to make explicit arguments about this than to leave it up to the judge.

PLACEMENT

The question of whether second negative counterplans are legitimate is another minor theory controversy which can still have an important impact on rounds. Most judges seem to accept 2NC counterplans, but there is at least a decent argument that they undermine depth of discussion and should therefore be disallowed.

TEXTUALITY

Another small controversy concerns whether counterplans and permutations need to be written down. At minimum, it is a good idea to ask your opponents for the explicit wording of their counterplan or permutation if they haven't written it out.

THE STUDY COUNTERPLAN

State counterplans were argued in the early 1970s, but the study counterplan was the second major generic counterplan, appearing around 1975. Its concept is simple enough. The negative argues that there is not enough data to adequately resolve the desirability of the plan. Thus, a decision should be deferred and the plan should be further studied. This counterplan is no longer very popular, but the concept of rethinking as advanced by kritik proponents is a very close parallel.

SIGNIFICANCE

The prevailing standard of significance is that any comparative advantage is a sufficient reason to vote affirmative given no disadvantage. It is arguable, however, that some advantages are too trivial to talk about--that even if there is no DA risk the plan should be rejected as unworthy of debate. This is a difficult argument to sustain, but it may occasionally be worth making.

INHERENCY

Inherency has always been an odd issue. Hypothesis testing treated inherency as a prerequisite to solvency--if you didn't know the cause of the problem, you couldn't know if you had solved it. Policy making tended to assimilate inherency to harm; a harm was said to be inherent to the degree to which it could be predicted to continue. In contemporary debate, inherency usually collapses into topicality. To be inherent, a plan must simply be different from the status quo, something which resolutions almost always require. Thus, today, inherency is rarely argued as an independent voting issue. Occasionally, however, such arguments do arise and the accompanying blocks should be helpful in that situation.

SOLVENCY

Solvency raises no great theoretical issues, but a common controversy surrounds whether a given solvency argument is absolute. The blocks included here address that issue.

RISK ANALYSIS

This concept has been one of the most powerful shapers of debate practice over the past three decades. The standard risk analysis formula is that the net impact of an argument should be found by multiplying its potential impact times its probability of occurring. It is based on such calculations that large impact, low probability arguments rose to prominence in debate. Current debate has begun to move away from this emphasis on the world-ending, and explicit risk analysis is less widely used than it once was. This may make these arguments more rather than less useful. Since judges are less likely to enter debates with fixed standards for risk analysis, it is important for debaters to provide such standards. Not all judges listen very much to weighing arguments, but many do, and teams able to employ them well have a significant edge.

PRESUMPTION

The exact weight and location of presumption is rarely worth arguing except in a counterplan round. Still, even in contemporary debate, presumption arguments may occasionally come in handy. The traditional view, held by most stock issues and policy making judges, was that presumption was against the risk of change. The hypothesis testing view, on the other hand, was that presumption was against the resolution. The resolution was the hypothesis being tested, and there was a danger associated with committing oneself to an untrue hypothesis.

Interestingly enough, proponents of the kritik, though they may not use the term presumption, seem to have pretty much adopted the old hypothesis testing view of the matter. Their view seems to be that there is a considerable risk associated with committing oneself to a potentially

untrue assumption. According to this perspective if a plan is based on a dubious assumption, it should be rejected.

I believe that there is still another view of presumption that merits consideration, although it has rarely been articulated. Just as resolutional focus justified a presumption against the resolution, I believe that plan focus justifies a presumption against the plan. For the judge to commit his or herself to the plan at the end of the round, the plan should have some comparative advantage over the negative alternative(s).

COUNTERWARRANTS

The proponents of counterwarrants believed that the judge votes for or against the resolution at the end of the round. Plans simply offer examples of the resolution which the judge evaluates in order to determine the overall validity of the resolution. By this logic, to vote affirmative on the basis of one example was to commit a hasty generalization. One policy couldn't provide a basis for reliable induction.

Counterwarrants are counter-examples of topical plans that are undesirable. To prove a counterwarrant, the negative offers a topical plan and then proceeds to argue that it is a bad idea. Affirmative warrants for the resolution are then weighed against negative counterwarrants in order to decide the debate.

Counterwarrants were never very popular and today they are virtually forgotten. I feel, however, that it was worthwhile to carry an answer block just in case one ever encounters this rare bird.

PUNISHMENT

The so-called "punishment paradigm" developed in the mid-1980s. It argued that certain theories and practices of debaters were so abusive that they should be automatically rewarded with a loss. Formal punishment arguments are now rarely heard in debate, but informal punishment arguments are heard all the time. It is therefore important to be able to recognize and answer punishment claims. Two common forms in which punishment arguments currently appear are time distortion claims and discursive impacts to kritiks.

PLAN: PLAN

A theory of recent vintage claims that the debate should be over whose plan is better, the affirmative's or the negative's, regardless of competitiveness. In the traditional view, the focus of debate is the affirmative plan, and the negative must provide a reason to reject the plan. Any counter-proposal that the negative advances must therefore compete; that is, it must provide a reason to reject the affirmative plan. The plan: plan proponents reject this view, arguing that if the negative can provide a better example of the

resolution, they should win.

This theory does not enjoy very widespread support, and I would discourage teams from attempting to use it. But it has been featured prominently on the various debate list serves, so you need to be prepared to debate against it.

NARRATIVE

The narrative was first run on the college criminal procedure topic and it has enjoyed a modest degree of popularity. Narrative is a radically different form of debate argument. Instead of presenting explicit reasons for a particular plan, teams using the narrative read stories, often fictional, to support the general concept of the resolution. (Narratives can also be used on the negative, though their affirmative use has been more prominent.) Usually no plan is presented. The use of this kind of narrative has been prominent in critical race theory and in some strands of feminism. It is said to be especially effective in empowering previously marginalized groups.

Narratives still remain rare, but they are popular enough that teams should at least be prepared to debate against them.

KRITIKS

Kritiks are usually said to be arguments attacking an underlying premise or assumption of an opponent's analysis. Often the impact of the kritik is either linguistic or discursive. That is, the misuse of language in some form is said to justify a ballot. There are various forms of kritiks. Some focus on language. Some focus on abstract philosophical issues (kritiks of thinking). Others focus on questions of moral and political philosophy (kritiks of value).

Kritiks are the most controversial theoretical issue in contemporary policy debate; they have many strong supporters and many fervent opponents. For a fuller understanding of kritiks, I strongly recommend that you consult *THE ANTI-KRITIK HANDBOOK*, as well as essays advocating the kritik by Bill Shanahan, Jon Brody, and Brian Lain.

HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

In this volume, I have attempted to produce a relatively thorough summary of the arguments for and against the major theory issues in contemporary policy debate. This book is intended to be both a set of briefs and a reference work on debate theory. In order to accomplish both of these goals, I have had to balance several different values. On one hand, the attempt has been made to produce briefs which could be read pretty much verbatim in actual debate rounds. This required that arguments be stated in a relatively short form. For individuals with limited theory backgrounds, therefore, not every argument in this book will make sense; the brief may assume

a level of background knowledge beyond what the individual debater possesses. For the most part, however, these briefs should be understandable by most debaters with at least some experience and exposure to theory. Balanced against the value of brevity were the values of clear explanation and thoroughness.

For the most part, these blocks are longer than would ordinarily be read in a debate round. They include both more arguments and more thoroughly explained arguments than is usually the case. Debaters, of course, more often than not, underexplain their arguments, especially theory arguments. I am not arguing in favor of theory blips. Nonetheless, to be optimally effective, these briefs do need adaptation before they are used in debates.

In adapting these briefs for actual use, there are several things which should be noted. First, the briefs include both offensive and defensive arguments. Offensive arguments are, in this context, those arguments that speak positively in favor of a given theory. Defensive arguments are those that respond to the criticisms of that theory. For the most part, the defensive arguments need not be made unless the argument to which they are intended to respond has been advanced.

Second, there are at least two ways in which these briefs can be shortened. One way is to underline or highlight the part of the brief which is actually to be read.

A second, probably better approach, is to take these arguments and rewrite them in your own words. Arguments presented in one's own language are easier to read and often more persuasive. Also, in the process of rewriting the blocks, you are likely to come to better understand the argument. You need to understand and be able to explain theory arguments, not simply parrot someone else's ideas.

This said, I believe that it would be useful to carry the blocks this book contains to all your debate rounds. Some of the arguments in the book are rarely made, and these briefs can serve as a kind of life preserver on the rare occasion when they do occur.

I also believe that the book can be used fruitfully as a kind of textbook on theory. If you read the book straight through, many of the different briefs will cast light on one another. Thus, some arguments which may not be totally clear standing in isolation should make a good deal more sense in the context of the total volume.

In many cases arguments found on one block will help to support other positions. Where this was the case, I have employed several different strategies. Certain core questions--such as advocacy and sound policy analysis, plan and resolutional focus--occur

over and over in debate theory. It seemed much too redundant to repeat thoroughly the analysis of such issues whenever they appeared. In some cases, I have made explicit cross-references from one block to another. In other instances, I have repeated arguments, often in a somewhat briefer form. To find the full explanation, you would therefore need to see another block. For example, the arguments about advocacy are most thoroughly developed in the briefs involving conditional counterplans, but these same arguments apply to all forms of conditionality, affirmative or negative. Finally, sometimes I have not mentioned arguments which it seemed obvious could be cross-applied from one brief to another. Again, viewing the book as a total reference tool, rather than using each block in isolation, will maximize its utility.

Not every brief in this book makes an argument which I would recommend advancing in a debate round. Justification arguments, for example, have been abandoned on most policy debate circuits for some time, and it is far from my intention to revive them. This book contains a good deal of what I consider to be bad theory. The rationale for including these blocks is that it is often easier to understand the answers if they can be seen in opposition to the position they are intended to address. Theory arguments are not risk free, and to make many of these arguments (at least to initiate them) at the least is likely to waste speech time and may get you into even worse trouble. Having a good sense of what kinds of arguments your judges will listen to is an important skill in theory as well as in substantive debate.

In some cases, I have included a brief supporting only one side of an argument. When this is the case, it is usually because I felt that the issue was pretty one sided--or at least that I wasn't the person to make an effective case for the other viewpoint. This is particularly so in the case of kritiks. As another of my publications, *THE ANTI-KRITIK HANDBOOK* reveals, I am not a fan of this form of argument. I have listed here some arguments in favor of the kritik, but I have made no attempt to flesh out the full case in its favor. The kritik has a number of articulate proponents who can doubtless do this better than I can. Still, even those who want to run kritiks will find at least some intellectual ammunition here. (Kritiks involve an extremely complex body of theory. *THE ANTI-KRITIK HANDBOOK* provides an extensive discussion of these issues. Reading its introduction will make these arguments far more meaningful. *THE ANTI-KRITIK HANDBOOK* also contains a great deal of evidence which further explains and supports these positions.)

Theory arguments can be powerful weapons in debate, but as with all weapons, unless they are properly used, they can also do damage to their wielders. There is no substitute for a good general

understanding, of theory as well as any other debate argument. Still, for those who are proficient users of theory, this book should be able to provide a sword. For those less proficient, it can provide at least a shield. And for both sets of debaters, as well as those who fall in between, it hopefully can provide a deeper and more sophisticated understanding of the range of theory arguments.

INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND EDITION

Over the past four years, the major theoretical developments have been predominantly in the area of kritiks. In order to reflect this trend, the new edition of this volume focuses heavily on an expanded set of blocks for debating kritiks on both sides of the topic. In particular, I have concentrated on arguments relating to the impact of kritiks. Kritiks function in a wide variety of ways in different rounds, and identifying how the kritik is functioning in a particular debate is critical in terms of debating it effectively. I have therefore tried to isolate all of the different impacts which kritiks sometimes claim and to offer arguments for and against those impacts. These range from kritiks which function as harm or solvency arguments to kritiks which offer alternative performances or focus on out of round activist strategies. Good kritik debaters will almost always be able to offer some kind of link to the affirmative. Thus, being able to effectively counter the impact of the kritik -- to explain why it is not a voting issue -- remains crucial for affirmative debaters.

It has become increasingly clear with time that kritiks offer and operate within an alternative paradigm of debate. (A paradigm is a basic model or philosophy. Debate theory has been traditionally conceptualized in terms of paradigms -- stock issues, policy making, hypothesis testing, and so on. Today, paradigms in debate are discussed much less explicitly than they once were, but arguments about the basic nature of the activity remain at least implicitly paradigmatic.) Two especially dramatic and innovative forms of critical argument have emerged in the past year. One, based on ideas formulated by Gordon Mitchell, has suggested that debates should focus on strategies for political activism. Jarius Grove and Kirk Evans of the University of Texas argued with considerable success that debates should be about how to effectively implement activist strategies for change rather than exclusively about the desirability of policies. The best discussion of debate as a forum for activism remains Mitchell's article in ARGUMENTATION AND ADVOCACY (based on an earlier piece in THE DEBATERS RESEARCH GUIDE), although it should be noted that Mitchell is mainly concerned with arguing that debaters should engage in real world activism outside, rather than within, debate rounds.

Perhaps the other most striking development in kritik debate involves the notion that debate should be viewed as a performance. One article frequently cited in support of this view is by political scientist Jessica Kulynych in the Winter 1997 issue of POLITY. "Performativity" is also discussed by the feminist philosopher Judith Butler in a variety of places. The notion of debate as performance (like the notion of gaming before it) has been somewhat bastardized in some debates. Kulynych does defend the use of non-rational appeals (wit, sarcasm, emotion, etc.) in political argument, and she does defend a broadened notion of the idea of politics itself. But she is still articulating a notion of political action and argument. Debate does not, even in this view, become interpretative dance (unless at least interpretative dance functions as a political statement relevant to the issues at hand.) Even in these newest "paradigms" our debates remain forums for political argument.

Another significant theoretical innovation of the past several years is the emergence of a new theory of negative fiat. This theory, developed by Michael Korcok, argues that counterplans should be understood in terms of opportunity costs. An opportunity cost is the cost of an option foregone. For example, if I spend \$100 on something, the opportunity costs of that expenditure are all of the other things that I could have done with that money. The 1999 issue of CONTEMPORARY ARGUMENTATION AND DEBATE contains a symposium on Korcok's theory.

In addition to a significantly expanded kritik section and coverage of Korcok's new opportunity cost theory, I have made a variety of smaller revisions in this volume. These include new blocks addressing Nicholas Rescher's argument that very low probabilities should be treated as effectively zero. Theoretical argument remains one of the staples of academic debate. This new edition of THOROUGHbred THEORY BLOCKS should aid you in winning your theory arguments.

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TOPICALITY IS A VOTING ISSUE

1. A BINDING TOPIC IS NEEDED TO LIMIT AND DIRECT DISCUSSION.
 - A. Issue diversity concerns justify a binding topic. A new topic is selected each year in order that different issues be debated. If notice were the only concern, the same case could be run year after year, reducing the breadth of education associated with changing subject matter.
 - B. Fairness concerns justify a binding topic. Topics are selected to be evenly balanced. If the affirmative could run anything, they could pick cases too one-sided for good debate.
 - C. Timeliness and importance concerns justify a binding topic. The topic is selected to deal with a timely and important set of issues. If topicality isn't a voting issue, there's no guarantee the affirmative will select a timely and important case.
2. A BINDING TOPIC IS NEEDED TO FAIRLY DIVIDE GROUND.
 - A. The topic is written to provide balance between the affirmative and the negative. Letting the affirmative go beyond the topic upsets that balance.
 - B. The division of ground model best resolves other theory issues. It clearly disallows extra-topical planks, topical counterplans, and designates which plan inclusive counterplans are permissible.
3. THE TOPIC DEFINES THE JUDGE'S JURISDICTION; S/HE HAS NO AUTHORITY TO GO BEYOND THE TOPIC.
 - A. Jurisdiction is the closest analogue between debate and real world decision-making.
 - B. Debate tradition supports the jurisdictional model.
4. THE TOPIC IS THE CENTRAL HYPOTHESIS BEING DEBATED IN THE ROUND.

Plans are just arguments by example for the resolution's truth, so if the plan isn't topical, it isn't an argument for the resolution.
5. TOPICALITY IS A TRADITIONAL RULE OF THE GAME.

A rules orientation toward debate theory is desirable because it minimizes argument over theory and focuses attention on substantive issues.
6. SOCIAL CONTRACT CONSIDERATIONS JUSTIFY A BINDING TOPIC.

The tournament invitation specified the national resolution as the topic for debate. The negative team came prepared only to debate that topic, and the affirmative implicitly agreed to do so when they entered the tournament.

TOPICALITY NEED NOT BE A VOTING ISSUE

1. PRIOR NOTICE IS THE ONLY PURPOSE OF TOPICALITY.

If the negative had prior notice, the case is debatable, and topicality becomes irrelevant.

2. ABUSE IS THE BEST STANDARD FOR EVALUATING TOPICALITY.

If the negative has adequate ground, then no abuse has occurred, and topicality should have no impact.

3. THE TOPIC ISN'T NEEDED TO DIVIDE GROUND.

The affirmative plan can divide ground just as well. Once the affirmative picks its ground, then negative ground is any competitive alternative.

4. THE DIVISION OF GROUND MODEL IS INFERIOR.

By disallowing extra-topical planks and topical counterplans, it makes it less likely that the best policy will be found.

5. JURISDICTIONAL CONCERNS DON'T MAKE TOPICALITY A VOTING ISSUE.

A. The case impact means that the judge should interpret his or her jurisdiction liberally. A world ending impact clearly outweighs one violation of separation of powers.

B. The jurisdictional model is ill-suited to debate. In debate, topicality mainly serves a fairness function. There's no reason here to mimic the specific procedures of actual policy making.

C. The jurisdictional view undermines negative ground. It would mean that the judge could never vote for a non-topical counterplan because s/he would lack authority to do so.

6. THE PLAN, NOT THE RESOLUTION, SHOULD BE THE FOCUS OF DEBATE.

A. Debate resolutions are too broad and ambiguous to debate as wholes.

B. By convention, the topic serves merely as a problem area generating a case list.

C. Resolitional focus encourages theories such as counter-warrants and alternative justification which undermine debate by destroying clash.

7. THE RULES APPROACH TO TOPICALITY SHOULD BE REJECTED.

A. It's arbitrary. There is no rule book. Debate theorists disagree over all kinds of issues.

B. It's anti-intellectual. Basic assumptions should be challenged. The appeal to rules is an authoritarian ploy for chilling innovation.

8. THE SOCIAL CONTRACT APPROACH TO TOPICALITY IS FLAWED.

A. There is no contract. Invitations to tournaments are a meaningless convention.

B. At best it's a forced contract. It's not truly a voluntary choice to debate the topic if your only other option is not to debate.

C. Debate conventions make everything arguable. The real social contract the debate community has formed is that everything is debatable--including whether topicality is a voting issue.

9. UNCLEAR OR UNDERDEVELOPED TOPICALITY ARGUMENTS SHOULD NOT BE VOTING ISSUES.

Since the risk of topicality is only against the affirmative, they should enjoy heavy presumption on the issue. This means there should be a high burden of negative clarity and explanation. If the argument is unclear initially, the affirmative should have maximum latitude in later speeches.

TOPICALITY SHOULD BE A REVERSE VOTING ISSUE

1. TO EQUALIZE ARGUMENTATIVE RISK.

Since topicality is fatal for the affirmative, it should be for the negative too.

2. TO DISCOURAGE TIME WASTER TOPICALITY ARGUMENTS.

If the negative isn't at risk, time wasting topicality arguments are encouraged. This distorts time allocation and impairs quality of discussion.

3. TOPICALITY IS A SINGULAR ISSUE.

A court would not consider a jurisdictional challenge in the same hearing as the substantive issues.

TOPICALITY SHOULD NOT BE A REVERSE VOTING ISSUE

1. THE LOGIC OF POLICY DISCOURSE OPPOSES THIS THEORY.

The fact that the plan is determined to be germane doesn't make it a good idea. The rejection of a jurisdictional challenge doesn't lead to automatic endorsement of a policy.

2. THE LOGIC OF HYPOTHESIS TESTING OPPOSES THIS THEORY.

The determination that the plan is an example of the resolution doesn't prove that the resolution is true.

3. THE LOGIC OF STOCK ISSUES ANALYSIS OPPOSES THIS THEORY.

Topicality is simply one stock issue which the affirmative must establish. They still need to win the rest.

4. NOT ALL ARGUMENTS NEED TO ENTAIL EQUAL RISK.

Most negative case arguments against inherency, harm, or solvency can't be turned.

5. THE ONE-WAY IMPACT OF TOPICALITY IS JUST A PARTIAL OFFSET TO THE OVERALL AFFIRMATIVE SIDE ADVANTAGE.

6. THIS THEORY ASSUMES PUNISHMENT IS LEGITIMATE AS A DEBATE CONSTRUCT.

Punishment arguments are undesirable because they're arbitrary, overemphasize theory, and chill innovation in argument. Arguments should carry their natural logical weight, not be arbitrarily designated as voting issues.

7. OVERLY EXPANSIVE TOPICS WOULD RESULT FROM TOPICALITY BEING A REVERSE VOTING ISSUE.

If topicality is all or nothing, negative teams would rarely run it, creating an even larger affirmative side bias.

8. TIME TRADEOFFS ARE AN INHERENT PART OF THE TACTICS OF DEBATE.

Both teams inevitably drop many of the arguments they initiate.

9. DESIGNATING AN ARGUMENT AS A TIME WASTER IS ARBITRARY.

Depending on affirmative answers in the particular round, the negative might well choose to go for topicality.

10. TOPICALITY ISN'T A SINGULAR ISSUE.

The separation of procedural and substantive issues in other forums doesn't mean they can't be combined in debate.

THE BETTER DEFINITION STANDARD SHOULD GOVERN TOPICALITY

1. THE BETTER DEFINITION CAN BE DETERMINED.

The better definition in this round is the one which enjoys superior evidential and analytical support. This can be debated in the same way as any other issue.

2. THE BETTER DEFINITION STANDARD PROVIDES OPTIMAL LIMITS.

A. "Reasonability" is too ambiguous. It can be defined as meaning "not absurd," and this would place no effective limits on debate.

B. Limits are needed for intelligent discussion and fair competition.

3. THE BETTER INTERPRETATION IS SOUGHT IN ALL OTHER INTERPRETIVE SITUATIONS.

A. Legal interpretation. Courts seek the most likely meaning of statutes and the Constitution.

B. Scholarship. Scholars should look for the most likely meaning of a text, not for just what it could mean.

C. Normal conversation. When talking to others we seek what they really mean, not just what they might mean.

4. BETTER ANALYSIS IS ALWAYS TO BE PREFERRED; WE ACCEPT THE BEST ANALYSIS ON ALL OTHER ISSUES IN DEBATE.

5. PROPER USE OF LANGUAGE IS AN END IN ITSELF--ABUSE OF LANGUAGE CAUSES ORWELLIAN DEBASEMENT OF POLITICS.

David Bell, York University political scientist, 1975, *POWER, INFLUENCE, AND AUTHORITY*, px-xi. George Orwell's satire on "Newspeak" and Herbert Marcuse's critique of "one dimensional" thought help stimulate a critical consciousness of the dangers inherent in the abuse of language. For while language is the medium of politics, it is far from a neutral instrument. Our own words and vocabulary affect us politically. Language is more than a tool for manipulating others. In ways often undetected, it structures our ideas about those with whom we interact. The medium of politics is itself political. The decay and abuse of language represent a deterioration of political life.

6. THE BETTER DEFINITION STANDARD BEST DIVIDES GROUND.

A. The purpose of the resolution is to divide ground.

B. Reasonability leaves a gray area--a set of cases which are both reasonably topical and reasonably non-topical.

C. This could produce irresolvable ground disputes. Both sides could defend the same plan, claiming that it's reasonably topical and reasonably non-topical respectively.

THE BEST DEFINITION STANDARD IS LINGUISTICALLY JUSTIFIED

1. DISCOVERY OF BEST DEFINITION NECESSARY TO DISCOVERY OF TRUTH.

Ralph Borsodi, THE DEFINITION OF DEFINITION, 1967, p.14.

If there is no way in which the teachers of mankind can avoid conveying more than one meaning when they use words, the truth will never emerge as a deciding factor in the life of mankind. One word with one meaning, and one meaning with one word, if Korzybski and his followers are right, is a completely utopian chimera. But a strict definition of the meaning of meaning, and a strict definition of the meaning of definition proves that the General Semanticists are mistaken.

2. REQUIRING BEST DEFINITIONS IS THE BEST WAY OF REDUCING INTELLECTUAL FUZZINESS.

Ralph Borsodi, THE DEFINITION OF DEFINITION, 1967, p.78.

No better discipline in precise thinking can be found than that required in thus substituting one recommended definition and designator for the mere enumeration of the common usages of important words; no better method is possible for getting rid of the fuzziness of what now passes for social science; for clarifying the discussion of the humanities and the arts, philosophy and theology, science and education, medicine and law; and for breaching that wall which now separates the two cultures we call the sciences and the humanities.

3. BEST DEFINITIONS ARE NECESSARY TO AVOID CONFUSION.

Ralph Borsodi, THE DEFINITION OF DEFINITION, 1967, p.77.

What we are provided with in dictionaries based upon common usage as solutions of the problem are dozens of designations (words) for each notion or idea, and dozens of definitions of each of the words and designators. The end result is our existing state of ambiguity and confusion. What we need are vocabularies in which the best possible judgment--a consensus of authorities--is used to recommend a single designator and a single definition for each concept or idea.

4. AUTHORITATIVE DEFINITIONS ARE NECESSARY FOR CLARITY.

Ralph Borsodi, THE DEFINITION OF DEFINITION, 1967, p.75.

If the problem of Obscurantism is to be adequately dealt with, this kind of precise communication is needed. It is not enough to restrict so-called dictionaries to the vocabularies of the various disciplines. It is not enough to define the words in a vocabulary as they are in fact being used. The definitions must reflect not merely what is but what should be. Every word must be authoritatively defined--there must be one recommended definition for each term even though the obsolescent and archaic definitions are also given.

5. DEFINITION IS CRITICAL TO COMMUNICATION.

Ralph Borsodi, THE DEFINITION OF DEFINITION, 1967, p.78.

But unlike both Korzybski and Wittgenstein, the lexicographer does not stop as they did with theoretical scientific analysis: he faces the condition--not the theory--which every dictionary-maker faces, the condition that some sort of definition of words is essential if communication is to rise above the level of naive preliterate man.

THE REASONABILITY STANDARD SHOULD GOVERN TOPICALITY

1. AFFIRMATIVE LATITUDE IN DEFINITION IS DESIRABLE.
 - A. Topic breadth is desirable. This encourages learning about a wider range of cases, increases research, and stimulates creativity.
 - B. Proponents of a position are traditionally allowed to define the terms of the discussion.
 - C. More sincere advocacy results from allowing the affirmative greater scope.
 - D. The free speech analogy--there should be a strong presumption against silencing any viewpoint.
 - E. Language is inherently ambiguous. Words mean just what we stipulate we mean by them. There is no best or better definition.

2. REASONABILITY CAN BE DETERMINED.
 - A. Common standards, such as limits, grammar, and field context determine what is reasonable in the context of debate.
 - B. Reasonableness is a widely recognized legal principle.

Barry Almond, prof international law, National War College, 26th Colloquium, 1983, p.279.
Standards of reasonableness, familiar to lawyers and jurists throughout the world, and appearing in the law of war principle of military necessity, balance out the expectations of the global community.
 - C. Courts uphold reasonability.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, quoted S.I. Hayakawa, LANGUAGE IN THOUGHT AND ACTION, 1949, p.208.
When a legal distinction is determined...between night and day, childhood and maturity, or any other extremes, a point has to be fixed or a line has to be drawn, or gradually picked out by successive decisions, to mark where the change takes place. Looked at by itself without regard to the necessity behind it, the line or point seems arbitrary. It might as well be a little more to the one side or the other. But when it is seen that a line or point there must be, and that there is no mathematical or logical way of fixing it precisely, the decision of the legislature must be accepted unless we can say that it is very wide of any reasonable mark.

3. ANALOGIES TO OTHER SITUATIONS SUPPORT REASONABILITY.
 - A. Authors of a bill are allowed to define its terms.
 - B. According to deconstructive and reader response criticism, author's intent isn't critical. Texts always have many meanings.
 - C. Unlike most other statements, the resolution has only a general intent; debaters are intended to offer their own interpretations.

4. CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER DEBATE ISSUES DOESN'T REQUIRE USE OF BETTER DEFINITIONS.
 - A. Topicality is unique. It is an all or nothing issue, uniquely fatal to the affirmative, and a voting issue independent of the overall policy calculus. This justifies its distinctive treatment.
 - B. Definitional issues are less important and less ultimately resolvable than policy issues; this also justifies distinct treatment.
 - C. Marginal analysis is acceptable on other issues. The affirmative can win with minimal significance, inherence, and/or solvency if there is no DA. Low probability disadvantages are often accepted based on risk analysis.

THE REASONABILITY STANDARD SHOULD GOVERN TOPICALITY cont'd

5. REASONABILITY PERMITS ADEQUATE DIVISION OF GROUND.

- A. The plan divides ground. If the affirmative is reasonably topical, the negative must compete with the plan.
- B. The negative can be required to be not reasonably topical. This would mean there is no grey area in which both teams can claim ground.

6. THE BETTER DEFINITION STANDARD ENCOURAGES TOO MUCH TOPICALITY ARGUMENT.

If topicality is more than an issue of threshold reasonability, the negative has a heightened incentive to invest heavily in elaborate generic topicality strategies. This undermines consideration of substantive arguments. Generic topicality arguments are often used to attack even mainstream cases.

BEST DEFINITION A MYTH

1. THE SEARCH FOR BEST DEFINITIONS IS A MAJOR CAUSE OF MISUNDERSTANDING.

I.A. Richards, Oxford, THE PHILOSOPHY OF RHETORIC, 1936, p.11.

A chief cause of misunderstanding, I shall argue later, is the Proper Meaning Superstition. That is, the common belief--encouraged officially by what lingers on in the school manuals as Rhetoric--that a word has a meaning of its own (ideally, only one) independent of and controlling its use and the purpose for which it should be uttered.

2. DEFINITIONS ARE NEVER DEFINITIVE.

Friedrich Waismann, prof of philosophy, Oxford, THE THEORY OF MEANING, G.R.H. Parkinson, ed., 1968, p.40.

...we can never eliminate the possibility of some unforeseen factor emerging, we can never be quite sure that we have included in our definition, everything that should be included, and thus, the process of defining and refining an idea will go on without ever reaching a final stage. In other words, every definition stretches into an open horizon.

3. DEFINITIONS ARE NEVER EXHAUSTIVE.

Friedrich Waismann, prof of philosophy, Oxford, THE THEORY OF MEANING, G.R.H. Parkinson, ed., 1968, p.38.

We tend to overlook the fact that there are always other directions in which the concept has not been defined. And if we did, we could easily imagine conditions which would necessitate new limitations. In short, it is not possible to define a concept like gold with absolute precision, i.e., in such a way that every nook and cranny is blocked against entry of doubt. That is what is meant by the open texture of a concept.

4. ATTEMPTS TO FIND DEFINITIVE MEANINGS CAN BE WORTHLESS.

Susanne Langer, philosopher, PHILOSOPHY IN A NEW KEY, 1942, p.43.

The analysis of "meaning" has had a peculiarly difficult history; the word is used in many different ways, and a good deal of controversy has been wasted on the subject of THE correct way, THE meaning of "meaning."

DEFINITION AN INHERENTLY LIMITED PROCESS

1. DEFINITION PRODUCES AN INFINITE REGRESS.

S.I. Hayakawa, noted linguist, LANGUAGE IN THOUGHT AND ACTION, 1949, p.172-3.

People often believe, having defined a word, that some kind of understanding has been established, ignoring the fact that the words in the definition often conceal more serious confusions and ambiguities than the word defined. If we happen to discover this fact and try to remedy matters by defining the defining words, and then, finding ourselves still confined, go on to define the words in the definitions of the defining words, and so on, we quickly find ourselves in a hopeless snarl.

2. EXEMPLIFICATION IS SUPERIOR TO DEFINITION.

S.I. Hayakawa, noted linguist, LANGUAGE IN THOUGHT AND ACTION, 1949, p.173.

The only way to avoid this snarl is to keep definitions to a minimum and to point to extensional levels wherever necessary--and in writing and speaking, this means giving specific examples of what we are talking about.

3. EXCESSIVE RESPECT FOR WORDS IS COUNTERPRODUCTIVE.

S.I. Hayakawa, noted linguist, LANGUAGE IN THOUGHT AND ACTION, 1949, p.251-2.

Because words are such a powerful instrument, we have in many ways a superstitious awe rather than an understanding of them and even if we have no awe, we tend at least to have an undue respect for them...This undue regard for words makes us tend to permit words to act as barriers between us and reality, instead of as guides to reality.

DICTIONARY AND JUDICIAL DEFINITIONS LIMITED

1. COURTS AND DICTIONARIES NOT AUTHORITATIVE.

S.I. Hayakawa, noted linguist, LANGUAGE IN THOUGHT AND ACTION, 1949, p.216.

Is medicine a "profession" or "trade"? Is the production of crude oil "a part of farming"? Is a harmonica player a "musician"? Is aspirin a "drug"? The way in which such questions are commonly settled is by appeals to dictionaries to discover the "real meanings" of the words involved. It is also common practice to consult past legal decisions and all kinds of learned treatises bearing on the subject. The decision finally rests, however, not upon appeals to past authority, but upon what people want. If they want the AMA to be immune from antitrust action, they will go to the Supreme Court if necessary to get medicine "defined" as a "profession." If they want the AMA prosecuted, they will get a decision that it is a "trade."

2. DICTIONARIES NOT AUTHORITATIVE.

S.I. Hayakawa, noted linguist, LANGUAGE IN THOUGHT AND ACTION, 1949, p.56.

To regard the dictionary as an "authority," therefore, is to credit the dictionary writer with gifts of prophecy which neither he nor anyone else possesses. In choosing our words when we speak or write, we can be guided by the historical record afforded us by the dictionary, but we cannot be bound by it, because new situations, new experiences, new inventions, new feelings, are always compelling us to give new uses to old words. Looking under a "hood," we should ordinarily have found, five hundred years ago, a monk; today, we find a motorcar engine.

3. DICTIONARY DEFINITIONS OVERLY ABSTRACT.

S.I. Hayakawa, noted linguist, LANGUAGE IN THOUGHT AND ACTION, 1949, p.58.

...dictionaries give definitions on a high level of abstraction; that is, with particular references lifted out for the sake of conciseness. This is another reason why it is a great mistake to regard a dictionary definition as telling us all about a word.

LANGUAGE INHERENTLY AMBIGUOUS

1. ALL MEANING IS APPROXIMATE.

S.I. Hayakawa, noted linguist, LANGUAGE IN THOUGHT AND ACTION, 1949, p.61-2.

To say dogmatically that we know what a word means in advance of its utterance is nonsense. All we can know in advance is approximately what it will mean. After the utterance, we interpret what has been said in the light of both verbal and physical contexts, and act according to our interpretation.

2. AMBIGUITY IS UNAVOIDABLE AND ESSENTIAL.

I.A. Richards, Oxford, THE PHILOSOPHY OF RHETORIC, 1936. p.40.

The context theorem of meaning will make us expect ambiguity to the widest extent and of the subtlest kinds nearly everywhere, and of course we find it. But where the old Rhetoric treated ambiguity as a fault in language, and hoped to confine or eliminate it, the new Rhetoric sees it as an inevitable consequence of the powers of language and as the indispensable means of most of our most important utterances--especially in Poetry and Religion.

WORDS HAVE MULTIPLE MEANINGS

1. WORDS HAVE NO ONE CORRECT MEANING.

S.I. Hayakawa, noted linguist, LANGUAGE IN THOUGHT AND ACTION, 1949, p.65.

A dictionary definition, therefore, is an invaluable guide to interpretation. Words do not have a single "correct meaning", they apply to groups of similar situations which might be called areas of meaning. It is for definition in terms of areas of meaning that a dictionary is useful.

2. WORDS NECESSARILY HAVE MULTIPLE MEANINGS.

S.I. Hayakawa, noted linguist, LANGUAGE IN THOUGHT AND ACTION, 1949, p.63.

People in the course of argument very frequently complain about words meaning different things to different people. Instead of complaining, they should accept it as a matter of course. It would be startling indeed if the word "justice," for example, were to have the same meaning to the nine justices of the United States Supreme Court; we should get nothing but unanimous decisions.

I.A. Richards, Oxford, THE PHILOSOPHY OF RHETORIC, 1936, p.39.

This theorem goes further, and regards all discourse--outside the technicalities of science--as over-determined, as having multiplicity of meaning. It can illustrate this view from almost any of the great controversies. And it offers us--by restraining the One and Only One True Meaning Superstition--a better hope, I believe, of profiting from the controversies.

S.I. Hayakawa, noted linguist, LANGUAGE IN THOUGHT AND ACTION, 1949, p.68.

In any good standard dictionary, words are defined in terms of areas of meaning and, for most words, there are many different areas of meaning.

3. VERSATILITY IS A PRIMARY CHARACTERISTIC OF SYMBOLS.

Ernst Cassirer, philosopher, AN ESSAY ON MAN, 1944, p.36.

A genuine human symbol is characterized not by its uniformity but by its versatility. It is not rigid or inflexible but mobile.

4. DIFFERENT MEANINGS OF WORDS CAN BE EQUALLY LEGITIMATE.

Susanne Langer, philosopher, PHILOSOPHY IN A NEW KEY, 1942, p.52.

Here, then, are the three most familiar meanings of the one word, "meaning,": signification, denotation, and connotation. All three are equally and perfectly legitimate, but in no possible way interchangeable.

5. PEOPLE CAN ASSIGN WHATEVER VALUE THEY WANT TO THEIR SYMBOLS.

S.I. Hayakawa, noted linguist, LANGUAGE IN THOUGHT AND ACTION, 1949, p.25.

We are, as human beings, uniquely free to manufacture and manipulate and assign values to our symbols as we please... This freedom to create symbols of any assigned value and to create symbols that stand for symbols is essential to what we call the symbolic process.

LANGUAGE FLEXIBILITY IS ESSENTIAL

1. LANGUAGE FLEXIBILITY IS ESSENTIAL TO ITS USEFULNESS.

I.A. Richards, Oxford, *THE PHILOSOPHY OF RHETORIC*, 1936, p.72-3.

The assumption is that words have, or should have, proper meanings which people should recognize, agree about and stick to. A pretty program, if it were possible. But, outside the technical languages of the sciences, it is not possible. For in the topics with which all generally interesting discussion is concerned, words must shift their meanings thus. Without these shifts such mutual understanding as we achieve would fail even within the narrowed resultant scope. Language, losing its subtlety with its suppleness, would lose also its power to serve us.

2. LINGUISTIC INFLEXIBILITY STIFLES NEW IDEAS.

Susanne Langer, philosopher, *PHILOSOPHY IN A NEW KEY*, 1942, p.164.

Language, in its literal capacity, is a stiff and conventional medium, unadapted to the expression of genuinely new ideas, which usually have to break in upon the mind through some great and bewildering metaphor.

3. MEANING CONSTANTLY CHANGING.

S.I. Hayakawa, noted linguist, *LANGUAGE IN THOUGHT AND ACTION*, 1949, p.60-1.

Such an impasse is avoided when we start with a new premise altogether--one of the premises upon which modern linguistic thought is based: namely, that no word ever has exactly the same meaning twice. The extent to which this premise fits the facts can be demonstrated in a number of ways. First, if we accept the proposition that the contexts of an utterance determine its meaning, it becomes apparent that since no two contexts are ever exactly the same, no two meanings can ever be exactly the same.

S.I. Hayakawa, noted linguist, *LANGUAGE IN THOUGHT AND ACTION*, 1949, p.60.

Everyone, of course, who has ever given any thought to the meanings of words has noticed that they are always shifting and changing in meaning.

4. MEANING EVOLVES RADICALLY OVER TIME.

Susanne Langer, philosopher, *PHILOSOPHY IN A NEW KEY*, 1942, p.229.

Every word has a history, and has probably passed through stages where its most important significance lay in associations it no longer has, uses now obsolete, double entendres we would not understand.

LANGUAGE AMBIGUITY IS UNDESIRABLE

1. AMBIGUITY IS THE GREATEST LINGUISTIC VICE.

Ralph Borsodi, THE DEFINITION OF DEFINITION, 1967, p.53.

Clarity is the great virtue of both words and of sentences; just as ambiguity is the great vice in the use of words, so inconsistency is the great vice in the use of sentences. Language, which ought to be a means of communicating and of understanding what is true, when suffering from these two vices, becomes a means of confusion at the very least and of tragic misunderstanding at worst.

2. LANGUAGE AMBIGUITY CAN BE SUFFICIENTLY REDUCED.

Ralph Borsodi, THE DEFINITION OF DEFINITION, 1967, p.47.

But words, in spite of the limitations of definition, can be defined sufficiently clearly, and sentences, in spite of the limitations of grammar, can be constructed sufficiently clearly to enable us to distinguish between statements which make sense and statements which do not. To insist, because of the unavoidable limitations of language, that nothing can be truly known is to talk nonsense.

3. PROPER DEFINITION CAN ELIMINATE AMBIGUITY.

Ralph Borsodi, THE DEFINITION OF DEFINITION, 1967, p.15-6.

To transform words from notions into ideas, and so make possible the transformation of the sentences which frame units of knowledge from vague notions into clear ideas, one thing--and one thing only--is needed, adequate definition. But adequate definition requires an intellectual discipline to which few will submit themselves. As a result, most people wander through life half-asleep, while those whom disciplined study has awakened find themselves needlessly confused by ambiguities which proper diction and definition would enable them to avoid.

4. TOO MUCH AMBIGUITY DESTROYS COMMUNICATION.

Ernst Cassirer, philosopher, AN ESSAY ON MAN, 1944, p.225.

Even language is one of the firmest conservative powers in human culture. Without this conservatism it could not fulfill its principal task, communication. Communication requires strict rules. Linguistic symbols and forms must have a stability and constancy in order to resist the dissolving and destructive influence of time.

5. ESTABLISHED CONNOTATIONS DETERMINE LIMITS OF ACCEPTABLE USAGE.

Susanne Langer, philosopher, PHILOSOPHY IN A NEW KEY, 1942, p.62.

A name may be awkward or convenient, ugly or pretty, but in itself it is never true or false. But if it already has a connotation, then it cannot be given an arbitrary denotation, nor vice versa. I cannot use the word "kitten," with its accepted connotation to denote an elephant. The application of a word with its connotation is the equivalent of a statement: "This is a such-and-such." To call an elephant "kitten," not as a proper name but as a common noun, is a mistake, because he does not exemplify the connoted concept.

6. DEFINITIONS CAN BE RATIONALLY TESTED.

Ralph Borsodi, THE DEFINITION OF DEFINITION, 1967, p.47.

What Subjectivists, Relativists, Solipsists, and Sceptics of all kinds ignore is the fact that, although the definition of words and the construction of sentences can never be perfect, there are nevertheless methods of testing definitions and methods of testing sentence-construction which make possible verification or discrediting of what is linguistically said to be true.

LANGUAGE IS CRITICAL (worthy of debate)

1. LANGUAGE IS OUR MOST IMPORTANT TOOL.

Susanne Langer, philosopher, PHILOSOPHY IN A NEW KEY, 1942, p.36.

Words are certainly our most important instruments of expression, our most characteristic, universal, and enviable tools in the conduct of life. Speech is the mark of humanity.

2. LANGUAGE IS NECESSARY TO THOUGHT.

Susanne Langer, philosopher, PHILOSOPHY IN A NEW KEY, 1942, p.83.

Language is, without a doubt, the most momentous and at the same time the most mysterious product of the human mind... without language there seems to be nothing like explicit thought whatever.

3. ANALYSIS OF LANGUAGE IS KEY TO UNDERSTANDING MENTAL PROCESSES.

Ernst Cassirer, philosopher, AN ESSAY ON MAN, 1944, p.135.

The ascent to higher levels of abstraction, to more general and comprehensive names and ideas, is a difficult and laborious task. The analysis of language provides us with a wealth of materials for studying the character of the mental processes which finally lead to the accomplishment of this task.

4. UNDERSTANDING LANGUAGE IS A KEY TO PSYCHOLOGY.

Ernst Cassirer, philosopher, AN ESSAY ON MAN, 1944, p.131.

Psychologists are unanimous in emphasizing that without insight into the true nature of human speech our knowledge of the development of the human mind would remain perfunctory and inadequate.

5. LANGUAGE IS KEY TO THE EXISTENCE OF SOCIETY.

Edwin Newman, journalist and language scholar, STRICTLY SPEAKING, 1973, p.32.

Still, it remains true that since nothing is more important to a society than the language it uses--there would be no society without it--we would be better off if we spoke and wrote with exactness and grace, and if we preserved, rather than destroyed, the value of our language.

DEBATABILITY SHOULD BE THE PRIMARY STANDARD FOR EVALUATING TOPIC INTERPRETATIONS

1. DEBATE IS UNIQUE AND HAS UNIQUE DEFINITIONAL NEEDS.

Standards from other fields are irrelevant or secondary. For example, social science definitions are often selected because they can be empirically operationalized in an experiment. This is an irrelevant consideration in debate.

2. THE ONLY PURPOSE OF TOPICALITY IN DEBATE IS PRIOR NOTICE.

If notice has been met, then a good debate can occur.

3. OTHER STANDARDS PLACE TOO MUCH EMPHASIS ON WORD GAMES.

Definitional issues are relatively trivial compared to substantive policy questions.

4. DEFINITIONS APPLY TO FIELDS OF DISCOURSE.

Ogden and Richards, Oxford, *THE MEANING OF MEANING*, 1938, p.111.

...all definitions are essentially ad hoc. They are relevant to some purpose or situation, and consequently are applicable only over a restricted field or "universe of discourse."

5. DEFINITIONS MERELY NEEDED TO ALLOW COMMUNICATION.

Ralph Borsodi, *THE DEFINITION OF DEFINITION*, 1967, p.32.

No definition will ever be perfect, but absolute perfection is not essential. All that is essential is that it be adequate -- adequate enough to enable men to ratiocinate and to communicate with other men as rational and humane beings.

6. DEFINITIONS SERVE PRACTICAL PURPOSES.

Ogden and Richards, Oxford, *THE MEANING OF MEANING*, 1938, p.121.

The reason for using definitions at all is practical. We use them to make discussion more profitable, to bring different thinkers into open agreement or disagreement with one another.

7. ADEQUATE USAGE IS DETERMINED BY PARTICULAR LANGUAGE NEEDS.

Ernst Cassirer, philosopher, *AN ESSAY ON MAN*, 1944, p.136.

As a matter of fact there exists no uniform measure for the wealth or poverty of a given idiom. Every classification is directed and dictated by special needs, and it is clear that those needs vary according to the different condition of man's social and cultural life.

8. DEFINITIONS ARE DETERMINED BY PRACTICAL UTILITY.

S.I. Hayakawa, noted linguist, *LANGUAGE IN THOUGHT AND ACTION*, 1949, p.217.

If people want agricultural cooperatives to operate oil wells, they will get the courts to define the activity in such a way as to make it possible. If the public at large doesn't care, the decision whether a harmonica player is or is not a "musician" will be made by the stronger trade union. The question whether aspirin is or is not a "drug" will be decided neither by finding the dictionary definition of "drug" nor by staring long and hard at an aspirin tablet. It will be decided on the basis of where and under what conditions people want to buy their aspirin.

9. DEFINITIONS VARY WITH PURPOSES.

S.I. Hayakawa, noted linguist, *LANGUAGE IN THOUGHT AND ACTION*, 1949, p.209.

Things can have "right names" only if there is a necessary connection between symbols and things symbolized, and we have seen that there is not... What we call things and where we draw the line between one class of things and another depend upon the interests we have and the purposes of the classification. For example, animals are classified in one way by the meat industry, in a different way by the leather industry, in another different way by the fur industry, and in a still different way by the biologist.

DEBATABILITY SHOULD NOT BE THE PRIMARY STANDARD

1. DEBATABILITY ISN'T EQUIVALENT TO TOPICALITY.

Most negatives carry evidence relating to lots of past topics; that doesn't make cases from those topics topical on this one.

2. TOPICALITY BECOMES DE FACTO A NON-VOTING ISSUE IF DEBATABILITY IS THE STANDARD.

This means, in effect, that the affirmative need not meet the terms of the topic if the negative has notice.

3. TOPICALITY SHOULD BE A VOTING ISSUE.

A. It's regarded as a non-debatable prior rule by most debate theorists.

B. In all other arenas, scholarly or political, speakers are expected to address the subject of the forum.

4. DEBATABILITY VIOLATES THE PURPOSE OF TOPICALITY.

In picking a new topic each year, we seek to debate new issues, pick a topic which divides ground in a competitively balanced way, and select a subject worthy of discussion. Letting the affirmative select any plan that's close to the topic frustrates these purposes, permitting plans that are recycled, relatively trivial, or competitively skewed.

5. THE CONCEPT OF DEBATABILITY IS ARBITRARY.

The affirmative will always say that its plan is debatable, and the negative will always say the opposite. There's no clear standard for resolving this impasse.

6. DEBATABILITY PUNISHES THE NEGATIVE FOR BEING PREPARED.

By this logic, the negative should do less work, so that they have a better chance to win on topicality.

7. DEBATE DOESN'T EXIST IN A VACUUM.

It draws its subject matter and its analytical tools from other fields. There's no reason other scholarly fields can't enlighten how we think about definition in debate.

8. DEFINITIONAL QUESTIONS ARE IMPORTANT.

They're central to both law and scholarship; debaters should learn to argue them effectively.

9. STRICT TOPICALITY STANDARDS ENCOURAGE SUBSTANTIVE DEBATE.

Broad topic interpretations mean that good clash is impossible in many debates. If the affirmative really wants to focus on substantive issues, they should run a mainstream case.

FRAMERS' INTENT IS KEY

1. SENTENCES BY DEFINITION AIM TO COMMUNICATE INTENT.

Ralph Borsodi, THE DEFINITION OF DEFINITION, 1967, p.48.

In the syntax of languages, a sentence is a group of words so related to one another as to convey the intention of the communicator to the communicatee.

2. ATTENTION TO INTENT IS NECESSARY TO MEANINGFUL COMMUNICATION.

Ogden and Richards, Oxford, THE MEANING OF MEANING, 1938, p.126.

Often without a clear consciousness of the fact, people have preoccupations which determine their use of words. Unless we are aware of their purposes and interests at the moment, we shall not know what they are talking about and whether their referents are the same as ours or not.

3. THE RESOLUTION IS A STATEMENT GOVERNED BY INTENT.

It is a statement produced by a particular set of people, the topic committee, intended to communicate a certain idea.

4. INTENT CAN BE DETERMINED.

We determine others' intent in every conversation. There are numerous cues to the framers' intent found in field context, the grammatical context of the resolution, and debate-tradition.

FRAMERS' INTENT IS NOT IMPORTANT

1. RESOLUTIONS ARE INTENDED TO ALLOW ROOM FOR DEBATERS' INTERPRETATIONS.

The topic committee may well have had no set definitive meaning.

2. INTENT IS TOO SUBJECTIVE.

How can we ever read the topic committee's minds? We can only rely on their plain meaning.

3. INTENT IS INADEQUATE TO FORESEE ALL POSSIBILITIES.

After extensive research debaters probably understand the topic's ramifications better than the topic committee did.

4. THE TOPIC SELECTION PROCESS MAKES THE RESOLUTION COLLECTIVE PROPERTY.

People's intent in voting for the topic is as important as the framers' intent in constructing it.

5. THE MEANING OF THE TOPIC IS CONSTRUCTED BY THE DEBATE COMMUNITY OVER TIME.

As with all forms of meaning, the meaning of the debate topic emerges through discourse within a particular speech community.

EACH WORD SHOULD HAVE INDEPENDENT MEANING

1. AUTHOR'S INTENT.

The resolution is a formal statement that the topic committee knows will be subject to intensive scrutiny. Given this they obviously would not include superfluous words.

2. LIMITS.

Rendering one word meaningless in one round sets a precedent for rendering other words meaningless in other rounds. In the universe of such debates the resolution becomes unbounded.

3. LEGAL SOURCES UPHOLD THIS STANDARD.

Bin Cheng, prof of air and space law, U of London, JOURNAL OF SPACE LAW, 1983, p.104.

The present United States interpretation of the word "peaceful" to mean merely "non-aggressive" would simply be wrong if applied to Article IV (2) of the Space Treaty, which is where the word appears in Article IV. The same would be true if applied to Article 5 of the 1979 Moon Treaty which likewise provides that all celestial bodies within the solar system other than earth "shall be used by all States Parties exclusively for peaceful purposes." Among various reasons, the simplest is that any such interpretation would render the first sentence of Article IV (2) of the Space Treaty completely meaningless and redundant, and cannot, therefore, be valid.

LIMITS SHOULD NOT BE EXAGGERATED

1. REDUNDANCY IS COMMON IN ENGLISH.

It's a natural part of the language.

2. REDUNDANCY CAN SERVE TO EMPHASIZE.

The topic committee might, for example, want to reinforce affirmative significance burdens.

3. ASSUMES WE CAN READ THE TOPIC COMMITTEE'S MIND.

They might well not have thought of the terms being redundant in the sense that they intended them.

4. LIMITS IS TOO SUBJECTIVE A STANDARD.

Determining how much limit is enough is completely arbitrary.

5. SOME WORDS HAVE LITTLE MEANING, FOR EXAMPLE, "THAT," "SUBSTANTIALLY," AND "POLICY."

It distorts the topic to try to read too much meaning into such inherently vague words.

6. THE MOST LIMITING DEFINITION IS DEFINITELY NOT BEST.

Employing this standard would push resolutions to the vanishing point of narrowness. Breadth has at least some values which must be balanced against depth.

7. REDUNDANCY IS AN ESSENTIAL PROPERTY OF LANGUAGE.

Peter Farb, WORD PLAY, 1973, p.273.

Redundancy, rather than being something that must be extirpated, is an essential property of language. It provides benefits because the repetition of all or part of a message guards against misinterpretation. All human languages, and most animal calls as well, have redundancy built into them. An ape or a monkey continues to emit its food call until the other members of its troop respond. A human speaker says Let me put that another way or in other words, and he then proceeds to repeat the content of his message all over again. Nearly every sentence in every human language possesses some degree of redundancy. An example in English is the agreement in number between an adjective and the noun it modifies, and the agreement of both of these with the number of the verb, as in Three boys go. If I failed to hear part of this sentence--for example, if I heard only thr- boy- go--the redundant grammatical signal in the third person plural verb go would allow me to reconstruct the phrase.

8. REDUNDANCY FACILITATES COMMUNICATION.

Peter Farb, WORD PLAY, 1973, p.273-4.

Communication would be extremely precarious if sentences lacked all redundancy, since the loss of merely a sound or two through inattention by the listener, mispronunciation by the speaker, or background noise might make the entire sentence unintelligible.

9. HALF OF ENGLISH UTTERANCE IS REDUNDANT.

Peter Farb, WORD PLAY, 1973, p.274-5.

One linguist has estimated that approximately half of a typical English utterance is redundant because it repeats grammatical instructions, like tense and number, found in the other half--and the same percentage appears to hold true for other languages as well. As a result, people can speak very fast, hesitate, utter ungrammatical sentences--and still be understood. Rather than castigating redundancy, Miss Fidditch should instead sing its praises. It allows an entire utterance to be understood despite the roar of jet planes overhead, mispronunciations, use of words whose exact meanings are not known, and even inadequacies in the structures of the languages themselves.

CONTEXT IS KEY

1. CONTEXT DETERMINES MEANING.

I.A. Richards, Oxford, *THE PHILOSOPHY OF RHETORIC*, 1936, p.11.

Most words, as they pass from context to context, change their meanings; and in many different ways. It is their duty and their service to us to do so.

S.I. Hayakawa, noted linguist, *LANGUAGE IN THOUGHT AND ACTION*, 1949, p.62.

Interpretation must be based, therefore, on the totality of contexts. If it were otherwise, we should not be able to account for the fact that even if we fail to use the right (customary) words in some situations, people can very frequently understand us.

Susanne Lander, philosopher, *PHILOSOPHY IN A NEW KEY*, 1942, p.113.

The expression "to flare up" has acquired a wider meaning than its original use, to describe the behavior of a flame; it can be used metaphorically to describe whatever its meaning can symbolize. Whether it is to be taken in a literal or a metaphorical sense has to be determined by the context.

Susanne Lander, philosopher, *PHILOSOPHY IN A NEW KEY*, 1942, p.113.

All discourse involves two elements, which may be called, respectively, the context (verbal or practical) and the novelty. The novelty is what the speaker is trying to point out or to express. For this purpose he will use any word that serves him. The word may be apt, or it may be ambiguous, or even new; the context, seen or stated, modifies it and determines just what it means.

2. INTRODUCING NON-CONTEXTUAL USAGES DISTORTS MEANING.

I.A. Richards, Oxford, *THE PHILOSOPHY OF RHETORIC*, 1936, p.55.

A word or phrase when isolated momentarily from its controlling neighbours is free to develop irrelevant senses which may then beguile half the other words to follow it.

3. EXAMINING WORDS IN ISOLATION DESTROYS MEANING.

Ernst Cassirer, philosopher, *AN ESSAY ON MAN*, 1944, p.120.

A language is not simply a mechanical aggregate of terms. Splitting it up into words or terms means disorganizing and disintegrating it. Such a conception is detrimental, if not disastrous, to any study of linguistic phenomena. The words and rules which according to our ordinary notions make up a language, Humbolt asserted, really exist only in the act of connected speech.

4. IGNORING CONTEXT IS STUPID.

S.I. Hayakawa, noted linguist, *LANGUAGE IN THOUGHT AND ACTION*, 1949, p.62.

It is clear, then, that the ignoring of contexts in any act of interpretation is at best a stupid practice. At its worst, it can be a vicious practice.

5. BEST TO APPROACH MEANING AT THE SENTENCE LEVEL.

G.R.H. Parkinson, lecturer in philosophy, U of Reading, *THE THEORY OF MEANING*, 1968, p.12.

...it is best to approach the problem of the nature of meaning by first considering the sentence, since in this way one is less tempted to suppose that words have meaning in isolation from one another.

6. PARALLEL USES HELP DETERMINE MEANING.

I.A. Richards, Oxford, *THE PHILOSOPHY OF RHETORIC*, 1936, p.63.

And on other occasions, the meaning comes from other partly parallel uses whose relevance we can feel, without necessarily being able to state it explicitly.

7. MULTIPLE CONTEXTS INFLUENCE MEANING.

I.A. Richards, Oxford, *THE PHILOSOPHY OF RHETORIC*, 1936, p.65.

As the movement of my hand uses nearly the whole skeletal system of the muscles and is supported by them, so a phrase may take its powers from an immense system of supporting uses of other words in other contexts.

8. MEANINGS ACQUIRED IN ONE CONTEXT REVERBERATE INTO OTHER CONTEXTS.

Susanne Langer, philosopher, *PHILOSOPHY IN A NEW KEY*, 1942, p.231.

Many symbols...may be said to be "charged" with meanings. They have many symbolic and significant functions, and these functions have been integrated into a complex so that they are all apt to be sympathetically invoked with any chosen one.

RESOLUTIONAL AND GRAMMATICAL CONTEXTS ARE KEY

1. WORDS GAIN MEANING IN CONTEXT--AS COMBINED WITH OTHER WORDS.

Dictionaries list multiple meanings derived from multiple contexts. A definition from one context shouldn't be inappropriately applied in another.

2. IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS PROVE THIS.

A "red herring" isn't a crimson fish, nor is a "hot dog" a panting canine.

3. GRAMMAR HELPS CLARIFY MEANING.

Words mean different things when used as different part of speech; the grammatical structure of the sentence can reveal their particular meaning.

RESOLUTIONAL AND GRAMMATICAL CONTEXTS AREN'T KEY

1. GRAMMATICAL ARGUMENTS TRIVIALIZE DEBATE.

Understanding mass nouns, etc., is unimportant.

2. STRICT ADHERENCE TO GRAMMAR ISN'T NECESSARY TO SATISFY THE MAIN PURPOSE OF TOPICALITY--LIMITS.

3. TOPIC FRAMERS AREN'T GRAMMARIANS; SUBTLE GRAMMATICAL ARGUMENTS ARE PROBABLY IRRELEVANT TO THEIR PURPOSES.

GRAMMAR IS KEY

1. GRAMMAR IS NECESSARY TO INTELLIGIBILITY.

Sir Isiah Berlin, professor of social and political theory, Oxford, THE THEORY OF MEANING, G.R.H. Parkinson, ed., 1968, p.32-3.

...verifiability depends on intelligibility and not vice versa; only sentences which are constructed in accordance with the rules of logic and of grammar, and describe what can logically be conceived as existing, are significant, are empirical statements, express genuinely empirical propositions.

2. GRAMMATICAL DISTINCTIONS FOUNDED IN LOGIC.

Ernst Cassirer, philosopher, AN ESSAY ON MAN, 1944, p.126-7

The distinctions between the various parts of speech, between the cases of nouns, the modes and tenses of verbs, and the functions of participles, were believed by Mill to be distinctions in thought and not merely words. "The structure of every sentence," he declares, "is a lesson in logic."

3. GRAMMAR IS CRITICAL TO LOGIC.

Ernst Cassirer, philosopher, AN ESSAY ON MAN, 1944, p.126.

John Stuart Mill, the founder of an "inductive logic," asserted that grammar is the most elementary part of logic because it is the beginning of the analysis of the thinking process. According to Mill the principles and rules of grammar are the means by which the forms of language are made to correspond with the universal forms of thought.

GRAMMAR NOT THAT IMPORTANT

1. OVER-EMPHASIS ON GRAMMAR UNDERMINES TRUE PURPOSES OF LANGUAGE.

S.I. Hayakawa, noted linguist, LANGUAGE IN THOUGHT AND ACTION, 1949, p.258-9.

...some teachers are so governed by two-valued rules of what expressions are "right" (under all circumstances) and "wrong" (under all circumstances), and so exclusively preoccupied with the problem of trying to get students to obey unrealistic grammatical directives, that they have long ago lost all sense of what language is for. These are the teachers who give the impression that the only important thing about any utterance is whether or not it is "grammatical." Since this is patently an absurd position, it is little wonder that students pay no attention to them.

2. GOOD GRAMMAR ISN'T NECESSARY TO COMMUNICATION.

S.I. Hayakawa, noted linguist, LANGUAGE IN THOUGHT AND ACTION, 1949, p.258.

...schools tell how "good English" ought to be spoken, but rarely take the trouble to describe how the English language is spoken. For example, we are all told that a double negative makes an affirmative, although nowhere is there any record of an officer of law holding a man on a charge of murder on the grounds that since the prisoner had said, "I ain't killed nobody," his words were actually a confession that he had killed somebody.

3. GRAMMAR IS LARGELY IRRELEVANT TO ACTUAL USAGE.

S.I. Hayakawa, noted linguist, LANGUAGE IN THOUGHT AND ACTION, 1949, p.258.

Grammar, at least as taught by many old-fashioned teachers, is almost purely directive and bears little relation to the way English is actually spoken and written.

4. GRAMMAR BEARS NO NECESSARY RELATIONSHIP TO LOGIC.

Ernst Cassirer, philosopher, AN ESSAY ON MAN, 1944, p.127.

Many grammatical distinctions which we think fundamental and necessary lose their value or at least become very uncertain as soon as we examine languages other than those of the Indo-European family. That there must exist a definite and unique system of the parts of speech, which is to be regarded as a necessary constituent of rational speech, and thought, has turned out to be an illusion.

5. GRAMMAR IS SUBORDINATE TO CLARITY.

Ralph Borsodi, THE DEFINITION OF DEFINITION, 1967, p.49.

The rules of grammar developed by specialists in the normative syntax of a language should be sacrificed whenever they interfere with clarity in scientific, in philosophic, and in other kinds of precise communication, with force and even elegance in oratory and literary composition, and with eloquence and inspiration in poetry.

FIELD CONTEXT IS IMPORTANT

1. ALL DISCIPLINES HAVE UNIQUE VOCABULARIES.

Ralph Borsodi, THE DEFINITION OF DEFINITION, 1967, p.85.

As it is today, every discipline--and almost every text--has a vocabulary or terminology of its own.

2. TECHNICAL TERMINOLOGY CAN PREEMPT MEANING.

Susanne Langer, philosopher, PHILOSOPHY IN A NEW KEY, 1942, p.229.

Sometimes a word of general import becomes a "technical term" and is practically lost to its former place in the language; sometimes a preeminent denotation narrows it again to a proper name...

3. COMMON USAGE TOO VAGUE FOR LOGICAL ANALYSIS.

Ernst Cassirer, philosopher, AN ESSAY ON MAN, 1944, p.135.

As compared with scientific terminology the words of common speech always exhibit a certain vagueness; almost without exception they are so indistinct and ill-defined as not to stand the test of logical analysis.

4. EVERYDAY LANGUAGE OFTEN MEANINGLESS.

S.I. Hayakawa, noted linguist, LANGUAGE IN THOUGHT AND ACTION, 1949, p.175.

...all of us (including mathematicians), when we speak the language of everyday life, often make meaningless noises without knowing that we are doing so. We have already seen what confusions this can lead to.

5. FIELD CONTEXT IS MOST PRECISE. IT EXCLUDES MEANINGS FROM IRRELEVANT CONTEXTS.

6. FIELD CONTEXT IS MOST REAL WORLD; IT REFLECTS HOW TOPIC AREA EXPERTS ACTUALLY USE THE TOPIC'S TERMS.

CONTEXTUAL DEFINITIONS NOT SO WONDERFUL

1. DEBATE IS UNIQUE.

Debate's definitional purposes may be different than scholars in a given field.

2. CONTEXTUAL DEFINITIONS ARE INCLUSIVE BUT NOT EXCLUSIVE.

They prove that a word can reasonably be used in a certain way, but not that it can't be used in other ways.

3. CONTEXTUAL DEFINITIONS CAN BE TOO LOOSE FOR DEBATE PURPOSES.

A contextual usage might be loose or metaphorical.

4. THE DEBATE TOPIC CREATES ITS OWN UNIQUE CONTEXT.

INTERPRETATIONS SHOULD ALLOW ADEQUATE NEGATIVE GROUND

1. RESOLUTIONS ARE WRITTEN TO PROVIDE SIDE EQUITY.

Interpretations which violate this goal vitiate the purpose of having a resolution.

2. THE TOPIC SHOULD BE INTERPRETED SO AS TO ALLOW COUNTERPLAN GROUND.

- A. The affirmative has many topical options to choose from, so the negative should be able to do more than defend the status quo.
- B. Sometimes the status quo is effectively indefensible, requiring a counterplan option.
- C. Many judges reject topical counterplans, so the resolution should be interpreted so as to provide non-topical counterplan ground.

3. DEFINITIONS SHOULD BE VALUE NEUTRAL.

What the negative has to defend shouldn't be evil by definition.

Ralph Barsodi, THE DEFINITION OF DEFINITION, 1967, p.33.

Impartiality--By impartiality I mean that no part or aspect of the referent of the word being defined should be enumerated or described so as to give a partial and therefore a false, a biased, or a distorted conception of the referent.

NEGATIVE GROUND IS NOT AN IMPORTANT STANDARD

1. TOPICAL COUNTERPLANS ALLOW THE NEGATIVE PLENTY OF GROUND WITHOUT NEEDING TO RESTRICT THE AFFIRMATIVE.
2. THE NEGATIVE HAS NO INHERENT RIGHT TO COUNTERPLAN.

If the topic allows little counterplan, then presumably the negative was intended to defend the status quo.

THE AFFIRMATIVE HAS A RIGHT TO DEFINE TERMS

1. PROPONENTS OF A POLICY ARE TRADITIONALLY ALLOWED TO DEFINE ITS TERMS.

For example, Congress defines terms for purposes of legislation.

2. SCHOLARS ARE ALLOWED TO STIPULATE THEIR OWN MEANINGS FOR PURPOSES OF DISCUSSION.

3. THE AFFIRMATIVE HAS THE BURDEN OF PROOF.

Since they must justify their plan, they should have the benefit of defining the topic's terms.

4. ALLOWING ONE TEAM TO STIPULATE THE TOPIC'S MEANING PROVIDES A CLEAR LINE AND MINIMIZES TOPICALITY ARGUMENT.

5. RIGHT TO DEFINE DOESN'T MEAN ANYTHING GOES.

The definition the affirmative stipulates must still meet minimum standards of definitional support.

NO AFFIRMATIVE RIGHT TO DEFINE TERMS

1. THE RESOLUTION DETERMINES GROUND FOR BOTH THE AFFIRMATIVE AND THE NEGATIVE.

Thus, one team shouldn't have an exclusive right to define what it means.

2. THE AFFIRMATIVE CAN DEFINE WHAT IT MEANS BY ITS OWN WORDS.

But, not by what the words of others mean--in this case the words of the topic committee.

3. AFFIRMATIVE RIGHT TO DEFINE IS COMPLETELY UNLIMITING.

By this standard, the affirmative could define the topic to mean anything.

EFFECTS TOPICALITY IS ILLEGITIMATE

1. EFFECTS ARE UNLIMITING.

On many topics, innumerable policies could have the effect of bringing about topical action indirectly.

2. DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS ARE INDISTINGUISHABLE.

There's no magic line that separates the relatively direct effects of a plan from its indirect ones. Any such line is purely arbitrary.

3. EFFECTS TOPICALITY CONFUSES JURISDICTIONAL WITH POLICY ISSUES.

Questions of jurisdiction must be determined prior to the examination of a policy. With effects topicality, policy issues need to be decided first.

4. EFFECTS ARE INHERENTLY PROBABILISTIC.

Topicality should be a yes or no issue. If probabilities are assessed in this context, at least the affirmative should have to prove a greater than 50% likelihood that topical action will result from its plan.

5. EFFECTS UNDERCUTS NEGATIVE GROUND.

If the affirmative gets all indirect and probabilistic routes to a topical outcome, little negative ground is left.

6. EFFECTS MAKE TOPICALITY AND SOLVENCY REDUNDANT.

This violates the principle that prima facie issues should be kept conceptually separate.

EFFECTS TOPICALITY IS LEGITIMATE

1. EVEN IF A PLAN IS ONLY TOPICAL IN ITS EFFECTS, IT'S STILL TOPICAL.

It still enacts the resolution and justifies its endorsement.

2. THIS ISN'T UNDERLIMITING.

- A. Contextual evidence that a plan has a topical effect provides limits. Contextual cards don't exist for an unlimited number of cases.
- B. Resolutional action must still be a probable cause of the plan. That is, a topical outcome must be more likely than not. This precludes plans that have only a tenuous link to the topic.
- C. Limitation to first order effects provides a limit.
- D. Overlimitation is worse than underlimitation. It's better to research and learn about too many things than too few.

3. JURISDICTION NEED NOT BE DETERMINED A PRIORI.

- A. Effects are relevant to jurisdictional issues. Effects on interstate commerce, for example, determine federal jurisdiction to intervene.
- B. Jurisdiction need not be determined first in debate. In the real world, jurisdiction is determined first to save time. But the time has already been allocated for this debate.
- C. A debate logically encompasses the whole policy process from initiation to enactment. There no reason to break the debate up into the same procedural steps as actual policy making.
- D. The jurisdiction objection assumes the judge is actually modelling the behavior of real policy makers. We think the judge is just a private person endorsing or rejecting the plan.
- E. Jurisdiction is a poor model for topicality. It wouldn't let the judge vote for a non-topical counterplan.

4. TOPICALITY CAN BE PROBABILISTIC.

- A. All other issues in debate are probabilistic. Advantages and disadvantages are never certain. Even topicality that isn't effects based is probabilistic because doubt can always be raised about the acceptability of the affirmative interpretation.
- B. If the plan is probably topical (that is, more than 50% likely to be topical), adequate limits are maintained.
- C. Policy makers use probabilities in determining jurisdiction. For example, the determination that a policy has a substantial effect on interstate commerce is a probabilistic issue.

5. EFFECTS TOPICALITY ALLOWS ADEQUATE NEGATIVE GROUND.

- A. Most topics allow substantial counterplan ground even if effects are allowed. Agent counterplans and counterplans that solve the harm in a different way are usually available. And the negative can always defend the status quo.
- B. Allowing topical counterplans can solve the ground problem.
- C. There's no inherent right of the negative to counterplan.
- D. Ground is too subjective a criterion. There's no way to objectively determine adequate ground.

EFFECTS TOPICALITY IS LEGITIMATE cont'd

6. COMBINING SOLVENCY AND TOPICALITY ISN'T BAD.

- A. Other debate burdens interact. Inherency and solvency interrelate, significance burdens are relative to disadvantages, and net benefits determine the competitiveness of counterplans.
- B. Solvency in terms of gaining an advantage is independent of whether the plan produces a topical effect. The topical effect isn't an advantage in itself; it still must be shown to be beneficial.

7. MANY TOPICS CLEARLY CALL FOR AN EFFECT TO BE PRODUCED.

On such topics effects are the only way to evaluate topicality. Further, the fact that topics are often written this way implies that topic framers and the debate community at large regard effects as acceptable.

8. ALL PLANS RELY ON TOPICALITY BY EFFECTS.

Policy enactment can always be broken down into a series of effectual steps-initial proposal, committee hearings, recommendation out of committee, floor debate, passage, Presidential signature, etc.

9. EFFECTS MAY GIVE THE NEGATIVE MORE TOPICALITY GROUND.

It's often easier to prove that a plan probably won't produce a topical effect than to win a purely definitional objection.

10. EFFECTS MAY PROVIDE GREATER LIMITS.

Defining "to" effectually as "in the direction of" is far more limiting than defining it as "for the purpose of."

ARGUMENTS AGAINST EXTRA-TOPICAL PLAN PLANKS

1. THE RESOLUTION DEFINES THE JURISDICTION OF THE JUDGE AND/OR THE STANDING TO ARGUE OF THE TWO TEAMS.

The affirmative has no standing to advocate and the judge no authority to adopt extra-topical provisions.

2. THE PURPOSE OF THE RESOLUTION IS TO DIVIDE GROUND.

If the affirmative is allowed to defend extra-topical provisions this purpose has been frustrated.

3. ALLOWING EXTRA-TOPICAL PLANKS GIVES THE AFFIRMATIVE EXTRA-TOPICAL ADVANTAGES.

To avoid a DA is essentially to gain an advantage.

4. EXTRA-TOPICALITY TESTS THE PLAN IN A UTOPIAN WORLD.

It in effect allows the affirmative to recreate the world around the affirmative plan, to create a world in which its plan is desirable.

5. THE NEED FOR EXTRA-TOPICAL PROVISIONS PROVES THE RESOLUTION INSUFFICIENT.

To be justified, the resolution should be both necessary and sufficient to generate an on balance desirable policy.

6. EXTRA-TOPICALITY IS UNFAIR TO THE NEGATIVE.

The resolution provides notice regarding the policies for which the negative needs to be prepared. The range of possible plan spikes is unlimited, providing no effective notice.

7. THE TOPIC IS ALSO DESIGNED TO FOCUS DISCUSSION.

Extra-topical planks shift debate away from the desirability of topical mandates to the desirability of extra-topical mandates. Thus, focus on the resolution is lost.

8. FIAT DERIVES FROM THE WORD "SHOULD" IN THE RESOLUTION.

The affirmative can fiat topical action because the resolution is that topical action should be-adopted. There's no resolitional sanction for fiat beyond the resolution.

ARGUMENTS FOR EXTRA-TOPICAL PLAN PLANKS

1. THE RESOLUTION SERVES MAINLY TO INITIATE DISCUSSION.

It only serves as a problem area from which the advantage generating elements of the affirmative plan must derive.

2. ALLOWING EXTRA-TOPICAL PLANKS ALLOWS US TO FIND THE BEST POLICY.

The purpose of any policy debate should be to find the best policy. If topical action, accompanied by non-topical action constitutes the best policy, a rational decision-maker would endorse both. The resolution is still justified as long as it is part of the optimal policy package.

3. THIS IS THE MOST REAL WORLD.

Members of Congress attach riders to the main part of a bill. Public policy scholars often advocate provisions designed to ameliorate the potential side effects of their primary policies.

4. JURISDICTION IS A FLAWED ANALOGY.

The topic doesn't define the jurisdiction of the judge; otherwise, s/he could never vote for non-topical counterplans. Also, the jurisdictional view transforms topicality into a "risk" issue. If one needed to go beyond his or her jurisdiction to prevent nuclear war, s/he should probably do so.

5. DIVISION OF GROUND IS NOT A PROBLEM.

Focus on the plan also divides ground. The affirmative has the ground defined by its plan, the negative all ground competitive with that plan. In fact, since plan focus legitimizes topical counterplans, negative ground is increased. Extra-topical planks also provide negative ground because the negative can run disadvantages to the spikes.

6. EXTRA-TOPICAL PLANKS DON'T CREATE EXTRA-TOPICAL ADVANTAGES.

Extra-topical provisions are essentially neutral ground (like non-competitive counterplan elements); they can potentially be included in either team's policy package. Extra-topical planks can be used only to answer DAs, not to generate an advantage. In one sense, avoiding a DA is an "advantage," but it can never be an advantage which alone justified an affirmative ballot. It can remove minuses but never create an independent plus.

7. EXTRA-TOPICAL PLANKS ARE RECIPROCAL WITH THE ABILITY OF THE NEGATIVE TO COUNTERPLAN.

The counterplan attempts to create a world where the plan would be undesirable, the spike one in which it would be a good idea. The spike, therefore, is no more utopian than the counterplan. If utopianism of either spikes or counterplans is deemed a problem, the answer is to establish limiting standards of fiat, based on agent, literature context, or policy realism.

8. THE RESOLUTION NEED ONLY BE SUFFICIENT TO CREATE AN ADVANTAGE; IT NEED NOT BE SUFFICIENT TO FEND OFF ALL DA'S.

The spike proves the DA is not intrinsic to the resolution.

9. NOTICE/FAIRNESS ISN'T A PROBLEM.

The number of spikes to any DA is not unlimited. Since the negative offers the DA, they should be prepared for potential ways of solving it. The affirmative also has no "notice" about what non-topical counterplans they can expect, but they're expected to defend against all solutions to their advantage. Plan focus expands negative ground by allowing topical counterplans.

10. LOSS OF RESOLUTIONAL FOCUS ISN'T A PROBLEM.

By nature, arguments expand away from the initial core topic focus. This is true of advantages, disadvantages, and counterplans. Plan spikes may eliminate some of the less germane generics, resulting in more topic specific focus.

ARGUMENTS FOR EXTRA-TOPICAL PLAN PLANKS cont'd

11. FIAT DOESN'T EXCLUSIVELY DERIVE FROM "SHOULD."

If it did, no non-topical counterplans could be considered. Saying something "should" be done always assumes some context. The affirmative argues the topical parts of the plan should be done within the context of the other changes the plan enacts.

12. ABUSE POTENTIAL OF EXTRA-TOPICAL SPIKES IS LIMITED.

They must be in the 1AC; they can't be abandoned, and the affirmative can't win on the spike alone. Overly utopian spikes can be limited by other fiat standards parallel to those on counterplans.

EXTRA-TOPICALITY IS A VOTING ISSUE

1. EXTRA-TOPICAL PLANKS DISTORT TIME ALLOCATION.

By crowding the debate with irrelevant issues they undermine the quality of argument on the real issues of the topic. The only way to discourage this is to make extra-topicality a voting issue.

2. THE PLAN HAS TO BE TAKEN AS A WHOLE.

The judge has no line item veto. If s/he can't vote for it as a whole, s/he can't vote for any of it.

3. CONGRESSIONAL ANALOGIES SUPPORT.

If the plan is flawed, it should be sent back to committee to be rewritten.

EXTRA-TOPICALITY IS NOT A VOTING ISSUE

1. TIME ALLOCATION EFFECTS AREN'T A REASON FOR A BALLOT.

- A. Debaters make arguments to get favorable time tradeoffs all the time. Every debater in every round drops certain arguments
- B. Punishment is a poor argument paradigm. It requires suspension of the normal process of policy evaluation, so it should only be used against the worst offenses, such as evidence falsification.
- C. The punishment is excessive to the crime. If the extra-topical plank is dropped from the round, the negative can then run the disadvantage it was intended to answer.
- D. The affirmative has also had to invest time in debating this issue. It hasn't given them that much of an advantage.
- E. Compared to the total round, the time distortion is small. This single argument shouldn't be allowed to determine the whole debate.

2. MAKING EXTRA-TOPICALITY A VOTING ISSUE INTERFERES WITH FINDING THE BEST POLICY.

The goal of policy debate is to find the best policy. Theories which discourage the affirmative from writing its plan in the way in which it thinks is best undermines this goal. Not only are clearly extra-topical planks discouraged, marginally topical plan planks are as well.

3. ANALOGIES SUPPORT THE AFFIRMATIVE.

- A. Courts sometimes strike down parts of a bill.
- B. Elimination of the extra-topical plank could be regarded as a floor amendment.
- C. the analogy of counterplan competitiveness supports. Each part of the counterplan must be competitive, not just the counterplan as a whole.

4. THE SEND THE PLAN BACK TO COMMITTEE ANALOGY IS FLAWED.

- A. The debate encompasses the whole policy process. We can imagine that the plan was sent back to committee and returned to the floor within the scope of the round.
- B. Slavish reliance on legislative analogies is foolish. The judge is simply endorsing or rejecting the plan at the end of the round, and s/he can easily choose to just endorse its topical elements.

5. CHEAP SHOT NIT PICKING OF PLANS WOULD RESULT FROM MAKING EXTRA-TOPICALITY A VOTING ISSUE.

The negative would have a huge incentive to root through plans looking for something that is topically suspect. Funding and enforcement provisions could always be challenged. The result is too much debate about topicality at the expense of substantive policy.

JUSTIFICATION IS A VOTING ISSUE

1. EACH TERM IN THE RESOLUTION SHOULD BE JUSTIFIED.

This enhances logical skills by forcing examination of necessary relations between advantage and resolution.

2. FAILURE OF JUSTIFICATION ILLUSTRATES A LACK OF INHERENCY.

The failure of justification proves that there are other ways to gain the advantage without endorsing the resolution.

3. JUSTIFICATION ARGUMENTS BROADEN THE RANGE OF OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO THE JUDGE.

With more options, s/he is more likely to find the best policy.

JUSTIFICATION IS NOT A VOTING ISSUE

1. JUSTIFICATION ARGUMENTS VIOLATE ADVOCACY.

They at most suggest an alternative but they don't advocate one.

2. JUSTIFICATION ARGUMENTS ARE OVERLY VAGUE.

They don't specify a clear policy option.

3. JUSTIFICATION ARGUMENTS VIOLATE TIME LIMITS.

Innumerable justification arguments, each implicitly a conditional counterplan, could be run in each round. Superficial discussion would be inevitable.

4. COUNTERPLANS CAPTURE THE BENEFITS OF JUSTIFICATION.

They too can demonstrate that the advantage isn't inherent to the plan or that it doesn't logically necessitate the resolution.

COUNTERPLANS MUST BE NON-TOPICAL

1. TOPICAL COUNTERPLANS VIOLATE FAIR DIVISION OF GROUND.

Topics are written to provide fair ground for both sides. Since the negative already has all non-topical ground, it's inequitable to give them topical ground as well.

2. THE JUDGE MUST AFFIRM OR NEGATE THE RESOLUTION AT THE END OF THE ROUND.

The plan is just an illustration by example of the resolution's truth. Endorsing another example of the resolution still affirms the resolution.

3. THE TOPIC ISN'T JUST A PROBLEM AREA.

Topics are written as resolutions for a reason. If the debate community wanted a problem area, it could write its topics that way.

4. TOPICAL COUNTERPLANS ALLOW TRIVIAL DISTINCTIONS.

They permit the negative to counterplan with a policy virtually identical to the affirmative plan. This reduces clash and trivializes debate.

5. IF THE NEGATIVE CAN BE TOPICAL, THE AFFIRMATIVE SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO BE NON-TOPICAL.

A reciprocal extension of the topical counterplan theory is to make topicality not a voting issue against the affirmative either.

COUNTERPLANS CAN BE TOPICAL

1. THE PLAN IS THE FOCUS OF THE DEBATE.

Whether topical or not, a competitive counterplan still provides a reason to reject the plan.

2. ALLOWING TOPICAL COUNTERPLANS PRODUCES MORE SOUND POLICY ANALYSIS.

- A. The purpose of a policy debate is to find the best policy.
- B. Disallowing topical counterplans makes finding the best policy less likely. If the negative can only defend non-topical options, then it's only possible to conclude at the end of the round that the plan is better than all non-topical options. It still remains uncertain that the plan is the best policy.
- C. Topical counterplans are often the best, most germane alternatives. On many topics the real question is not whether something should be done but how to do it.
- D. Bi-directional topics necessitate topical counterplans. When both the plan and its antithesis are topical, the negative has next to no non-topical ground.

3. TOPICAL COUNTERPLANS PRODUCE FAIRER DIVISION OF GROUND.

The number of competitive counterplans against any particular affirmative is limited, usually far less than the number of topical Plans that the affirmative can choose from. Topical counterplans give the negative a more equal set of choices.

4. RESOLUTIONAL FOCUS IS UNDESIRABLE.

- A. It encourages counterproductive theories such as alternative justification and counter-warrants. Both these theories hurt debate by undermining clash.
- B. Most debate resolutions are too broad and ambiguous to evaluate as general statements of principle.
- C. Plan focus produces more valuable truths. On most topics there are hundreds of possible ways to implement the resolution. It defies credibility to think that none of these plans is a good idea. For example, it is extremely unlikely that there is no federal plan to reduce juvenile crime that's a good idea. Since we already know that the resolution, in some form, is almost certainly true; the more valuable question is which particular examples of the resolution are valid.

5. RESOLUTIONAL WORDING IS SIMPLY A TRADITION.

Functionally, resolutions have been treated as problem areas generating case lists for a long time. Ignoring the way that topics actually function is sterile formalism.

6. ANSWERS TO THE TRIVIAL DISTINCTION OBJECTION.

- A. Trivial distinctions aren't unique to topical counterplans. Exception counterplans can be non-topical, but virtually the same as the affirmative. Affirmative plans are often a very small departure from the status quo.
- B. If the distinction between plan and counterplan is great enough to generate a net benefit, then it's worth debating.
- C. There are solutions to this problem other than rejecting all topical counterplans. It's possible to require that the counterplan be substantively rather than just procedurally different from the plan. Also, rejecting plan inclusiveness solves this problem.
- D. Implementational counterplans can be good. They make the affirmative accountable for their own implementation planks. If the affirmative doesn't specify implementation provisions, implementation counterplans won't compete.
- E. This argument is a reason to reject counterplans that are trivially distinct, not a reason to reject all topical counterplans.

7. TOPICAL COUNTERPLANS DON'T JUSTIFY AFFIRMATIVE NON-TOPICALITY.

The topic determines the germaneness of the affirmative plan; it generates a case list from which the affirmative must select a plan. The topic isn't needed to assure the germaneness of the counterplan, competitiveness and standards of negative fiat do that.

COUNTERPLANS CAN BE REASONABLY NON-TOPICAL

1. THE NEGATIVE HAS AS MUCH RIGHT TO DEFINE ITS OWN GROUND AS THE AFFIRMATIVE DOES.

If the affirmative need only be reasonably topical, the negative should only have to be reasonably non-topical.

2. REASONABLE NON-TOPICALITY ENHANCES POLICY ANALYSIS.

The wider the range of options available to the negative, the more likely the best policy will be found.

3. THE AFFIRMATIVE DOESN'T HAVE AN EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO DEFINE TERMS.

Since the definition of terms implicates the ground of both teams, both have a right to an interpretation.

4. MORE THAN ONE INTERPRETATION CAN EXIST IN THE SAME ROUND.

There usually are several reasonable interpretations of a statement, so there's no reason two can't coexist in the same debate.

5. REASONABLE NON-TOPICALITY WON'T ALLOW THE NEGATIVE TO COUNTERPLAN WITH THE AFFIRMATIVE PLAN.

A counterplan must be a reason to reject the affirmative, so counterplanning with the affirmative wouldn't compete.

COUNTERPLANS MUST BE NOT REASONABLY TOPICAL

1. REASONABLE NON-TOPICALITY ALLOWS THE NEGATIVE TO COUNTERPLAN WITH THE AFFIRMATIVE PLAN.

The same policy may be both reasonably topical and reasonably non-topical. In this case, it would be impossible to decide whose ground that policy is.

2. ONE SET OF DEFINITIONS SHOULD GOVERN THE ROUND.

Allowing multiple interpretations equivocates about the meaning of the resolution.

3. AS THE ADVOCATE OF CHANGE, THE AFFIRMATIVE SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO DEFINE.

The negative must therefore be non-topical by the affirmative interpretation.

4. REASONABLE NON-TOPICALITY RISKS TRIVIALIZING DEBATE.

It allows the negative to counterplan with a policy very close to the affirmative.

FIAT SHOULD ASSUME THAT THE JUDGE IS AN ALL POWERFUL DECISION MAKER

1. POLICY MAKER MODEL GIVES TANGIBLE GUIDELINES FOR CONSTRUCTING SPECIFIC DEBATE THEORIES.

Without a specific external model specific theory constructs are completely undetermined.

2. BY SPECIFYING AN AGENT, THE RESOLUTION DESIGNATES THE PERSPECTIVE FROM WHICH THE DEBATE IS TO BE VIEWED.

In evaluating arguments on a federal topic, the judge acts as the federal government.

3. THE POLICY MAKER ROLE NEED NOT BE TOO LIMITING.

The judge acts as an ideal policy maker, one open to all arguments and not preoccupied with his or her own political advantage.

4. THE SINGLE DECISION MAKER VIEW IS INFERIOR.

- A. It destroys negative fiat. If the judge acts as a total institution--Congress, executive, or court--then s/he can fiat counterplan alternatives as long as they fall within his or her power. Acting as a single decision maker, the judge couldn't guarantee counterplan adoption.
- B. As individual decision maker, the judge can't guarantee plan passage. This opens debate up to arguments that the judge shouldn't vote for unpopular plans because it would impair reelection chances or personal influence.
- C. There is no reason to assume that the judge holds the decisive vote. It's relatively rare that single votes in Congress are decisive. Assuming this violates the policy realism which the model attempts to enhance.

FIAT SHOULD ASSUME THAT THE JUDGE IS A SINGLE DECISION MAKER

1. THE ALL POWERFUL DECISION MAKER MODEL IS INFERIOR.

- A. It's unrealistic. Decisions are always made by individuals, and they always need to take into account what other decision makers are likely to do.
- B. It creates too much fiat power. If the judge can act as the whole of Congress, there's no reason why s/he couldn't act as the whole of the federal government. This would permit unrealistic and question begging fiat through all three branches simultaneously.

2. THE ENDORSEMENT MODEL IS INFERIOR.

- A. It makes fiat unlimited. It's possible to intellectually endorse anything, from universal pacifism to different laws of nature.
- B. The policy model gives tangible guidelines for debate theory. Absent an external debate model, theory argument becomes completely ad hoc.

3. THE SINGLE DECISION MAKER MODEL IS BEST.

- A. It provides a tangible model for resolving other debate theories.
- B. It wouldn't overly expand political arguments. It assumes that the judge is an ideal, decision-maker, open to all arguments and not concerned about personal gain.

FIAT SHOULD BE VIEWED AS AN ACT OF ENDORSEMENT

1. THE JUDGE NEED NOT PRETEND TO BE AN ACTUAL POLICY MAKER.

We evaluate policy arguments all the time in our private lives. There's no need to assume an alternative persona when one comes to judge a debate.

2. VIEWING THE JUDGE AS AN ACTUAL POLICY MAKER IS TOO CONSTRAINING.

Real policy makers would never consider most of the arguments made in debate. They would reject radical and politically unpopular ideas out of hand. Even arguments like Clinton couldn't be overtly considered because they would appear too partisan.

3. THE POLICY MAKING MODEL IGNORES THE UNIQUENESS OF DEBATE.

As a competitive activity, debate has unique needs relating to fair competition. These needs are undervalued if all debate theory simply mimics the policy process.

4. DEBATE IS ESSENTIALLY AN ACADEMIC ACTIVITY.

Thus it makes more sense to evaluate arguments from a scholarly perspective rather than the prospective of an actual policy maker.

5. THE ENDORSEMENT MODEL IS NOT TOO OPEN ENDED.

It can be constrained by standards limiting the alternatives which can be considered.

6. THE ALTERNATIVES ARE INFERIOR.

Viewing the judge as an all powerful decision maker is highly unrealistic. Viewing the judge as a single decision maker destroys negative fiat and opens debate to arguments about personal political capital.

FIAT ASSUMES ATTITUDE CHANGE

1. REALISM REQUIRES THE ASSUMPTION OF ATTITUDE CHANGE.

No policy could come into being without the relevant decision-makers being persuaded to adopt it.

2. FIAT ASSUMES THE NORMAL PROCESS OF POLICY ENACTMENT.

The normal process includes persuading those who are responsible for the decision.

3. ATTITUDE CHANGE ASSUMPTION ISN'T UNFAIR TO THE NEGATIVE.

A. Fiat only assumes the minimum attitude change needed to enact the plan. The negative can still run backlash based disadvantages.

B. The fiat as persuasion view allows plan repeal as a negative argument. Repeal wouldn't be automatic, but it could result if the negative can prove a large enough backlash to make the decision-makers change their minds.

4. IMPLICATIONS OF FIAT AS PERSUASION.

A. Likelihood of circumvention is lessened. Since decision-makers have been persuaded to adopt the plan, their motives to circumvent are eliminated.

B. Backlash becomes less likely. The process of persuading policy makers involves persuading enough of the public that the plan is desirable to make it politically practical. Thus, plan adoption assumes at least some change in public attitudes.

C. Fiat isn't instantaneous. Since it comes as the end result of a process of persuasion, we should assume that currently and popular plans take some time to enact.

D. Precedent and snowball arguments are enhanced. If decision-makers are persuaded to adopt the values underlying the affirmative plan, they would be more likely to adopt other policies based on the same values.

E. Plan rejection sets a counter-precedent. This enhances disadvantage uniqueness. In voting, for example, to protect federalism, decision-makers would be embracing an attitude which would prevent its future erosion and reverse the trend of past violations.

F. Political capital links are enhanced. The most likely way an unpopular plan would be adopted is as the result of a political bargain. This implies a substantial investment of political capital in securing enactment.

FIAT DOESN'T ASSUME ATTITUDE CHANGE

1. FIAT MERELY EXTENDS TO INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES.

It doesn't extend to changing people's minds.

2. FIAT AS PERSUASION MAKES PLAN REPEAL A VALID ARGUMENT.

This is bad for debate because it means that radical or unpopular plans could never be debated--they would automatically generate a repeal-producing backlash.

3. REALISM ISN'T A PARAMOUNT VALUE WITH REGARD TO FIAT.

Fiat is simply a debate convention to permit discussion of policies based on their merits. It is inherently artificial and unrealistic.

4. ANSWERS TO IMPLICATIONS OF THE VIEW.

- A. The plan could be adopted with minimal attitude change. An unpopular plan is most likely to be adopted as a result of a political bargain. This means underlying attitudes won't be affected much.
- B. Circumvention remains likely. There's no reason to think that general public attitudes have been changed. Policy makers sometimes do (and often should) act in ways that are politically unpopular. Similarly, backlash often forces repeal or circumvention.
- C. Backlash arguments remain powerful. The minimum attitude change needed to enact the plan still leaves substantial negative public attitudes, sufficient to generate a backlash.
- D. The plan need not set a precedent. Decision-makers often act in inconsistent ways. If the plan is the result of a political bargain, then underlying attitudes need not have changed.

5. FIAT AS PERSUASION CREATES TOO MUCH UNCERTAINTY.

The exact degree of attitude change, and its effects on underlying value structures, is incalculable. This plunges debate into a morass of speculative assumptions. Debate is much clearer if it occurs based on the assumption of present attitudes.

6. THE ATTITUDE CHANGE ASSUMPTION UNDERCUTS NEGATIVE GROUND.

Backlash and circumvention arguments are the staples of negative argument. Without them, debate would be even more competitively skewed towards the affirmative.

PLAN REPEAL IS A LEGITIMATE ARGUMENT

1. FIAT SHOULD ASSUME PERSUASION.

All policies come into being as a result of persuasion, and policy enactment would be impossible without it.

2. MUST CONSIDER PERSUASION AND REPEAL.

If persuasion is assumed to enact the plan, we should consider the possible effects of persuasion in terms of plan repeal. A realistic view of fiat requires consideration of both.

3. PLAN REPEAL ARGUMENTS ARE REALISTIC.

Sometimes policies generate a backlash which produces repeal. Catastrophic medical coverage under Medicare and Clinton's gays in the military policy are examples. The risk of repeal is a legitimate factor to consider in arguing whether or not a plan should be done.

4. PLAN REPEAL ARGUMENTS WOULDN'T UNDERMINE DEBATE.

The fact that decision-makers were persuaded to adopt the plan initially means repeal wouldn't be automatic. But, if the backlash were severe enough, it would still be a possibility.

PLAN REPEAL IS NOT A LEGITIMATE ARGUMENT

1. POLICY DEBATE FOCUSES ON WHAT SHOULD BE.

Allowing repeal arguments introduces too much policy realism at the expense of normative analysis.

2. REPEAL ARGUMENTS WOULD DESTROY THE CONSIDERATION OF RADICAL OR UNPOPULAR IDEAS.

They would automatically generate a backlash which would result in repeal.

FIAT NEED NOT BE IMMEDIATE

1. FUTURE FIAT IS REALISTIC.

We sometimes do endorse the enactment of policies at some point in the future. For example, politicians often defer consideration of controversial policies until after elections.

2. THE ASSUMPTION OF NORMAL MEANS CREATES DELAY.

Fiat assumes the normal adoption process. Policies always take some time to move from the stage of initial proposal to actual enactment. In calling for its plan the affirmative endorses this normal process of enactment, not the plan's magical appearance out of the blue.

3. THE JUDGE'S DECISION SHOULD BE REGARDED AS BEGINNING THE PROCESS OF ADOPTION, NOT AS ENDING IT.

The judge isn't a real policy maker; s/he is a private citizen deciding what s/he thinks real policy makers should do. Real policy makers haven't begun the process of plan enactment. To assume that they have imagines the real world away and replaces it with an imaginary one.

4. NEGATIVE GROUND ISN'T DESTROYED.

A. The truly principled, intrinsic arguments against a policy aren't time bound. The negative can always run these arguments.

B. The negative can run arguments based on the prediction of future conditions. All debate arguments are predictive.

C. There's no right to run Clinton. This has become a tired argument. Without it, negative strategy would inevitably move in new directions.

D. Future fiat enhances negative presumption. There are more doubts about future action, so presumption is logically enhanced. This presumption is not overwhelming; if it was we. would never make plans for the future. But it still gives the negative some offsetting competitive advantage.

5. FUTURE FIAT ISN'T TOO UNCERTAIN.

We always act on the basis of uncertainties. Conditions in the near term future can be predicted with reasonable confidence.

6. ENDORSEMENT OF THE PLAN SHOULDN'T BE DEFERRED.

Based on the arguments in this debate, you should at least tentatively endorse the plan now. If conditions change, you can withdraw that endorsement. The point is that at present, support for the plan is justified.

PLAN ADOPTION SHOULD BE ASSUMED TO BE IMMEDIATE

1. DECISIONS ARE ALWAYS MADE IN THE PRESENT.

It's metaphysically impossible to fiat something in the future.

2. FUTURE FIAT UNDERMINES NEGATIVE GROUND.

It eliminates all short term, time sensitive disadvantages. Without these arguments, debate would be incredibly skewed towards the affirmative.

3. FUTURE FIAT IS TOO UNCERTAIN.

Not acting now avoids disadvantages associated with present political conditions. But it is impossible to know whether or not even worse conditions might exist at the point in time in which the plan is finally adopted. This undermines meaningful debate and creates a huge presumption against the affirmative because it requires action in the face of vast uncertainty.

4. DEFERRING ACTION IS BETTER THAN FIATING FUTURE ACTION NOW.

The affirmative position justifies rejecting their plan today. Rather than committing yourself to its future adoption, you should wait until the time when the affirmative actually calls for its adoption and decide then.

THE AFFIRMATIVE MUST SPECIFY AN AGENT

1. THE DESIRABILITY OF A POLICY OFTEN DEPENDS ON WHO IS ENACTING IT.
Lack of specification leaves the plan too vague to intelligently evaluate.
 2. LACK OF AGENT SPECIFICATION IN THE RESOLUTION DOESN'T ABSOLVE THE AFFIRMATIVE.
Exact topical mandates aren't specified by the resolution either. As with mandates, the resolution offers a range of agent options, but the affirmative must still advocate one.
 3. ALLOWING NO AGENT TO BE SPECIFIED IS A FORM OF AFFIRMATIVE CONDITIONALITY.
If allows the affirmative to in effect have multiple different versions of its plan to defend. This makes the plan a moving target and causes superficial debate.
 4. AGENT ISSUES ARE WORTHY OF DEBATE.
 - A. How policies should be enacted is an important aspect of the policy process.
 - B. Implementation debates are more realistic. They focus debate on a narrowed range of issues. The alternative is over-reliance on good is bad mega-impact generics.
 5. AGENT COUNTERPLANS ARE ESSENTIAL NEGATIVE GROUND.
On broad topics, they are one of the negative's only ways of countering a wide range of specific cases.
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THE AFFIRMATIVE NEED NOT SPECIFY AN AGENT

1. THE TOPIC DOESN'T SPECIFY A PARTICULAR AGENT.
This means that the affirmative isn't bound to defend one either.
2. SOMETIMES POLICIES ARE ADVOCATED WITHOUT SPECIFICATION OF AGENT.
Proponents of the policy believe that it's good whoever enacts it.
3. LACK OF SPECIFICATION ISN'T A FORM OF CONDITIONALITY.
The affirmative doesn't change its plan, nor can it specify an agent as the debate goes on.
4. LACK OF SPECIFICATION DOESN'T DESTROY DISADVANTAGE GROUND.
If the negative can win that a certain agent would probably adopt the plan, the affirmative is still liable to disadvantages linked to that agent.
5. AGENT COUNTERPLANS ARE UNDESIRABLE.
 - A. They are overly generic. They raise the same issues year after year.
 - B. Agent counterplans distract attention from the main issues of the topic. What should be done is almost always more important than who should do it.
 - C. Agent counterplans undermine case specific research. They undermine education by giving the negative too easy an alternative to case specific work. Even on broad topics, the negative can find other generic disadvantages.

FIAT SHOULD EXTEND TO ANY INSTITUTION

1. IT'S GOOD FOR DEBATE TO CONSIDER AS WIDE A RANGE OF OPTIONS AS POSSIBLE.

Considering international and private solutions avoids a narrow focus on statist solutions focusing on the national government.

2. THIS STANDARD ELIMINATES THE WORST ABUSES OF FIAT.

It precludes fiatting changes in natural physical laws or individual attitudes.

3. PERSUASION ISN'T LIMITED TO DOMESTIC PUBLIC ACTORS.

It's possible to try to persuade foreign governments (as Amnesty International does) or private corporations (as consumer groups do regularly). If fiat is seen as the end result of persuasion, there's no reason it shouldn't extend to all institutions.

PRIVATE SECTOR FIAT SHOULD BE REJECTED

1. IT IS QUESTION BEGGING.

Debates over government regulation of business assume that corporations are behaving in problematic ways. To imagine that they will always act so as to promote the public interest fiats away the real world context from which the resolution was drawn.

2. PRIVATE FIAT IS RADICALLY UTOPIAN.

It would allow, for example, pollution to be solved by all businesses voluntarily ceasing to pollute. Considering options like this which will never occur diverts attention from real solutions.

3. WHAT PRIVATE ACTORS SHOULD DO, BUT DON'T, IS IRRELEVANT TO WHAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD DO.

Effective public policy requires a realistic assessment of the actual behavior of private actors.

4. PRIVATE FIAT VIOLATES THE INSTITUTIONAL NATURE OF BUSINESSES.

By their nature, businesses are profit motivated. A counterplan which forces them to act against their profit motive constitutes an economic fantasy.

FOREIGN FIAT SHOULD BE REJECTED

1. IT IS QUESTION BEGGING.

Topics relating to American foreign policy are written because the behavior of foreign nations is considered problematic. Foreign fiat imagines away the context which gave birth to the topic. For example, the debate over changing U.S. foreign policy towards China would become meaningless if China voluntarily did everything that we want them to do.

2. FOREIGN FIAT IS TOO UTOPIAN.

It would permit the negative to solve all war impacts by fiat global disarmament. There's no point in debating policies like this that could never occur. Doing so distracts attention from real solutions.

3. WHAT OTHER COUNTRIES SHOULD DO, BUT WON'T, IS IRRELEVANT TO WHAT THE UNITED STATES SHOULD DO.

What it should do has to be governed by a realistic assessment of the world as it is, not as it ideally ought to be.

4. LANGUAGE BARRIERS AND LIMITED ACCESS TO MATERIALS UNDERCUT EFFECTIVE DEBATE ABOUT WHAT FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS SHOULD DO.

Materials available to debaters will almost totally reflect an American viewpoint, while materials expressing the viewpoint of foreign governments is likely to be unavailable or even in a foreign language.

5. FOREIGN FIAT PERMITS COUNTRY OF THE WEEK COUNTERPLANS.

With over a hundred sovereign nation states in the world, most of whom could do most plans, this gives the negative too much latitude and the affirmative too little chance to prepare. A quick computer search can probably find a contextual card to support most such counterplans.

THE SUBJECT/OBJECT STANDARD IS AN APPROPRIATE LIMIT FOR NEGATIVE FIAT

1. THE PRESENT BEHAVIOR OF THE OBJECT OF THE RESOLUTION PROVIDES THE BACKGROUND CONTEXT FOR THE RESOLUTION.

But the resolution does not necessarily assume the present behavior of all other international actors. Fiat should therefore be permitted through these alternative subjects.

2. THIS STANDARD ELIMINATES THE WORST POTENTIAL ABUSES OF FIAT.

For example, it would exclude counterplans on the China topic that would fiat China solving its own human rights abuses. On the mideast topic, it wouldn't permit a counterplan to have the topic countries voluntarily disarm.

3. LIMITED FOREIGN FIAT IS DESIRABLE.

- A. It tests whether the issue is really one in which the United States has a unique need to be involved.
- B. It is competitively desirable. The negative is already at a competitive disadvantage. Excluding fiat over foreign countries would further undercut their ability to compete.
- C. Global perspectives are desirable. Looking at problems from a global perspective opens up possible solutions that a narrowly national viewpoint would preclude.

THE SUBJECT/OBJECT STANDARD IS NOT A GOOD LIMIT FOR FIAT

1. THE BEHAVIOR OF ALL INTERNATIONAL ACTORS IS THE CONTEXT OUT OF WHICH THE RESOLUTION COMES.

There's no principled distinction between imagining a change in Japan's policies and a change in China's.

2. THIRD PARTY COUNTERPLANS STILL HAVE A LARGE ABUSE POTENTIAL.

Even if the negative were not allowed, on the China topic, for example, to stop Chinese arms exports, it could get that all other countries stop their Chinese arms purchases. On the mid-east topic, Iranian and Iraqi disarmament would have been permissible counterplans. World disarmament by non-topic countries would be permitted and would solve most war harms, since it takes two countries to fight a war.

3. THIS DISTINCTION FAILS TO FIT WITHIN A GENERAL VIEW OF FIAT.

A. If fiat is seen as the end result of persuasion, there's no reason persuasion couldn't be addressed to topic countries as well as non-topic countries. In fact, the persuasion of topic countries is more realistic since the issues involve them more directly.

B. If fiat is seen as intellectual endorsement, there's no reason why actions by the resolution's object couldn't also be endorsed.

C. If fiat is grounded in a literal policy making model, then no foreign fiat would be permitted at all because the judge is assumed to be acting as the agent of the resolution.

4. THE SUBJECT/OBJECT STANDARD UNDERMINES AFFIRMATIVE FIAT ON MANY TOPICS.

On topics calling for the U.S. government to reform itself, the U.S. government is both the subject and the object of the resolution. This would make any affirmative fiat impermissible.

5. THE OBJECT OF RESOLUTIONAL INTEREST ISN'T JUST THE GRAMMATICAL OBJECT OF THE RESOLUTION AS A SENTENCE.

On foreign topics, the true object is the topic country and the total set of its international relations. By this logic, it should be impermissible to change any of these relationships.

6. FOREIGN FIAT IS ILLEGITIMATE.

(See blocks against foreign fiat and defending the domestic public actor standard.)

7. THIS STANDARD GIVES THE NEGATIVE TOO GREAT A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE.

On aid related topics, there are relatively few types of aid which only the U.S. can provide. The real question here is usually whether or not aid should be given, not who should give it.

8. GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ARE UNREALISTIC.

The world as we know it is made up of competing nation states. To imagine this reality away is a dangerous illusion.

FIAT THROUGH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IS ACCEPTABLE

1. INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS FALL WITHIN REALM OF DISCOURSE ASSOCIATED WITH AMERICAN PUBLIC POLICY.

At least for organizations to which the United States belongs, it is appropriate for American citizens to think about what these organizations should do.

2. INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS ARE SUBJECT TO PERSUASION.

As public actors they can be influenced by international public opinion. The debate can be seen as an attempt to shape that international public opinion.

3. DEVELOPING GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES IS DESIRABLE.

Being wedded to a narrow national perspective undermines truly global solutions.

4. THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM NEED NOT BE INHERENTLY COMPETITIVE IF TRULY GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ARE CULTIVATED.

Arguments based on political realism are self-fulfilling prophecies.

5. STATES NEITHER DO NOR SHOULD ALWAYS ACT TO MAXIMIZE SOVEREIGNTY AND SELF-INTEREST.

The existence of many international organizations and the whole body of international law proves this.

FIAT THROUGH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD BE REJECTED

1. INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS ARE THE INSTRUMENTS OF THE NATION STATES WHICH BELONG TO THEM.

Thus, to fiat through an international organization means in effect to fiat through multiple individual nations.

2. FOREIGN FIAT IS UNDESIRABLE.

(See arguments on the "foreign fiat should be rejected" block.)

3. INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AREN'T SUBJECT TO DIRECT DEMOCRATIC INFLUENCE.

Their constituency is the governments of their members, not the general public. If debate is seen as an adjunct to democratic decision making, then international organizations are an inappropriate object of fiat.

4. INTERNATIONAL FIAT IS UTOPIAN.

In effect, it fiats global cooperation in a particular area. Universal cooperation defies the nature of the international system, which is anarchistic and competitive.

5. INTERNATIONAL FIAT VIOLATES THE INSTITUTIONAL NATURE OF NATION STATES.

By nature states are sovereignty maximizers. It violates their nature to have them act in ways contrary to their own national interest.

6. WHAT INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD DO, BUT WON'T, DOESN'T DETERMINE WHAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT SHOULD DO.

What it should do ought to be based on a realistic assessment of what other actors will do.

7. THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM IS ANARCHIC.

Robert O. Keohane, Harvard University Dept of Government Chair, INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND STATE POWER, 1989, p.1.

Even those observers of contemporary world politics who have emphasized the importance of transnational relations agree that "states have been and remain the most important actors in world affairs" (Keohane and Nye, 1972:xxiv). Furthermore, they recognize that international systems are decentralized: "Formally, each is the equal of all the others. None is entitled to command; none is required to obey" (Waltz, 1979:88). Although the term "anarchy" is loaded and potentially misleading because of its association with chaos and disorder, it characterizes world politics in the sense that world politics lacks a common government (Axelrod and Keohane, 1985:226). "In the absence of agents with system-wide authority, formal relations of super- and subordination fail to develop" (Waltz, 1979:88).

8. POWER MAXIMIZATION IS THE ESSENCE OF THE STATE SYSTEM.

John J. Mearsheimer, University of Chicago Dept of Political Science Chair. INTERNATIONAL SECURITY, Winter 1991, p.220.

Why should we expect trouble in the new Europe? At an abstract level, anarchy provides states with strong incentives to increase their power at the expense of potential rivals thus making it virtually impossible to conceive of a Europe populated by status quo powers. The historical record supports this proposition. Since the inception of the modern state system in 1648, politics among European states has revolved around the competition for power.

9. EVEN NEO-LIBERALS SEE STATES AS THE CENTER OF WORLD POLITICS.

Robert O. Keohane, Harvard University Department of Government Chair, INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND STATE POWER, 1989, p.2.

Neoliberal institutions do not assert that international agreements are easy to make or keep: indeed, we assume the contrary. What we do claim is that the ability of states to communicate and cooperate depends on human-constructed institutions, which vary historically and across issues, in nature (with respect to the policies they incorporate) and in strength (in terms of the degree to which their rules are clearly specified and routinely obeyed) (Aggarwal, 1985 :31). States are at the center of our interpretation of world politics, as they are for realists; but formal and informal rules play a much larger role in the neoliberal than in the realist account.

FIAT THROUGH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD BE REJECTED cont'd

10. EMPHASIS ON NATIONAL SELF-INTEREST IS MORALLY SOUND.

David Hendrickson, Colorado College Political Scientist, FREE MOVEMENT, Brian Barry and Robert Goodin, eds., 1992, p.217.

Realism, moreover, has been closely identified in European history with the defense of the state system and with the refuge from oppressive power that a system of independent states permitted. A pointed contrast was often drawn - most memorably, perhaps, by Gibbon - between the multiplicity and diversity fostered by this system and the oppressive weight of the old Roman dominion. The ability to flee is an important value secured by the plurality of independent states, and has always formed one of its most compelling justifications.

David Hendrickson, Colorado College Political Scientist, FREE MOVEMENT, Brian Barry and Robert Goodin, eds., 1992, p.215.

Far more characteristic of the realist position, however, is the view that action on behalf of national interest is itself an ethical imperative. The preservation of the state's security, well-being and institutional integrity is the condition for the realization of other values, without which no civilized existence is possible.

FIAT SHOULD BE LIMITED TO AGENTS ACTING IN ACCORD WITH THEIR INSTITUTIONAL NATURE

1. INSTITUTIONS POSSESS DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS.

For example, corporations inherently seek profits and nation states protect sovereignty.

2. FIAT CONTRARY TO INSTITUTIONAL NATURE VIOLATES THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF HUMAN NATURE.

It fiats, in effect, what is practically impossible in the world as we know it. Fiat contrary to human nature is no more legitimate than fiatting a change in the laws of physical nature.

3. THIS STANDARD SETS A GOOD LIMIT FOR DEBATE.

It rules out most private and international counterplans but permits relevant domestic governmental counterplans.

THE INSTITUTIONAL NATURE STANDARD SHOULD BE REJECTED

1. THE IDEA OF AN INSTITUTIONAL NATURE IS A METAPHYSICAL ABSTRACTION.

Institutions evolve; they don't possess a fixed constant nature.

2. ALL INSTITUTIONS ARE SUBJECT TO COMPETING INFLUENCES.

Thus, on occasion nation states do surrender some of their sovereignty and corporations accept less in the way of profits.

3. MODERN PHILOSOPHY REJECTS THE IDEA OF FIXED HUMAN NATURE.

According to existentialism, people don't possess an a priori essence. "Existence precedes essence"; that is, one's essence is a product of experience. Similarly, postmodernism and feminism reject the idea of human nature as an "essentialist" dogma. Given the suspect philosophical status of this concept, it shouldn't serve as a basis for fiat.

4. THIS STANDARD WOULD OVERLY LIMIT AFFIRMATIVE FIAT.

Affirmative teams often call on the federal government to engage in global altruism or to limit its own power.

FIAT SHOULD BE LIMITED TO DOMESTIC PUBLIC ACTORS

1. NEGATIVE FIAT MUST BE LIMITED.

- A. Without limits there is limitless abuse potential. The negative could potentially counterplan by changing the laws of nature so that weapons no longer kill, or they could fiat that all criminals morally reform themselves.
- B. Unlimited fiat is question begging. Resolutions emerge out of the context of real world problems and situations. Foreign topics assume a world of competitive sovereign nation states. Domestic regulatory topics assume profit-motivated corporations. To imagine away the context from which the resolution is drawn destroys meaningful debate.
- C. Unlimited fiat destroys the discussion directing function of the topic. New topics are selected each year to allow new issues to be debated. Super-generic counterplans such as world government or world anarchy frustrate this purpose.
- D. Unlimited fiat is utopian. Options such as anarchy and world government are practical impossibilities in the contemporary world. It's much more useful to debate about policies that actually could exist.

2. DOMESTIC PUBLIC ACTORS IS THE BEST LIMIT FOR NEGATIVE FIAT.

- A. Domestic public policy is the implicit realm of discourse for academic policy debate. Every college and high school policy topic of the last twenty years has called for action by domestic public policy makers. This suggests that the context for this debate is the framework of domestic public policy making.
- B. Every discussion or debate has to assume a context. Decisions are only meaningful to particular people in particular situations. Looking at issues from a God's eye view has no practical value.
- C. Debate is best understood as an adjunct to democratic decision making. This explains why we always select the topics we do. As American citizens we should be concerned about the actions of our government, which we have at least some fractional impact upon, rather than other institutions over which we have no formal influence.
- D. The domestic public actor framework is assumed by the policy literature from which the topic is drawn. Discussions of what the U.S. government should do almost always take the behavior of other actors as a given, as part of the environment with which U.S. government decision makers must deal.

3. THE DOMESTIC PUBLIC ACTOR STANDARD IS NOT TOO LIMITED.

It still allows fiat to occur through all branches of the federal government as well as state and local governments.

4. THE DOMESTIC PUBLIC ACTOR STANDARD IS NOT TOO BROAD.

State or local action as an alternative to federal action is a recurrent issue in American politics due to the structure of its government. These issues, as well as issues involving the different branches of the federal government should, therefore, be debated.

5. ACTUAL INFLUENCE ON POLICY IS IRRELEVANT.

As citizens of a democracy, members of the debate community have a unique responsibility to evaluate the decisions of their government.

6. IN INSTANCES WHERE NON-U.S. GOVERNMENT ACTION IS PROPOSED AS AN ALTERNATIVE, PROBABILITY OF ADOPTION REMAINS AN ISSUE.

Suggestions that NATO should act in Bosnia or businesses should self-regulate are effectively countered by the empirical failure of such approaches. What another agent should do doesn't decisively determine what the U.S. government should do.

FIAT SHOULD BE LIMITED TO DOMESTIC PUBLIC ACTORS cont'd

7. COMBINING THIS STANDARD WITH A FIELD CONTEXT REQUIREMENT PROVIDES ADDITIONAL LIMITS.
8. AMERICANS SHOULD FOCUS ON THE ACTIONS OF THEIR OWN GOVERNMENT.

Douglas Lackey, Professor of Philosophy, City College of New York, THE ETHICS OF WAR AND PEACE, 1989, p.xi.

Readers will notice that I have concentrated my criticisms on actions of the United States and the allies of the United States, particularly the state of Israel. I say little about actions by opponents of the United States, for example, the Soviet Union's invasions of Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Afghanistan. There are two reasons for this selectiveness. First, these Soviet invasions were so blatantly immoral that they leave little room for analysis or debate, only condemnation. Second, as an American citizen, I feel morally responsible for actions taken by the United States, not for actions taken by the Soviets. As an American citizen, I also feel indirectly responsible for actions taken by the state of Israel, which every year receives over three billion dollars in American aid.

THE DOMESTIC PUBLIC ACTOR STANDARD IS UNDESIRABLE

1. OTHER STANDARDS PLACE LIMITS ON NEGATIVE FIAT.

Even a standard ruling out individual fiat sets some limits and avoids the worst potential abuses of negative fiat.

2. NOT ALL TOPICS HAVE DOMESTIC PUBLIC ACTORS AS THEIR AGENTS.

One high school topic of the early 1970s focused on the actions of international organizations. There have been other international topics.

3. DEMOCRATIC DECISION MAKING CONCERNS DON'T JUSTIFY THIS STANDARD.

A. Individual debaters and judges have only a minuscule effect on actual policy making. Public and academic debates have next to no influence on real decisions, so it isn't useful to look at them from this perspective.

B. Individuals can influence actors other than their own elected officials. Foreign governments are subject to pressure by private groups such as Amnesty International. Private corporations are subject financial pressures. Private NGOs can be lobbied or influenced through donations.

C. Not all debaters are American citizens. There's no reason they should be constrained by this viewpoint.

4. THE LITERATURE DOESN'T ALWAYS LIMIT ITSELF TO DISCUSSION OF WHAT DOMESTIC PUBLIC ACTORS SHOULD DO.

In the debate over Bosnia a major argument was that Europe should act, not America. Self-regulation by private industry is frequently proposed as an alternative to government regulation.

5. THE DOMESTIC PUBLIC ACTOR STANDARD IS TOO LIMITED.

Debaters and judges are citizens of the world, not just of particular nation states. It isn't good to just cultivate narrowly nationalistic perspectives.

6. THE DOMESTIC PUBLIC ACTOR STANDARD IS TOO BROAD.

It still allows anarchy, socialism, libertarianism, big-regionalism, and other utopian counterplans to be run. It also allows the super-generic and unrealistic counterplan of all fifty states acting identically and in unison.

NEGATIVE FIAT SHOULD BE LIMITED TO ACTIONS PROPOSED IN THE TOPIC'S POLICY LITERATURE

1. NEGATIVE FIAT MUST BE LIMITED.

(See reasons indicated in the "fiat should be limited to domestic public actors" brief.)

2. A FIELD CONTEXT STANDARD IS OPTIMAL.

- A. Every discussion and debate assumes a context. Decisions are only meaningful to particular people in particular situations.
- B. The literature best defines the context within which the debate over a particular resolution occurs. It indicates empirically what are regarded as the relevant options.
- C. The analogy to affirmative topicality supports. The recognition that meaning is contextual has led to the widespread endorsement of field context as a standard for affirmative topic interpretation.

3. THE FIELD CONTEXT STANDARD IS NOT TOO LIMITING.

If the negative can find no expert who endorses its counterplan as an alternative to the affirmative, then it obviously is not considered germane in the context of real world policy discussions. Thus, there is little intellectual value in discussing it.

4. THE FIELD CONTEXT STANDARD IS NOT TOO BROAD.

If the counterplan is proposed in the literature, then there are authorities who empirically consider it a germane alternative. Thus, it should be considered.

5. THE SPECIFIC EVIDENCE REQUIREMENT FOR COUNTERPLANS DOESN'T IMPLY A SIMILAR BURDEN FOR DISADVANTAGES.

Disadvantage links are questions of probabilities, and various forms of proof are relevant in establishing the level of risk to be assigned. Counterplan fiat involves a question of germaneness, a question of relevance rather than probabilities. To determine germaneness, field context is uniquely appropriate.

6. SMALL COUNTERPLANS DIRECTLY LINKED TO SOLVING SPECIFIC HARMS OR CREATING UNIQUENESS COULD BE EXEMPT FROM THIS STANDARD.

Their direct logical germaneness is self-evident. This is still a good standard for large, generic counterplans,

7. COMBINING THIS STANDARD WITH THE DOMESTIC PUBLIC ACTOR STANDARD PROVIDES AN OPTIMAL LIMIT.

THE FIELD CONTEXT STANDARD FOR NEGATIVE FIAT IS UNDESIRABLE

1. FIELD CONTEXT IS TOO VAGUE A STANDARD.

- A. The literature surrounding the resolution is too vague a concept. Literature always refers to other literature in an infinite set of circles. There's no point at which literature stops being relevant.
- B. The standard is either too expansive or too limiting. If the counterplan must be proposed in the literature as an alternative to the particular affirmative plan, then almost no counterplans would be allowed. If it merely needs to appear in the general literature related to the topic, almost anything goes.

2. THE STANDARD IS REJECTED IN ANALOGOUS SITUATIONS.

- A. Specific link evidence isn't required for disadvantages to be run against particular plans.
- B. The specific affirmative plan doesn't need to appear in the literature, so there's no reason that the counterplan should have to.

3. THE STANDARD EXCLUDES MANY LOGICAL, LIMITED COUNTERPLANS.

Counterplans to address specific harms often don't appear in the literature. Counterplans to make disadvantages unique almost never do.

4. THE FIELD CONTEXT STANDARD IS TOO BROAD.

Most topics can be linked, at least indirectly, to the standard utopian counterplans. Germaneness is just a computer search away.

FIAT SHOULD BE LIMITED TO A SINGLE ACTOR

1. DECISIONS ARE ALWAYS MADE FROM THE STANDPOINT OF SINGLE ACTORS.

No one can ever decide at once what multiple actors will do.

2. MULTIPLE ACTOR FIAT IS EXTREMELY UNREALISTIC.

Requiring that all branches of the government and the bureaucracy will support the plan is essentially utopian.

3. RESISTANCE BY OTHER AGENTS IS AN ISSUE WHICH SHOULD BE DEBATED.

This question can't be considered if the opposition of all other institutional actors can be imagined away.

FIAT NEED NOT BE LIMITED TO A SINGLE ACTOR

1. WE SOMETIMES DO CONSIDER WHAT MULTIPLE ACTORS SHOULD DO.

Policy proposals are often directed simultaneously to a variety of different groups.

2. FIAT SHOULD BE VIEWED AS A NORMATIVE ENDORSEMENT.

From this perspective, we can easily endorse what multiple different actors should do.

3. MULTIPLE AGENT FIAT ENJOYS GENERAL ACCEPTANCE.

The affirmative often fiats how President, Congress, and courts will act with regard to a particular policy, and this has never been theoretically controversial.

4. ALMOST ALL PLANS REQUIRE ACTION BY MULTIPLE AGENTS.

Acting though Congress implies the persuasion of over half of its 535 members. There's no difference between this and persuading actors in other government institutions.

5. COOPERATION OFFERS DISADVANTAGE GROUND AS WELL AS CONFLICT.

Interbranch cooperation and bipartisanship are arguably bad as well as good.

NEGATIVE FIAT SHOULD BE LIMITED TO THE RESOLUTIONAL AGENT

1. THE RESOLUTIONAL AGENT DEFINES THE PERSPECTIVE FROM WHICH THE DEBATE SHOULD BE EVALUATED.
 - A. The policy making model supports. If the judge assumes the role of a policy maker, s/he has to occupy a certain institutional role. A federal policy maker evaluating a federal resolution couldn't simultaneously be a state or international policy maker.
 - B. The endorsement concept of fiat also supports. Even if the judge is just deciding what s/he thinks the federal government should do, this evaluation still assumes the perspective of federal decision makers.
 - C. What the federal government should do isn't determined by what other agents should do. What we should do as agents is determined by what others actually will do, not by what we think they ought to do.
2. THE RESOLUTIONAL AGENT STANDARD IS NOT TOO LIMITED.
 - A. There are many possible alternatives that even individual agents can undertake.
 - B. Even radical alternatives such as changing government forms would still be allowed, as long as the same agent could undertake them.
3. THIS STANDARD PROVIDES THE BRIGHTEST LINE.

It doesn't require evaluation of the literature or degrees of democratic input into various institutions.

NEGATIVE FIAT SHOULD NOT BE LIMITED TO THE RESOLUTIONAL AGENT

1. THE STRICT POLICY MAKING MODEL SHOULD BE REJECTED.

Judges aren't policy makers; they are debate judges. Debate commonly considers many arguments actual policy makers would reject, and there's no reason debates have to be evaluated from the perspective of a literal policy maker.

2. THIS STANDARD ASSUMES THAT THE RESOLUTION'S PRIMARY QUESTION IS WHAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD DO RATHER THAN WHO SHOULD DO THE SUBSTANCE OF THE RESOLUTION.

But there's nothing in the logic or grammar of the resolution that justifies this conclusion.

3. ISSUES OF AGENT SHOULD BE EVALUATED.

Who should do something is often as important as what should be done.

4. IF WE SHOULD TAKE THE ACTUAL BEHAVIOR OF OTHER AGENTS AS A BACKGROUND TO TOPICAL ANALYSIS, THEN WE SHOULD ALSO CONSIDER THE LIKELIHOOD OF OTHER COUNTERPLANS BEING PASSED BY THE SAME AGENT.

A real decision maker wouldn't have unlimited fiat over all other policies either. They would also have to be evaluated in a context of practical political probabilities. But subjecting all counterplans to probabilistic analysis would effectively destroy the counterplan as a negative option.

5. THIS STANDARD OVERLIMITS NEGATIVE GROUND.

On broad topics especially, the negative needs the agent counterplan option to remain competitive.

6. THIS ISN'T THE ONLY BRIGHT LINE STANDARD.

The domestic public actor standard is equally bright.

7. A BRIGHT LINE FOR NEGATIVE FIAT ISN'T NECESSARY.

Counterplans should be evaluated for abuse on a case by case basis. If there's no abuse in the particular round, then there's no reason to exclude it.

**FIAT SHOULD BE LIMITED TO COUNTERPLANS AS
POLITICALLY REALISTIC AS THE AFFIRMATIVE PLAN
(THE REALM OF DISCOURSE STANDARD)**

1. UTOPIAN COUNTERPLANS NEED TO BE LIMITED.
 - A. They produce politically unrealistic debate, focusing attention on alternatives with no real chance of passage.
 - B. They are overly generic, being run on topic after topic.
 - C. They are question begging, imagining away the real world context from which the resolution originated.
2. IT'S POSSIBLE TO ENDORSE A PLAN AS BETTER THAN THE STATUS QUO AND A COUNTERPLAN AS THE BEST POSSIBLE POLICY AT THE SAME TIME.

In this case, since both can be endorsed, the counterplan isn't a reason to reject the affirmative. This simultaneous endorsement is possible because the two policies aren't really in the same realm of discourse.

3. TO GUARANTEE THAT COUNTERPLANS REALLY DO FALL WITHIN THE SAME REALM OF DISCOURSE AS THE AFFIRMATIVE, ONLY COUNTERPLANS AS POLITICALLY REALISTIC AS THE PLAN SHOULD BE CONSIDERED.
4. THIS STANDARD IS FAIR TO THE NEGATIVE.

It eliminates utopian counterplans against small incremental affirmatives, but it still allows radical counterplans against radical affirmatives.

THE REALM OF DISCOURSE STANDARD SHOULD BE REJECTED

1. THERE ARE IMPORTANT VALUES ASSOCIATED WITH CONSIDERING RADICALLY DIFFERENT ALTERNATIVE FUTURES.

Sometime only radical changes offer a true solution, and radical perspectives help to illuminate mainstream values.

2. DEBATE IS AN ACADEMIC ACTIVITY.

Debaters are students whose potential political influence lies in the future. It's more educational for them to consider a wide range of scholarly perspectives rather than just those that are politically mainstream.

3. ADVOCACY INFLUENCES PROBABILITY OF ADOPTION.

Many policies that were once considered beyond the pale become mainstream by being advocated and argued. Precluding this process is intellectually stultifying.

4. TOPIC TRIVIALIZATION RESULTS FROM THIS STANDARD.

It encourages affirmatives to pick plans as close to the status quo as possible in order to foreclose counterplans.

5. THE COUNTERPLAN AS A STRATEGY WOULD BE EFFECTIVELY DESTROYED BY THIS APPROACH.

Most counterplans are less likely than affirmative plans, especially generic ones. Removing this option from the negative arsenal would make debate even more competitively biased towards the affirmative than it already is.

6. EVEN REAL WORLD POLICY-MAKERS DON'T USE THIS STANDARD.

Opponents of a bill often offer a counterproposal even though they think it is unlikely to pass.

7. PROBABILITIES OF ADOPTION ARE TOO DIFFICULT TO EVALUATE.

Most policy literature describes what should be done; it doesn't evaluate the likelihood of adoption.

NEGATIVE FIAT IS ILLEGITIMATE

1. AFFIRMATIVE FIAT DERIVES FROM THE WORD "SHOULD" IN THE RESOLUTION.

There's no negative resolution from which the negative can derive a reciprocal power of fiat.

2. COUNTERPLANS DON'T JUSTIFY NOT ENDORSING THE AFFIRMATIVE PLAN.

Even if the judge can't endorse the plan as the best policy, s/he can still endorse it as better than the status quo.

3. WE OFTEN ENDORSE ONE POLICY AS BETTER AND ANOTHER POLICY AS BEST AT THE SAME TIME.

For example, one might simultaneously endorse the view that Colin Powell would be the best President and that Bob Dole would be a better President than Bill Clinton.

4. VIEWING THE JUDGE AS A PARTICIPANT IN THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS JUSTIFIES REJECTING NEGATIVE FIAT.

A. The judge should be viewed as a participant--an individual decision maker voting on the plan--rather than as an all-powerful decision maker with absolute control. This is a far more realistic view of fiat because in the real world no decision maker has absolute power.

B. As a limited decision maker the judge would not reject the plan without considering the probabilities of the counterplan being able to pass. Even if the counterplan is best, it isn't a reason to reject the plan if it's too unpopular to pass.

5. THE COUNTERPLAN HAS IMPACT ONLY AS A DISADVANTAGE.

The negative must not only win an impact--that the counterplan is better--but a link: that the plan makes the counterplan less likely.

6. NO NEGATIVE FIAT PRODUCES BETTER DEBATE.

It eliminates utopianism and focuses on more realistic comparisons of plan and status quo.

7. ELIMINATING NEGATIVE FIAT PRODUCES MORE IN DEPTH ANALYSIS.

A. Counterplans inevitably create multiple options for the judge to consider. These include the plan alone, the counterplan alone, neither plan nor counterplan, plan and counterplan together, and plan with any subset of the counterplan., Trying to consider all these options in the same round produces superficial debate.

B. Even if the status quo drops out of the round after the counterplan is introduced, the affirmative has wasted the 1AC indicting the present system.

8. RECIPROCITY ISN'T A DECISIVE CONSIDERATION.

If negative fiat is theoretically and practically unsound, exact reciprocity with the affirmative isn't necessary. Presumption is a non-reciprocal benefit which the negative continues to enjoy.

NEGATIVE FIAT IS LEGITIMATE

1. IT FOLLOWS FROM THE LOGIC OF POLICY DISCOURSE.

The purpose of a policy debate is to find the best policy. If only the plan and the status quo can be considered, discovery of the best policy is less likely.

2. THE EQUIVALENT OF THE COUNTERPLANS EXISTS IN ALMOST ALL OTHER POLICY FORUMS.

When the Democrats offer a proposal to deal with one problem, the Republicans often respond with a counterproposal. Scholars evaluating policy proposals often make counterproposals of their own.

3. RECIPROCITY JUSTIFIES NEGATIVE FIAT.

- A. Fairness dictates that theory constructs should apply, when possible, to both sides. Since the affirmative can propose change, the negative should be able to as well.
- B. The affirmative already enjoys a substantial side advantage. The prerogative of case selection far outweighs the tiny benefit to the negative of presumption.
- C. Even with the counterplan option, the affirmative wins far more than the negative. Eliminating counterplans would produce a vast competitive distortion.

4. THE TERM "SHOULD" DOESN'T LIMIT FIAT TO THE AFFIRMATIVE.

- A. Saying something "should" be done implies it should be done relative to some range of alternatives. The counterplan proves it "should not" be done relative to the counterplan.
- B. Fiat derives not so much from the word "should" as from the basic concept of policy debate--which is that the best policy should be found and endorsed.

5. UNDERLYING CONCEPTS OF FIAT JUSTIFY NEGATIVE FIAT.

- A. If the judge is pretending to be an actual policy maker, s/he would enjoy at least the powers vested in the resolutional agent. Acting as that agent, s/he could be persuaded to adopt the counterplan.
- B. Viewing fiat as endorsement justifies negative fiat. If all the judge is doing is endorsing the desirability of the plan, then she can just as easily endorse the desirability of the counterplan. This is the best view of fiat because it is the most realistic--it doesn't require the judge to assume any artificial roles.

6. JUST ENDORSING THE PLAN AS BETTER THAN THE STATUS QUO ISN'T REASON ENOUGH TO VOTE AFFIRMATIVE.

Since the affirmative can pick its plan, the negative should be able to pick the alternative to which it will be compared.

7. THE COUNTERPLAN AS DISADVANTAGE ARGUMENT IS QUESTION BEGGING; IT ALREADY ASSUMES THAT THERE IS NO NEGATIVE FIAT.

8. UTOPIANISM ISN'T A VALID REASON TO REJECT NEGATIVE FIAT.

- A. It's possible to set standards to limit out utopian counterplans, while still permitting the non-utopian.
- B. Utopianism isn't a principled objection. Sometimes affirmative plans can be utopian too.
- C. Utopianism isn't necessarily evil. There are also values associated with considering alternative futures.

NEGATIVE FIAT IS LEGITIMATE cont'd

9. COUNTERPLANS NEED NOT PRODUCE SUPERFICIAL DEBATE.

- A. The negative can be limited to the counterplan as its only option.
- B. Allowing reversion to the status quo doesn't overly complicate the debate. The affirmative has already established its advantages relative to the status quo in the 1AC, and disadvantages are usually unique relative to the status quo as well as to the counterplan.
- C. Most permutations, especially the do both permutation, aren't especially complicated to resolve.
- D. If necessary, the affirmative can be limited to one permutation and even required to advocate any permutation they advance. This could limit the debate to two policies while allowing the counterplan.

10. THE AFFIRMATIVE NEED NOT WASTE ITS 1AC.

Most 1ACs are mainly designed to preempt negative arguments. There's no reason the affirmative couldn't use its 1AC to preempt a counterplan as well as a status quo defense.

NEITHER TEAM SHOULD HAVE FIAT

1. POLICY DEBATE DOESN'T REQUIRE FIAT.

Policies can be evaluated by multiplying their impact times their probability of adoption and then weighing them.

2. THIS APPROACH BEST BALANCES POLICY REALISM WITH THE CONSIDERATION OF IDEAL ALTERNATIVE FUTURES.

More probable policies have an advantage, but improbable policies would still have weight if their impact is great enough.

3. THIS APPROACH IS FAIR TO BOTH SIDES.

It doesn't give fiat just to the affirmative.

THE NO FIAT THEORY SHOULD BE REJECTED

1. FIAT IS JUST A LOGICAL SHORTHAND FOR SAYING THAT SOMETHING SHOULD BE DONE.

To evaluate probabilities in considering what should be done confuses "should" and "would."

2. REJECTING FIAT UNDERMINES THE PERMUTATION.

Most combinations of plan and counterplan would be much less probable than either alone; thus, they would have no impact on the round. The permutation is a necessary tool of policy analysis, both in terms of finding the best policy and in eliminating non-competitive alternatives.

3. CONSIDERATION OF UNPOPULAR ALTERNATIVES IS UNDERMINED.

Many policies with almost no chance of passing now are still worthy of consideration. This theory precludes that.

4. TOPIC TRIVIALIZATION IS ENCOURAGED.

The affirmative has an incentive given this theory to select plans which are almost identical to the present system. This produces trivial, insubstantial debate.

5. PROBABILITIES OF PASSAGE ARE TOO DIFFICULT TO DEBATE.

Most policy literature evaluates desirability; little directly addresses the probability of passage. Even approximate calculations of these probabilities are usually next to impossible.

THE "OPPORTUNITY COST" THEORY OF FIAT IS BEST

1. NEGATIVE FIAT SHOULD BE LIMITED TO DECISION-MAKERS CAPABLE OF ADOPTING THE AFFIRMATIVE PLAN.
2. FIAT SHOULD EXTEND ONLY TO COUNTERPLANS THAT ARE OPPORTUNITY COSTS TO THE AFFIRMATIVE PLAN.

An opportunity cost is the price of an option foregone by undertaking an alternative action. Unless both plan and counterplan can be undertaken by the same agent, foregoing the counterplan isn't an opportunity cost of the plan.

3. THE ONLY WAY TO DETERMINE THE PROPER SCOPE OF NEGATIVE FIAT IS TO DETERMINE WHO IS THE DECISION-MAKER.

Without knowing the decision-maker, the desirability of a decision can't be assessed. Different decision-makers have different powers to act, and unless the same agent can enact both plan and counterplan, the counterplan isn't a reason to reject the plan.

4. BASED ON OPPORTUNITY COSTS, FOREIGN FIAT IS ILLEGITIMATE ON A TOPIC WHERE THE AGENT IS THE U.S. FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

No decision-maker has authority over both U.S. Federal action and foreign government action.

5. STATE FIAT IS ILLEGITIMATE ON A FEDERAL TOPIC.

No decision-maker has authority to enact either state or federal action.

THE "OPPORTUNITY COST" THEORY OF FIAT SHOULD BE REJECTED

1. THE JUDGE IS THE RELEVANT DECISION-MAKER IN THE DEBATE.

As decision-maker, the judge can endorse action by agents other than those capable of adopting the affirmative plan.

2. THE OPPORTUNITY COST THEORY ASSUMES THAT THE DEBATE IS ABOUT WHAT A SPECIFIC AGENT SHOULD DO.

But the debate can equally well be about Which agent should adopt a particular action.

3. AGENT DEBATE IS BENEFICIAL.

A. It is educational. It teaches about how different branches of government act and interact.

B. It enhances fairness. On broad topics, agent counterplans are needed to check a huge affirmative side bias.

C. It follows from the nature of American government. Because American government is divided, the issue of who should enact a particular policy is often the key one.

4. THE OPPORTUNITY COST THEORY IS TOO INDETERMINATE.

It calls for limiting fiat to the "appropriate" agent without specifying who the appropriate agent is. It could be the agent in the plan, the agent in the resolution, or an agent with authority over either.

5. UNDER THIS THEORY, AFFIRMATIVES CAN WRITE THEIR PLANS TO EXCLUDE ALL AGENT COUNTERPLANS.

If the plan specifies a particular agent, acting alone, this would always rule out an alternative agent.

6. THE THEORY ENCOURAGES FIAT THROUGH VERY SPECIFIC EXECUTIVE AGENCIES.

This harms debate by focusing it on regulatory trivia.

7. DEBATE SHOULD ALLOW A WIDE RANGE OF OPTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED.

Debaters aren't actual policy-makers; they are students who should learn about a wide range of issues and options.

ALTERNATIVE JUSTIFICATION IS A VALID APPROACH

1. PLANS ARE SIMPLY ARGUMENTS FOR THE RESOLUTION.

If any single plan is proven to be a good idea, then the resolution has been proven true. For example, if there is any net beneficial federal program to reduce juvenile crime, then the statement is true that the federal government should establish a program to reduce juvenile crime.

2. A WIDER RANGE OF OPTIONS MAKES THE BEST POLICY MORE LIKELY TO BE FOUND.

By allowing the affirmative to offer several examples of the resolution, alternative justification enhances the probability of finding the best policy.

3. ALTERNATE JUSTIFICATION HIGHLIGHTS STRATEGIC GAMESMANSHIP AND TACTICAL CHOICE MAKING.

This reality improves debate game.

ALTERNATIVE JUSTIFICATION SHOULD BE REJECTED

1. THE CONCEPT OF PLAN FOCUS JUSTIFIES REJECTING ALTERNATIVE JUSTIFICATION.

For debate to effectively focus on the plan, the plan needs to remain fixed throughout the round.

2. ALTERNATIVE JUSTIFICATION PRODUCES SUPERFICIAL ARGUMENT.

If unlimited conditionality is accepted, each of the affirmative's multiple plans could evoke multiple counterplans, and each of the multiple counterplans could suggest multiple permutations. Consideration of this range of policy options in any depth would be impossible.

3. ALTERNATIVE JUSTIFICATION HAS NO SUBSTANTIVE INTELLECTUAL BENEFITS FOR DEBATE; IT SIMPLY IS AN EXERCISE IN GAMESMANSHIP.

4. ALTERNATIVE JUSTIFICATION VIOLATES ADVOCACY.

The purpose of policy debate is to teach sound advocacy skills, so any approach which clashes with that objective should be rejected.

5. ALTERNATIVE JUSTIFICATION OVEREXPANDS TOPICS.

The risk of losing on topicality is a major inducement for the affirmative not to run marginal cases. But if their marginal case is only one of several, they can run it and listen to the negative's topicality position before committing themselves. This would unfairly expand the topic.

6. ARGUMENT AVOIDANCE IS ENCOURAGED.

The affirmative has a perverse incentive to minimize clash by extending only those plans where the negative time allocation has been weak. This makes debate a game of argument evasion rather than argument clash.

7. ALTERNATIVE JUSTIFICATION PLACES TOO MUCH STRESS ON INTELLECTUAL GAMESMANSHIP.

It makes strategic choice the essence of the game rather than substantive argumentative clash.

8. BIDIRECTIONAL TOPICS BECOME UNDEBATABLE BY THE NEGATIVE.

Alternative justification allows the affirmative to propose two plans, each going in the opposite direction. This preempts negative counterplan ground, and it means that almost all negative arguments against one plan are likely to feed the other.

9. RESOLUTIONAL FOCUS SHOULD BE REJECTED.

It produces vague and superficial debate.

10. ALTERNATIVE JUSTIFICATION UNDERMINES TRUTH FUNCTION OF THE RESOLUTION.

Multiple examples of the resolution mean that none are likely to be tested in any depth. As a result it becomes more likely that the resolution will be falsely affirmed.

PLAN SEVERANCE IS LEGITIMATE

1. SEVERING UNDESIRABLE PLAN ELEMENTS CAN HELP DEMONSTRATE THE TRUTH OF THE RESOLUTION.

As long as a topical element remains in the plan at the end of the round, it can still provide a reason to affirm the resolution.

2. THE LOGIC OF POLICY ANALYSIS SUPPORTS.

If, in the course of a policy debate, certain elements of the policy are found to be uniquely undesirable, it would be reasonable to amend the policy to eliminate those elements. A rational decision maker would vote for the beneficial parts of a plan and reject the rest.

3. SEVERING OUT UNDESIRABLE PARTS OF THE PLAN ENHANCES THE DEBATE GAME.

It lays added stress on strategic choice and tactical decision making.

4. SEVERANCE DISPROVES THE INTRINSICNESS OF DISADVANTAGES.

If severing out part of the plan can solve the disadvantage, consistent with other topical action, this proves that the disadvantage is not intrinsic to the resolution.

PLAN SEVERANCE IS ILLEGITIMATE

1. THE VALUE OF SUSTAINED PLAN FOCUS REQUIRES REJECTING SEVERANCE.

Since the plan is the focus of the debate, it should remain fixed throughout.

2. SEVERANCE ENCOURAGES OTHER FORMS OF CONDITIONALITY.

It allows the affirmative to conditionally advocate parts of its plan and then withdraw endorsement once they have been indicted. If this is permitted, then alternative justification, intrinsicness, and conditional counterplans are also legitimate strategies. But the proliferation of alternative policies this would involve assures superficial debate.

3. SEVERANCE VIOLATES ADVOCACY.

Responsible advocates maintain a consistent position. Shifting advocacy encourages intellectual irresponsibility.

4. SEVERANCE ENCOURAGES ARGUMENT AVOIDANCE.

Whenever the negative attacks one part of the plan strongly, the affirmative will be encouraged to sever out that part of the plan, making debate into a game of argument evasion rather than argument clash.

5. INTELLECTUAL GAMESMANSHIP SHOULDN'T BE OVERSTRESSED.

Competitive pressures assure that there will be enough gamesmanship in the activity. Theory should try to stress substantive educational benefits instead.

6. RESOLUTIONAL FOCUS SHOULD BE REJECTED.

It produces vague and superficial debate.

7. SEVERANCE HURTS THE TRUTH FUNCTION OF THE RESOLUTION.

If the affirmative can sever out parts of its plan after its been shown they are undesirable, it's more likely that one of their rationales for the resolution will slip through without having been adequately tested.

8. SEVERANCE ENCOURAGES STRAWMAN PROVISIONS.

If generally accepted, this theory would encourage the affirmative to load up their plan with obviously disadvantageous provisions. The negative would waste its time attacking these elements, which would then be immediately severed.

INTRINSICNESS ARGUMENTS ARE A LEGITIMATE RESPONSE TO DISADVANTAGES

1. INTRINSICNESS ARGUMENTS PROVE THAT THE DISADVANTAGE IS NOT INHERENT TO THE RESOLUTION.
If topical action, plus a minor repair, is desirable, then the resolution should be affirmed.
2. INTRINSICNESS ARGUMENTS AID IN THE SEARCH FOR THE BEST POLICY.
If a rational decision maker finds a ready solution to a disadvantage to an otherwise beneficial policy, s/he should endorse both the policy and the solution.
3. INTRINSICNESS ARGUMENTS PARALLEL REAL WORLD ARGUMENT.
Congress adds riders to bills to solve foreseeable disadvantages.
4. INTRINSICNESS ARGUMENTS ARE PARALLEL TO COUNTERPLANS.
If the negative can solve case advantages with counterplans, the affirmative should be able to solve disadvantages with intrinsicness arguments.
5. INTRINSICNESS ARGUMENTS HELP FOCUS DEBATE ON CORE TOPIC CONCERNS.
They can be effectively used to demonstrate the non-germaneness of peripheral issues such as Clinton and spending.
6. TOPICALITY OF MINOR REPAIRS IS NOT A PROBLEM.
 - A. Topical or not, the repair still shows that the disadvantage is not intrinsic to the resolution.
 - B. Topicality is the starting point for the debate, not the end point. As long as the resolution is justified as part of an overall desirable policy package, then the resolution has been justified.
 - C. At least topical minor repairs are justified.
7. INTRINSICNESS ARGUMENTS DON'T DESTROY NEGATIVE GROUND.
 - A. They only eliminate non-inherent disadvantages. If the disadvantage is really intrinsic, then there should be no minor repair to solve it consistent with the resolution.
 - B. The disadvantage can be proven intrinsic by showing that the minor repair designed to solve it is undesirable.
8. INTRINSICNESS ARGUMENTS ARE NOT TOO UTOPIAN.
At least not all minor repairs need be utopian; some can very simple policy corrections. The same standards that apply to negative fiat can be used to limit utopianism of minor repairs.
9. MINOR REPAIRS DON'T MAKE THE PLAN AN EXCESSIVELY MOVING TARGET.
Policies evolve in the real world in response to arguments. Dogmatically maintaining a position in light of all counter-arguments is a poor advocacy technique.
10. INTRINSICNESS ARGUMENTS NEED NOT VIOLATE ADVOCACY.
The plan remains advocated throughout. The minor repair is simply a test to demonstrate the non-germaneness of the disadvantage, just as a permutation tests the competitiveness of a counterplan.
11. NON-CONDITIONAL MINOR REPAIRS SOLVE THE ADVOCACY PROBLEM.
If the affirmative advocates the minor repair, there is no advocacy violation. The second negative is commonly allowed to counterplan, so there's no reason the affirmative should not be able to add to its plan in 2AC.
12. INFINITE REGRESS IS NOT A MAJOR PROBLEM.
 - A. It's only a theoretical objection. No one has ever seen a sequence of minor repairs extending into 2AR.
 - B. This problem can easily be solved by limiting the affirmative to one level of repair against a disadvantage.

INTRINSICNESS ARGUMENTS ARE ILLEGITIMATE

1. THE AFFIRMATIVE LACKS THE AUTHORITY TO ADVOCATE NON-TOPICAL MINOR REPAIRS.

The function of the resolution is to fairly divide ground, and non-topical minor repairs are not part of what the affirmative has been authorized to defend.

2. INTRINSICNESS ARGUMENTS DESTROY NEGATIVE GROUND.

A. Virtually no disadvantages are intrinsic. Even core topic disadvantages can be repaired away.

B. At least the impact of disadvantages can be repaired away.

C. Major negative strategies are usually non-intrinsic. If the negative can't make arguments like spending or Clinton, they will be at an even greater competitive disadvantage than they are at present.

D. Intrinsicness arguments encourage inferior negative ground. The most, and maybe the only, intrinsic disadvantages are impact turns to advantages. But this forces the negative to defend counter-intuitive "good is bad" arguments of the Malthusian and CLS variety.

3. INTRINSICNESS ARGUMENTS ARE OVERLY UTOPIAN.

They allow the plan to be tested in the best of all possible worlds. Standards to limit fiat are controversial and difficult to apply.

4. MINOR REPAIRS MAKE THE PLAN A MOVING TARGET.

They enter the round in the 2AC and conceivably exit the round in 1AR or 2AR if they have been shown to be undesirable. The result of this shifting focus, given time constraints, is superficial debate.

5. INTRINSICNESS ARGUMENTS ALLOW INFINITE REGRESSION.

If the negative runs a disadvantage to the 2AC minor repair, the 1AR can offer an additional minor repair. If the negative links a disadvantage to this argument, the 2AR can offer still a third level of repair. At this point the negative is out of speeches, and the affirmative automatically wins.

6. MINOR REPAIRS SHIFT DEBATE FURTHER AWAY FROM THE CORE OF TOPICAL CONCERN.

Rather than debating Das to topical action, we end up debating DAs to minor repairs to DAs to topical action.

7. MINOR REPAIRS AREN'T REAL WORLD.

Repairs could easily be larger policy changes than the initial plan.

8. MINOR REPAIRS PROVE THE RESOLUTION INSUFFICIENT.

If the affirmative has to resort to an extra-topical repair to make its plan desirable, this proves that the resolution isn't a good idea in itself.

9. EXTRA-TOPICAL PLAN PLANKS ARE A SUPERIOR OPTION.

They capture all of the policy analysis benefits associated with intrinsicness arguments, but keep the plan constant throughout the round, allowing consistent advocacy and greater depth of extension.

10. INTRINSICNESS ARGUMENTS AREN'T RECIPROCAL TO THE COUNTERPLAN.

Counterplans are fiat arguments, reciprocal to affirmative plan fiat. They certainly don't justify an additional level of affirmative fiat. Also, non-conditional counterplans don't justify conditional intrinsicness arguments.

11. INTRINSICNESS ARGUMENTS JUSTIFY OTHER FORMS OF CONDITIONALITY, SUCH AS ALTERNATIVE JUSTIFICATION, SEVERANCE, AND CONDITIONAL COUNTERPLANS.

This proliferation of policies ensures superficial debate.

12. MINOR REPAIRS VIOLATE ADVOCACY.

The affirmative should advocate a consistent policy position throughout.

CONDITIONAL COUNTERPLANS ARE ILLEGITIMATE

1. CONDITIONAL COUNTERPLANS PRODUCE SUPERFICIAL DEBATE.

- A. The time limits of academic debate mean that it is impossible to discuss more than two policies with any thoroughness.
- B. Conditionality has huge abuse potential. If the negative can run one conditional counterplan, there's no reason they couldn't run ten.
- C. Counterplans distort depth of analysis more than other arguments. As opposed to a topicality argument or another disadvantage, a counterplan is a complete policy system, with advantages and disadvantages, solvency claims, as well as a myriad of theory issues to evaluate.

2. CONDITIONAL COUNTERPLANS VIOLATE ADVOCACY.

- A. Minimum advocacy burdens are essential for debate. Otherwise, teams would be allowed to beat their own arguments in order to take out turns.
- B. In the real world, advocates don't defend contradictory positions. Arguments of this sort are inherently unpersuasive and should therefore be discouraged.

3. CONDITIONAL COUNTERPLANS ENCOURAGE ARGUMENTATIVE IRRESPONSIBILITY.

A conditional counterplans entails no argumentative risks even if straight turned, the negative is able to abandon the position without consequence. Lacking argumentative responsibility, negative teams are free to advance superficially developed or even ethically repugnant arguments without risk.

4. CONDITIONAL COUNTERPLANS LEGITIMIZE AFFIRMATIVE CONDITIONALITY.

Allowing alternative justification, severance, and intrinsicness arguments proliferates the number of policy alternatives in the round and ensures even more superficial argument.

5. REAL WORLD ANALOGIES ARE UNPERSUASIVE.

Actual decision makers don't have the same constraints on decision time as exist in an academic debate.

CONDITIONAL COUNTERPLANS ARE LEGITIMATE

1. THEY FOLLOW FROM THE LOGIC OF RATIONAL DECISION MAKING.
 - A. Real world policy makers do consider multiple options at once. In a given set of hearings several independent bills are likely to be considered.
 - B. Multiple options make it more likely that the best policy will be found.
 - C. The role of the judge is to endorse the best policy at the end of the round. If a conditional counterplan has been proven to be the best policy, it's perverse not to allow it to be endorsed.
2. TIME LIMITS ISN'T A PROBLEM.
 - A. Time is finite in debate. Running one argument inherently trades off with another.
 - B. A counterplan doesn't introduce unique complexity into the round. The counterplan may just be a minor alteration of plan or counterplan. Disadvantages also raise multiple issues--uniqueness, links, impacts, turns, etc. A complex disadvantage like Malthus takes far more time to properly evaluate than a study counterplan.
 - C. There are multiple ways to defeat a counterplan. Topicality, competitiveness, fiat, solvency, disadvantages, etc. This means a focused attack should take less time than other arguments.
 - D. Underdeveloped counterplans should be relatively easy to answer. The time it takes to answer any argument is largely a function of the depth with which it is developed.
 - E. Empirically, most affirmatives don't spend longer answering a counterplan than they do a disadvantage or even a serious topicality attack.
 - F. Teams who want to abuse time limits can do so without conditional counterplans. Multiple cheap shot topicality arguments, numerous one or two card disadvantages or turns, or several kritiks equally distort time allocation.
 - G. Argument breadth has benefits. If depth were the only value, teams wouldn't be allowed to debate more than one advantage or disadvantage per round. Exploring the range of issues on a subject is also intellectually important.
 - H. Creating time pressure and making time based decisions is an inherent part of debate strategy. It's an acceptable part of all other debate arguments.
 - I. The total number of positions advanced is what's key. If all the negative did was to run two conditional counterplans, there would be far more in depth debate than usually occurs.
3. ADVOCACY CONCERNS AREN'T DECISIVE.
 - A. Real world advocates do sometimes argue conditionally. A member of Congress might well think a proposed bill should be rejected both relative to the status quo and to another bill which s/he proposes.
 - B. In the real world, policies are attacked from a variety of perspectives. In debate there is only one negative team, so to encompass the true range of potential counter-affirmative advocacy, multiple conditional positions must be allowed.
 - C. The judge shouldn't directly assess advocacy skills. The judge's role is to evaluate arguments, not to decide who did the better job of debating. If a poor advocacy technique still produces a winning argument, that's mainly an indictment of the team that loses it.
 - D. The main purpose of debate is to teach analytical rather than advocacy skills. Contemporary society needs intelligent critics more than it does dogmatic advocates.
 - E. Conditional argument enhances policy analysis. Every policy evokes an alternative decision tree. The ability to think through a chain of hypothetical alternatives is an important one.

CONDITIONAL COUNTERPLANS ARE LEGITIMATE cont'd3. **ADVOCACY CONCERNS AREN'T DECISIVE.** cont'd

- F. Devil's advocacy has value. The simultaneous defense of the two extreme positions often reveals the untenable nature of the middle ground.
- G. Most debate practice isn't consistent with the advocacy paradigm. Discos allow a shift in advocacy position, and permutations allow multiple alternatives to be considered.
- H. Judges shouldn't censor arguments just because they think they would be unpersuasive in the real world. This would mean excluding all radical or politically unpopular viewpoints.
- I. High rates of speed and the proliferation of multiple responses aren't persuasive advocacy techniques in the real world, but proponents of the advocacy view do little to discourage these practices.
- J. Allowing conditional counterplans won't undermine the vocational training of future lawyers and lobbyists. Most debate practices require adaptation to situations beyond debate. It's not that hard to abandon debate techniques that don't work elsewhere.
- K. Conditional arguments can be part of a consistent negative position. The negative's fundamental advocacy requirement is to oppose the affirmative. As long as they do so, they are consistent at the most basic level.
- L. Consistent and hypothetical analysis may both be important skills to learn. They can both be accommodated in debate if the affirmative is required to defend a single unchanging plan but the negative is allowed to use hypothetical reasoning in attacking that plan.
- M. Conditional advocacy is consistent with real world decision making. Both executive policy makers and business executives consider proposed changes from all angles.
- N. Conditional negative analysis is consistent with the plan focus view of debate. If the plan is the focus of debate it should remain unchanged, but multiple conditional alternatives (if competitive) still retain the central focus on the plan.

4. **ANSWERS TO ARGUMENTATIVE IRRESPONSIBILITY.**

- A. The negative is still responsible for the evidence and analysis that it presents. The evidence can be used against them, and sometimes the counterplan advantage can be turned into a case advantage.
- B. Counterplans always suggest permutations which may be used to answer other disadvantages.
- C. Most other negative arguments aren't turnable either. Topicality, significance, inherency, and solvency arguments can't be turned.
- D. Empirically, few disadvantages are straight turned. Thus, negative "responsibility" for its disadvantages isn't that great. Throw away disadvantages are common.
- E. Extreme emphasis on argument responsibility is undesirable. It justifies punishment arguments for "bad theory" and would justify making topicality a reverse voting issue. Arguments should be judged based on their logical weight in the policy calculus, not have artificial responsibility ~ burdens imposed on them.
- F. Conditionality doesn't violate the minimum advocacy burden. Neither team can defeat its own arguments. But abandoning a conditional counterplan involves conceding an opponent's argument; thus, it's more analogous to kicking out a disadvantage or a disco.
- G. It's more responsible advocacy to concede untenable arguments than it is to dogmatically defend every position that one initially advances. Flexibility and conciliation are also important argument skills.

CONDITIONAL COUNTERPLANS ARE LEGITIMATE cont'd

5. **CONDITIONAL COUNTERPLANS DON'T JUSTIFY AFFIRMATIVE CONDITIONALITY.**
 - A. The plan is the focus of the debate. This means that it should remain unchanging, but it can still be attacked from multiple angles.
 - B. Negative conditionality is reciprocal with the affirmative ability to select a case. Since the affirmative selects the ground for the debate they enjoy a huge preparation edge. Allowing hypothetical negative arguments helps to offset this edge.
 - C. Theory issues should be evaluated on a case by case basis. If conditional counterplans are good for debate they should be accepted, even if alternative justification is rejected as undesirable.
 - D. Reciprocity should be evaluated in terms of the overall side equity of the activity. Since the affirmative enjoys an overall competitive edge, it's legitimate to give the negative certain offsetting non-reciprocal theory advantages.
6. **CONDITIONAL COUNTERPLANS ARE LEGITIMATE AGAINST NEW CASES. REQUIRING THE NEGATIVE TO DEFEND ONE SINGLE POLICY OPTIONS MAKES SENSE ONLY IF THE NEGATIVE HAS HAD SOME TIME TO RESEARCH AND CONSIDER THE ALTERNATIVES.**
 - A. Fairness considerations support. Running a new case, the affirmative has a huge advantage. This justifies more liberality with regard to negative strategies.
 - B. Truth considerations justify. Against a new case, the negative can't have a considered judgment about the strongest negative position. It's necessary for them to discover the best policy alternative though the process of testing different options in the round.
 - C. Analogies support. If a policy is introduced without prior notice, opponents of the policy would have a lower threshold of argument to meet. The risk of falsely affirming an undesirable plan is greater absent preparation, so opponents of the policy should have greater latitude in the objections they raise.
7. **POLICY MAKERS CONSIDER MULTIPLE AND EVEN CONTRADICTIONARY ALTERNATIVES.**

PRESIDENTIAL STUDIES QUARTERLY, Winter 1998, p.237.

From a list of forty proposed sanctions against the USSR, Jimmy Carter selected seven, including boycotting the Moscow games. President Ford pondered five alternatives for Angola, including closer association with the white regimes to protect U.S. economic scientific and strategic interests, the opposite (dissociation from the white regimes and linkage with the African states), and "walking away" from the problem.

DISPOSITION OF COUNTERPLANS: IF THE NEGATIVE LOSES THE COUNTERPLAN, THEY LOSE

1. THE COUNTERPLAN IS THE NEGATIVE'S POLICY POSITION.

If they lose the counterplan, there is nothing to vote negative for.

2. REVERSION TO THE STATUS QUO SHOULDN'T BE ALLOWED.

- A. This makes the counterplan conditional. Conditional counterplans skew time allocation, violate advocacy, encourage argument irresponsibility, and justify affirmative conditionality.
- B. Real world analogies are irrelevant. Real world decision makers don't have the same time limits or the same competitive incentives as debaters.
- C. Permutations don't justify retaining the status quo as an option. The permutation is just a test; it isn't something the judge votes for.
- D. Alternatively, if the affirmative advocates the permutation, it is still defending just one policy position. This doesn't justify the negative defending two.
- E. The status quo fallback produces competitive distortions. It determines time allocation decisions. It reduces depth of coverage. And it encourages argument irresponsibility because it lets the negative get out of its counterplan.
- F. The judge can't vote for the status quo if neither team advocates it. The judge is limited to choosing among advocated positions by his or her role as a debate judge. S/he doesn't have the same latitude as an actual decision maker.

DISPOSITION OF COUNTERPLANS: THE STATUS QUO ALWAYS REMAINS AN OPTION

1. THE LOGIC OF REAL WORLD DECISION MAKING SUPPORTS.

When two proposals for change are advanced, the decision maker always has the option of rejecting both and retaining the status quo. The status quo doesn't vanish as a logical option just because there is a counterplan in the round.

2. RETAINING THE STATUS QUO AS AN OPTION HAS NO ABUSE POTENTIAL.

According to this theory, each team can advance only one proposal for change. The status quo as a fallback doesn't license multiple conditional policies.

3. THIS CORRESPONDS TO REAL WORLD ADVOCACY.

Opponents of a bill will often argue both that the bill is inferior to their alternative and to the status quo.

4. THE LOGIC OF COUNTERPLAN COMPETITION SUPPORTS.

If the judge can adopt both plan and counterplan (justifying an affirmative ballot), s/he should be able to reject both plan and counterplan (justifying a negative ballot).

5. RETAINING THE STATUS QUO AS AN OPTION ONLY EXPANDS THE NUMBER OF POLICY ALTERNATIVES FROM THREE TO FOUR.

Plan alone, counterplan alone, and both plan and counterplan are already options. Neither plan nor counterplan simply constitutes a fourth logical option.

6. THE STATUS QUO OPTION INEVITABLY RECEIVES IN DEPTH CONSIDERATION.

The whole 1AC indicts the status quo. Most of the case and disadvantage debate usually implicate the plan versus status Quo comparison as much as the plan versus counterplan debate. The status quo has thus been considered in enough depth to allow for a meaningful endorsement.

7. AFFIRMATIVE USUALLY HAS MULTIPLE POLICY OPTIONS IN A COUNTERPLAN ROUND BECAUSE THEY USUALLY ADVANCE SEVERAL PERMUTATIONS.

If the judge can vote either for the plan or for a permutation, there's no reason the judge should not be able to vote for either counterplan or status quo.

8. RETENTION OF THE STATUS QUO DOESN'T VIOLATE ADVOCACY.

The negative advocates the counterplan, but if the judge rejects both affirmative and negative proposals for change, the status quo is the logical option.

9. REJECTION OF THE CHANGE THAT THE NEGATIVE ADVOCATES ISN'T A SUFFICIENT REASON TO VOTE AFFIRMATIVE.

The plan is the focus of the debate, so there still has to be a reason to vote for the plan at the end of the round. If the plan isn't better than the present system, it should be rejected, even if the negative has suggested an even worse alternative.

10. CONDITIONALITY CONCERNS DON'T JUSTIFY REJECTING THE STATUS QUO OPTION.

A. The negative isn't being conditional. It is advocating the counterplan. The status quo is simply a logical option always available to the judge.

B. At most, this is a logical, limited form of conditionality inherent in the idea of a counterplan. Whenever there are two proposals for change, decision makers have the logical option of doing both or neither. There's nothing abusive about allowing the judge an option s/he would have in every other decision making situation.

DISPOSITION OF COUNTERPLANS: LOSS OF THE COUNTERPLAN ON THEORY GROUNDS JUSTIFIES REVERSION TO THE STATUS QUO

1. THE NEGATIVE POLICY POSITION IS THE STATUS QUO AS MODIFIED BY THE COUNTERPLAN.

If the counterplan is noncompetitive, or illegitimate on some theory ground, then it should simply drop from the round, leaving the unmodified status quo as the negative position.

2. EVEN WITH A COUNTERPLAN, DISADVANTAGES WHICH ARE PROVEN TO BE UNIQUE RELATIVE TO THE PRESENT SYSTEM CONSTITUTE INDEPENDENT ARGUMENTS.

Even if the counterplan is defeated, these arguments still apply.

3. DROPPING OUT A COUNTERPLAN DEFEATED ON THEORY IS ANALOGOUS TO ELIMINATING EXTRA-TOPICAL PLANKS.

The affirmative has basically won that the negative has made a non-germane argument or one which they didn't have the authority to advance. The judge should ignore such arguments, but shouldn't automatically vote against the team that made them.

4. PUNISHMENT IS ILLEGITIMATE.

Voting against a team simply because they ran an illegitimate counterplan assumes that punishment is a legitimate approach. Punishment leads to too much focus on theory and a loss is punishment excessive to the offense.

5. VOTING ON AN ILLEGITIMATE COUNTERPLAN IS ANTI-EDUCATIONAL.

It means that none of the other substantive arguments in the round will be evaluated or resolved.

6. TIME DISTORTIONS SHOULDN'T BE VOTING ISSUES.

A. All teams drop arguments and all teams seek favorable time tradeoffs. It's absurd to vote against a team for doing something that is such an integral part of debate strategy.

B. Both teams have had to invest time in the issue. Thus, the degree of competitive distortion is minimal.

7. CONDITIONALITY ISN'T A VOTING ISSUE.

A. There are better ways to resolve the issue. The counterplan can be eliminated from the round or the team running the conditional argument can be stuck with it. Both of these dispositions of the counterplan are costly for the negative.

B. These costs are more proportionate to the offense. Loss of a theoretical construct shouldn't mean that all the other policy issues in the round are ignored.

CONDITIONALITY IS A VOTING ISSUE

1. CONDITIONALITY DESTROYS TIME ALLOCATION.

By introducing an illegitimate theory construct, time allocation was distorted, undermining in depth consideration of the real issues in the debate. The only sure way to discourage this is to vote against it.

2. CONDITIONAL ARGUMENT MEANS THAT NO POLICY POSITION HAS BEEN ADVOCATED.

If a team fails to advocate a position then there is nothing to vote for and they automatically lose.

NET BENEFITS IS THE ULTIMATE STANDARD OF COMPETITIVENESS

1. IF THE COUNTERPLAN ALONE IS BETTER THAN THE PLAN PLUS ALL OR PART OF THE COUNTERPLAN, IT IS CLEARLY A REASON TO REJECT THE PLAN.

2. JURISDICTIONAL CONCERNS DON'T UNDERMINE THE NET BENEFITS STANDARD.

- A. Competitiveness isn't a jurisdictional issue; it's a policy issue. In fact, it's the ultimate framework within which policies are evaluated.
- B. Effects are often relevant to determining jurisdiction. Effect on interstate commerce is one factor determining federal jurisdiction.

3. MUTUAL EXCLUSIVITY IS JUST A SPECIAL CASE OF NET BENEFITS.

Two contradictory laws could both exist on the books, it's just that we would probably never want them to.

4. REDUNDANCY ALONE ISN'T A REASON TO REJECT A PLAN.

At most it renders the debate a tie. At that point, a small net benefit in the form of presumption is required as a tie-breaker.

5. PHILOSOPHICAL COMPETITIVENESS ISN'T AN INDEPENDENT STANDARD.

It's meaningless unless the philosophical difference between plan and counterplan translates itself into a disadvantage.

6. RESOLUTIONAL COMPETITIVENESS IS ILLEGITIMATE.

- A. The plan is the focus of the debate. The counterplan must therefore provide a reason to reject the plan, not just the resolution.
- B. To be resolutionally competitive, the counterplan should offer a reason to reject all topical plans. If it doesn't compete with the specific affirmative, then it isn't resolutionally competitive.

REDUNDANCY CAN MAKE A COUNTERPLAN COMPETITIVE

1. POLICIES CAN BE ABSOLUTELY REDUNDANT.

For example, there would be no possible advantage to requiring air bags in cars if all cars were prohibited. If a counterplan renders the plan completely superfluous, it should be competitive by redundancy.

2. PRESUMPTION IS AGAINST THE PERMUTATION TO DO BOTH.

Doing both is a greater change than doing the counterplan alone; thus, there is a presumption against it. If the counterplan captures all of the affirmative advantage and has additional benefits, you should do the counterplan alone.

3. THE RISK OF COUNTERPLAN REPEAL ISN'T A REASON TO "PUT THE PLAN ON THE BOOKS" AS A BACKUP MECHANISM.

- A. This is a should would argument. Fiat is ongoing, so counterplan repeal shouldn't be considered as an option.
 - B. Having the plan as a backup mechanism makes counterplan repeal more likely. It makes the costs of repeal less, and it would encourage opponents of the counterplan to think that repeal is feasible.
 - C. Don't pass the plan until after the counterplan is repealed. If certain circumstances not now foreseeable made counterplan repeal desirable, those same circumstances might render the plan undesirable. You shouldn't commit yourself ahead of time to endorsing the plan in a post-counterplan world.
-

REDUNDANCY DOESN'T MAKE A COUNTERPLAN COMPETITIVE

1. REDUNDANCY ISN'T A REASON TO REJECT THE PLAN.

At most it makes the debate a tie. To be competitive, a counterplan must provide a reason to reject the plan.

2. REDUNDANT SAFEGUARDS ARE A GOOD IDEA.

If we didn't have them, Three Mile Island could have turned into Chernobyl. All policies have some risk of failure, so redundant policies provide at least some increment of added solvency.

3. THE PLAN SHOULD STILL BE PUT ON THE BOOKS AS A BACKUP MECHANISM.

There's always a chance that the counterplan will be repealed, in which case the plan would produce an advantage.

- A. This isn't a should-would argument. It's totally unrealistic to think that fiat is forever. Even if should-would considerations disallow immediate repeal arguments, a changing political climate makes long terms repeal a clear possibility.
- B. Redundancy need not make repeal more likely. At most, this is an empirical issue for which evidence is needed.
- C. You shouldn't wait until after counterplan repeal to endorse the plan. The case proves that it has clear advantages, but its passage in the future might be politically impossible.

PHILOSOPHICAL COMPETITIVENESS ISN'T A VALID STANDARD

1. THE PHILOSOPHICAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PLAN AND COUNTERPLAN HAS NO IMPACT UNLESS IT CAN BE TRANSLATED INTO AN ADVANTAGE.
2. MORAL PLURALISM ALLOWS THE SIMULTANEOUS ENDORSEMENT OF PHILOSOPHICAL DISTINCT PERSPECTIVES.

No value is absolute; we're always ready to trade off a very small amount of one value for a great deal of another. It's possible to assume a philosophical perspective which gives some weight to each value and total weight to neither.

3. IF THE PLAN AND COUNTERPLAN PRODUCE THE GREATEST TOTAL SUM OF HUMAN WELFARE, THEN THEY ARE PHILOSOPHICALLY COMPATIBLE WITHIN A UTILITARIAN FRAMEWORK.
4. PHILOSOPHICAL COMPETITIVENESS IS TOO SUBJECTIVE.

The negative can always assert some philosophical difference between policies.

PERMUTATIONS ARE A VALID FORM OF ARGUMENT

1. A LEGITIMATE PERMUTATION COMBINES ALL OF THE PLAN WITH ALL OR PART OF THE COUNTERPLAN.

2. THIS DOESN'T MAKE THE PLAN A MOVING TARGET.

The whole plan is advocated from start to finish.

3. WITHOUT PERMUTATIONS, THE NEGATIVE COULD RUN ANYTHING AS A COUNTERPLAN.

The affirmative at least needs to be able to suggest the option of doing both as a way of showing that the counterplan is not a reason to reject plan.

4. MECHANICAL PERMUTATIONS ARE NEEDED TO CHECK ARTIFICIALLY COMPETITIVE COUNTERPLANS.

Without permutations, the negative could ban the plan in one plank and do anything else in addition.

5. LOGICAL PERMUTATIONS ARE NEEDED TO CHECK OVERBROAD COUNTERPLANS.

The negative can often ban the plan with the same action that bans a number of other policies. But since it's possible to do the plan and ban the other policies the advantages of banning the other policies aren't reasons to reject the plan.

INTRINSICNESS AND SEVERANCE PERMUTATIONS ARE ILLEGITIMATE

1. AN INTRINSICNESS PERMUTATION ADDS SOMETHING NOT FOUND IN EITHER THE ORIGINAL PLAN OR COUNTERPLAN.
2. INTRINSICNESS ARGUMENTS ARE UNDESIRABLE.
 - A. They make the plan a moving target, producing more superficial analysis.
 - B. They shift the affirmative's advocacy position.
 - C. They undermine negative ground since few if any disadvantages are really intrinsic.
 - D. They are utopian, allowing the plan to be tested in an ideal world.
(For other arguments, see the "intrinsicness arguments are invalid" block.)
3. INTRODUCTION OF A COUNTERPLAN DOESN'T LEGITIMATE INTRINSICNESS PERMUTATIONS.
 - A. The ability to advocate a counterplan is reciprocal with the affirmative ability to advocate a plan. Adding new elements to the permutation isn't reciprocal with any strategic option of the negative.
 - B. Policies should only be advanced in the first two speeches. This allows maximum time to discuss them in depth. A valid permutation merely recombines policy elements found in the first two speeches; intrinsicness permutations add new elements.
 - C. By proposing a counterplan, the negative isn't putting the debate onto a utopian plane. Counterplans are bound by reasonable standards of negative fiat. In advancing a legitimate counterplan, the negative doesn't license utopian intrinsicness responses.
 - D. Even if the counterplan is utopian, all of the other arguments still stand against intrinsicness.
4. SEVERANCE PERMUTATIONS ELIMINATE AN ELEMENT FOUND IN THE ORIGINAL PLAN.
5. SEVERANCE IS UNDESIRABLE.
 - A. It makes the plan a moving target, undermining depth of analysis.
 - B. It shifts the affirmative's advocacy position.
(Also see the severance is bad brief.)
6. INTRODUCTION OF A COUNTERPLAN DOESN'T LEGITIMIZE SEVERANCE.
 - A. The affirmative has unlimited time to find the best policy. It should be prepared to defend its plan against all germane alternatives, not just the status quo.
 - B. Replanning initiates a new debate, wasting the first two speeches.
7. AT MINIMUM, THE PERMUTATION MUST STILL RETAIN A TOPICAL ELEMENT. EVEN IF THE AFFIRMATIVE GETS TO REPLAN, THEIR NEW PLAN MUST STILL ENACT THE RESOLUTION.

INTRINSICNESS AND SEVERANCE PERMUTATIONS ARE LEGITIMATE

1. INTRINSICNESS PERMUTATIONS ARE LEGITIMATE.
 - A. By introducing a counterplan, the negative accepts that we are looking for then best policy, not just a policy better than the status quo. Adding new elements to the permutation helps in finding the best policy.
 - B. The option of the second negative counterplan justifies intrinsicness permutations. If the negative can add to the policy system it defends in second negative, the affirmative should be able to add to its policy package in second affirmative.
 - C. The affirmative plan was written with the comparison to the status quo in mind. Once the frame of comparison is changed, it becomes reasonable for what the affirmative advocates to change.
 - D. This doesn't undermine negative ground. The affirmative is still advocating everything it did initially; it is just also advocating something else. The negative is perfectly free to run disadvantages to the intrinsicness permutation.
 - E. Utopian counterplans uniquely justify intrinsicness permutations. They radically change the world to which the affirmative is being compared. Also, they imply that the judge has vast fiat powers and should be engaged in pursuing ideal alternative futures.
(Also see the block defending intrinsicness arguments.)
2. SEVERANCE PERMUTATIONS ARE LEGITIMATE.
 - A. Introduction of a counterplan changes what the affirmative is being compared to. In light of this change, it's appropriate for the affirmative to reconsider what it is proposing.
 - B. The logic of optimal policy making justifies reverence permutations. The counterplan implies that we are looking for the best policy. If the plan minus an element is the best policy, it should logically be endorsed.

TIME FRAME PERMUTATIONS ARE ILLEGITIMATE

1. THEY MAKE ALL COUNTERPLANS NON-COMPETITIVE BECAUSE IT WOULD ALWAYS BE POSSIBLE TO DO THE COUNTERPLAN, THEN THE PLAN, OR VICE VERSA.

2. TIME FRAME PERMUTATIONS ARE REALLY SEVERANCE PERMUTATIONS.

They render the plan non-operational for part of the time frame it was conceived of as functioning in the 1AC.

3. FIAT SHOULD BE LIMITED TO THE PRESENT MOMENT.

Human decision makers can only act in the present. Also, future fiat is too uncertain to be a sound basis for policy. The situation might be completely different by the time that the future fiat comes about.

4. THE PERMUTATION ADDS A NEW ELEMENT -- TEMPORAL SEQUENCING -- NOT FOUND IN EITHER THE INITIAL PLAN OR THE COUNTERPLAN.

This makes it an intrinsicness permutation. Intrinsicness permutations should be rejected because they make the plan a moving target and undercut negative ground.

TIME FRAME PERMUTATIONS ARE LEGITIMATE

1. THEY DON'T RENDER ALL COUNTERPLANS NON-COMPETITIVE.

The negative must still win that it is net beneficial to do the time frame permutation.

2. PERMUTATIONS THAT DO THE PLAN, THEN THE COUNTERPLAN ARE NOT SEVERANCE PERMUTATIONS.

Nothing in the plan mandated that it go on forever. The topic merely calls for the adoption or establishment of a policy, not its indefinite continuation.

3. PERMUTATIONS THAT DO THE COUNTERPLAN, THEN THE PLAN DON'T SEVER.

Nothing in the plan specified a starting date. The whole plan remains intact.

4. FUTURE FIAT IS LEGITIMATE.

We often endorse acts either phased in a certain way or to be undertaken at a certain point in time when a certain situation prevails.

5. TIME SEQUENCING ISN'T AN INTRINSICNESS PERMUTATION.

Temporal sequencing is just one of the logical ways in which plan and counterplan can be combined. It doesn't introduce any policy not found in the original plan and counterplan.

**PERMUTATIONS ARE JUST A TEST
(COUNTERPLANS CAN'T BE CAPTURED)**

1. THE AFFIRMATIVE CAN'T ADVOCATE THE PERMUTATION.

If they do, they are shifting their advocacy from their initial position proposing the plan alone.

2. THE AFFIRMATIVE LACKS STANDING TO ADVOCATE THE NON-TOPICAL PARTS OF THE PERMUTATION.

The affirmative only has standing to argue for topical things; they can't propose anything non-topical.

3. VOTING FOR THE PERMUTATION IS IN EFFECT AN INTRINSICNESS ARGUMENT.

The affirmative adds the counterplan to its plan to avoid a disadvantage. Intrinsicness is bad because it makes the plan a moving target.

PERMUTATIONS ARE NOT JUST A TEST (COUNTERPLANS CAN BE CAPTURED)

1. THE LOGIC OF POLICY ANALYSIS SUPPORTS CAPTURE.

The purpose of a policy debate is to find the best policy. If the permutation is the best policy, then the judge should be able to endorse it.

2. A PERMUTATION ISN'T AN ADVOCACY SHIFT.

The affirmative still advocates its plan. They are just pointing out that what the negative has advocated solves for its own disadvantage.

3. THE OPTION OF ENDORSING THE PERMUTATION FOLLOWS FROM THE ROLE OF THE JUDGE.

In advancing the counterplan, the negative presumes that the judge has the power to endorse it. If the judge has the power to endorse both plan and counterplan, and if doing so results in the best policy, there's no reason s/he shouldn't make such an endorsement.

4. THE PERMUTATION AS AN OPTION FOLLOWS FROM THE BASIC THEORY OF FIAT.

A. If the judge is acting as a policy maker, a policy maker would enact the best total policy package available.

B. If the judge is merely endorsing the desirability of policies, s/he can easily endorse two policies together as the optimal policy package.

5. THE JUDGE CAN VOTE FOR NON-TOPICAL THINGS.

Otherwise, non-topical counterplans would never be permissible. The negative's advocacy of the counterplan gives the judge the authority to endorse all or part of it along with the affirmative plan.

6. THE AFFIRMATIVE NEED NOT ADVOCATE THE PERMUTATION.

They can simply point out that it is the logically best combination of the policies that have been advocated in the round.

7. THE PERMUTATION ISN'T AN INTRINSICNESS ARGUMENT.

The negative introduced the counterplan. The affirmative isn't bringing any new policy element into the round.

8. THE NEGATIVE SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT THEY ADVOCATE.

If they propose a policy that solves their own disadvantage, they should bear the cost of that mistake.

9. NOT ALLOWING THE PERMUTATION AS A POLICY OPTION REQUIRES THE AFFIRMATIVE TO POTENTIALLY DEFEAT THE SAME ARGUMENT TWICE.

The negative can sometimes turn a counterplan net benefit into a disadvantage in second negative by reading uniqueness. For fairness reasons, the affirmative shouldn't have to defeat an argument as both a counterplan and as a disadvantage, when the counterplan itself defeats the disadvantage.

10. THE CONCEPT OF THE PERMUTATION AS A TEST IS PARADOXICAL.

A. If the permutation is just a test then it is not an advocated argument and should have no impact within a pure policy advocacy framework.

B. If testing arguments is valid, as hypothesis testers believe, then the permutation can also serve as an intrinsicness argument testing the germaneness of the disadvantage. If argument tests are valid against counterplans, they should be against disadvantages too.

PERMUTATIONS MUST BE TOPICAL

1. THE JUDGE MUST ENDORSE TOPICAL ACTION AT THE END OF THE ROUND.

If the permutation isn't topical, then the judge in voting for it won't be voting for the resolution.

2. PERMUTATIONS CAN'T BE JUST A TEST.

To have impact in a policy debate, they need to be advocated policy positions.

3. OFFSET COUNTERPLANS ARE LEGITIMATE.

- A. They focus attention on the broad question the resolution asks rather than small particular plans.
- B. They are fair to the affirmative. To offset the affirmative, the counterplan has to be a bigger policy. This gives the affirmative a large target to attack.
- C. Offset counterplans are competitive. They completely capture the affirmative advantage and are therefore redundant, while they go on to prove that the resolution is undesirable.

PERMUTATIONS NEED NOT BE TOPICAL

1. THE PERMUTATION IS JUST A TEST OF COMPETITION.

The judge doesn't vote for the permutation; s/he votes for the plan.

2. TOPICALITY MERELY SERVES TO INITIATE THE DEBATE.

The resolution generates a case list on which the plan must appear. This provides notice for the negative and allows for good debate. The judge then votes for the plan at the end of the round (alone or in combination with a counterplan) not for the resolution.

3. THE PERMUTATION STILL RETAINS A TOPICAL ELEMENT--THE INITIAL PLAN.

Even if the plan is combined with other anti-topical actions, topical action is still being undertaken.

4. REQUIRING PERMUTATIONS TO BE TOPICAL LEGITIMIZES RESOLUTIONAL COMPETITIVENESS AND OFFSET COUNTERPLANS.

- A. Resolutional competitiveness confuses policy questions with germaneness questions. Competition is a policy question and topicality a question an issue of germaneness.
- B. Offset counterplans aren't truly competitive. The part of the counterplan which does the affirmative doesn't compete because it isn't a reason to reject the plan. In fact, it endorses the plan. The part of the counterplan which goes beyond the plan is obviously not a reason to reject the plan either since the negative calls for it to be combined with the plan.
- C. Offset counterplans undermine specific policy clash. They allow the negative to ignore the affirmative and force the affirmative to clash with a broadly generic negative approach.

PERMUTATIONS MUST BE ADVOCATED

1. NON-ADVOCATED ARGUMENTS LACK IMPACT IN A POLICY FRAMEWORK.

A "test" of competition has no more impact than an intrinsicness argument or a justification position.

2. POLICY DEBATE IS BEST WHEN EACH TEAM DEFENDS ONE POLICY POSITION.

This permits the greatest depth of discussion.

3. ADVOCATING THE PERMUTATION DOESN'T UNREASONABLY SHIFT AFFIRMATIVE GROUND.

The affirmative still advocates the whole of its plan. The only change is that it now chooses to also advocate elements of the counterplan. This isn't unfair since the negative chose to introduce the counterplan itself.

4. ALLOWING NON-ADVOCATED PERMUTATIONS IS A FORM OF CONDITIONALITY.

It gives the affirmative at least two positions, its original plan and the permutation. Conditionality violates advocacy and produces superficial argument.

5. AT MOST, THE AFFIRMATIVE SHOULD HAVE ONE PERMUTATION.

Current convention limits the negative to no more than one counterplan, so there's no reason the affirmative should be able to offer more than one permutation.

PERMUTATIONS NEED NOT BE ADVOCATED

1. THE PERMUTATION IS A LOGICAL OPTION AVAILABLE TO THE JUDGE.

A. The goal of a policy debate is to find the best policy.

B. If the permutation is the best policy, then it is the one the judge should endorse.

2. THE JUDGE CAN VOTE TO ENDORSE BOTH WHAT THE AFFIRMATIVE ADVOCATED AND WHAT THE NEGATIVE ADVOCATED.

The permutation illustrates their logical compatibility and the disadvantage illustrates their mutual desirability.

3. NEITHER TEAM HAS TO ADVOCATE THE TOTAL POLICY PACKAGE WHICH THE JUDGE ENDORSES AT THE END OF THE ROUND.

The judge has the authority to endorse policies offered by both sides.

4. THE PERMUTATION DOESN'T MAKE THE AFFIRMATIVE'S ADVOCACY OF ITS PLAN CONDITIONAL.

The plan is consistently advocated throughout. The permutation just raises the question of whether also adopting all or part of the counterplan would be an even better policy.

5. A LITTLE CONDITIONALITY NEED NOT PRODUCE PANIC.

Whenever a counterproposal is introduced, it generates a kind of logical, limited conditionality. Real world decision makers in this situation can always choose between plan, counterplan, both, and neither. There's no reason this is too complex a set of choices for judges and debaters to handle.

6. MORE THAN ONE PERMUTATION IS ALL RIGHT.

The negative chose to introduce the counterplan. It created a risk for itself in selecting a counterplan which can be combined with the affirmative in multiple ways. There is still no new policy element introduced by the affirmative. Its multiple permutations are simply ways of dealing with different parts of the negative position.

PARTIALLY PLAN-INCLUSIVE COUNTERPLANS ARE ILLEGITIMATE

1. PLAN-INCLUSIVE COUNTERPLANS TRIVIALIZE DEBATE.

If the negative can capture part of the affirmative plan, then they can capture 99.9% of the plan. The result is that debate will focus on narrow procedural questions rather than substantively distinct policies.

2. PLAN-INCLUSIVENESS WASTES THE 1AC.

It refocuses the debate on the tiny distinction between plan and slightly different counterplan. The same depth of discussion is impossible if the first speech is rendered moot.

3. PLAN INCLUSIVENESS IS ANTI-EDUCATIONAL.

It allows supergeneric agent counterplans to be run year after year. It would be far more educationally beneficial if the negative had to clash with the substance of specific affirmative cases.

4. PLAN-INCLUSIVENESS DISCOURAGES POLICY COMPLEXITY AND ARGUMENT DIVERSITY.

If the negative only has to clash with one structural element of a plan, then the affirmative is discouraged from writing complex, multi-faceted plans. Also, it has no incentive to develop different advantage areas if the part of the plan that generates these advantages can be easily captured.

5. PLAN-INCLUSIVE PROVISIONS DON'T REALLY COMPETE.

Counterplans need to provide a reason to reject the plan. The parts of the plan the counterplan duplicates are embraced, not rejected.

6. PLAN FOCUS JUSTIFIES REJECTING PLAN-INCLUSIVENESS.

If the plan is the focus of the debate, it should be ground exclusive to the affirmative.

7. RESOLUTIONAL FOCUS JUSTIFIES REJECTING PLAN-INCLUSIVENESS.

If the plan-inclusive counterplan is topical, then it provides a reason to endorse the resolution rather than rejecting it.

8. AT LEAST THE NEGATIVE SHOULD BE FORCED TO COMPETE WITH ONE EXPLICIT STRUCTURAL ELEMENT OF THE PLAN.

If they are allowed to carve out exceptions not even in the structure of the plan, then they can focus the debate on the tiniest of differences, such as whether the plan should exist in one particular jurisdiction.

9. PLAN INCLUSIVE COUNTERPLANS SHOULD NOT BE ACCEPTED IF THEY CAN BE CONSTRUED AS FRIENDLY AMENDMENTS TO THE PLAN.

If they are friendly, then they aren't the kind of position that opposing advocates would advance.

10. FINDING EXACTLY THE BEST POLICY ISN'T THE MOST IMPORTANT GOAL OF ACADEMIC DEBATE.

Strong clash between distinct alternatives produces better debate.

11. PLAN INCLUSIVE COUNTERPLANS ARE TOO POWERFUL A TOOL FOR THE NEGATIVE.

If they negative can defend the tiniest distinction from the affirmative, they should always win.

12. NO ONE ADVOCATES NOT USING THE AFFIRMATIVE AGENT TO DO SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT, SO MANY COUNTERPLANS ARE NOT PLAN INCLUSIVE.

Even if agent counterplans are allowed, the negative should not be able to use the affirmative's agent to do one or more of the affirmative's mandates.

13. NON-TOPICAL PLAN-INCLUSIVE COUNTERPLANS ARE OFTEN TRIVIALIZING.

Absolute terms like "all" have generally been left out of recent resolutions because they produce trivializing exception counterplans which could potentially exclude one person.

PARTIALLY PLAN-INCLUSIVE COUNTERPLANS ARE LEGITIMATE

1. THEY HELP TO FIND THE OPTIMAL POLICY.

- A. The purpose of a policy debate is to find the best policy.
- B. The affirmative has unlimited time to devise the best plan that it can. If it's proven not to be the best, it should be rejected.
- C. Not allowing plan-inclusive counterplans risks accepting sub-optimal policies. If the negative can't argue for refinements in the affirmative approach, the truly best policy may never be found.

2. PLAN-INCLUSIVE COUNTERPLANS ARE REAL WORLD.

Actual policy debate often centers around relatively small differences between policies, not radically different alternatives. The art of political compromise is the art of finding common ground.

3. REJECTING PLAN-INCLUSIVENESS DISTORTS COMPETITION.

Even with plan-inclusive counterplans the negative wins far less than half the time. Removing this useful tool from their arsenal makes debate even more competitively lopsided.

4. PLAN-INCLUSIVE COUNTERPLANS ARE ESSENTIAL ON BIDIRECTIONAL TOPICS.

- A. If the affirmative is both hardline and softline at the same time, the negative has no generic disadvantage ground left.
- B. It is obviously a germane alternative for the negative to say that policy should go to one extreme rather than staying in the middle. But plan-inclusiveness is needed to defend one of the extreme alternatives.
- C. This also turns the trivial distinction objection. Allowing plan inclusiveness permits the consideration of more extreme alternatives.

5. ALMOST ALL COUNTERPLANS ARE PLAN-INCLUSIVE.

They either use an alternative agent to enact the same mandates or the same agent to enact different mandates. If both are disallowed, the negative will have almost no counterplan ground.

6. NON-TOPICAL PLAN-INCLUSIVE COUNTERPLANS ARE CLEARLY GERMANE.

On topics that call for total coverage of something, it's obviously a logical alternative to say that only partial coverage is appropriate.

7. PLAN-INCLUSIVENESS DOESN'T TRIVIALIZE DEBATE.

- A. The problem isn't unique. Many affirmative plans are only a small departure from the status quo.
- B. If the difference between plan and counterplan is large enough to generate a net benefit, than it's worth debating.
- C. The affirmative can minimize this risk by writing plans with fewer components. If they don't load their plan with specific implementational mechanisms, they aren't subject to narrowly focused procedural counterplans.
- D. Procedural debate can be a good thing. Narrower focus allows greater depth of discussion. Implementation questions are also more realistic than are debates over radically distinct alternatives.
- E. This is just a potential abuse argument. If there's no actual abuse here, there's no reason to reject this counterplan.

PARTIALLY PLAN-INCLUSIVE COUNTERPLANS ARE LEGITIMATE cont'd

8. PLAN-INCLUSIVENESS DOESN'T WASTE THE 1AC.
 - A. The affirmative still sets the initial ground for the debate. The negative must still find some aspect of the affirmative plan with which to compete.
 - B. The negative isn't obligated to run arguments that were preempted in the 1AC. A good deal of negative strategy focuses on shifting the debate away from the affirmative's strongest ground.
 - C. The negative has as much right to define its ground as the affirmative. It's more fair to let both teams partially determine ground for the debate rather than let one side dictate it.
9. GENERICNESS OF COUNTERPLANS ISN'T A REASON TO REJECT PLAN INCLUSIVENESS.
 - A. Agent counterplans are run year after year because in a system of divided government they are relevant on topic after topic.
 - B. Questions of who should enact policies are often fundamental. Disallowing agent debates distorts policy analysis.
 - C. Being generic isn't a good reason to reject an argument. People have found arguments like Clinton and spending persuasive on topic after topic.
10. PLAN-INCLUSIVENESS MAKES THE AFFIRMATIVE ACCOUNTABLE FOR ITS SPIKES.
 - A. Specific implementation mechanisms are used in order to gain a strategic advantage. It's fair that there should be an accompanying strategic risk.
 - B. Advantages which can be easily counterplanned away aren't very good advantages. Focusing on advantages more generic to the topic leads to better debate on core topic issues.
11. PLAN INCLUSIVE COUNTERPLANS ARE COMPETITIVE.

They provide a reason to reject the plan taken as a whole. If they were artificially competitive, they should be possible to permute.
12. THERE'S NO PRINCIPLED REASON THE NEGATIVE CAN'T DRAW LOGICAL DISTINCTIONS NOT FOUND IN THE EXPLICIT AFFIRMATIVE PLAN STRUCTURE.

This is just the same as a logical permutation against an overbroad counterplan.
13. FRIENDLY AMENDMENT IS A POOR STANDARD.

It's too vague to be effectively defined. The affirmative will always say it's friendly and the negative that it isn't.

REGARDLESS OF ITS COUNTERPLAN, THE NEGATIVE RETAINS PRESUMPTION

1. PLAN FOCUS JUSTIFIES.

If the focus of the debate is the affirmative plan, presumption is against the plan. The affirmative faces the burden of justifying its plan as the optimal policy. If the counterplan is as good as the plan, the affirmative has failed in its burden of optimality.

2. RESOLUTIONAL FOCUS JUSTIFIES.

In this view, the resolution serves as the central hypothesis being tested in the round. Presumption always rests against the resolution. The affirmative must establish with a preponderance of proof that the resolution is true. It hasn't done this if there is a counterplan as good as the plan.

3. GAMING CONSIDERATIONS JUSTIFY.

The affirmative wins significantly more than half of all debates because of the large advantage it has in case selection. Vesting presumption in the negative (that is, always letting the negative win ties) is a fair response to the affirmative side advantage.

4. THE COUNTERPLAN AT LEAST RETAINS PRESUMPTION IF IT IS LESS CHANGE.

If presumption is based on the risk of change, there is no reason it would automatically shift to the affirmative given a counterplan.

5. IF THE COUNTERPLAN IS AS GOOD AS THE PLAN, IT PROVIDES A REASON TO REJECT THE PLAN.

If the plan isn't the best policy, then there is no reason to endorse it.

6. THE COUNTERPLAN RETAINS PRESUMPTION VERSUS THE DO BOTH PERMUTATION.

Doing both involves more change than doing the counterplan alone. Thus, if the counterplan has a larger net advantage than the plan, and doing both has no greater advantage, only the counterplan should be endorsed.

PRESUMPTION SHIFTS TO THE AFFIRMATIVE IN A COUNTERPLAN ROUND

1. THE COUNTERPLAN MUST BE A REASON TO REJECT THE PLAN.

If the counterplan is only as good as the affirmative plan it isn't a reason to reject it.

2. INITIAL NEGATIVE PRESUMPTION IS GROUNDED IN RISK OF CHANGE.

By abandoning the status quo, the negative loses the presumption grounded in the known.

3. ONCE THE STATUS QUO IS ABANDONED, THE PLAN IS THE POLICY OPTION OCCUPYING THE FLOOR.

If it is prima facie desirable, any counterplan must be shown to be better to displace its presumption of desirability.

4. DEBATE SHOULD FOCUS NOT ON PLAN OR RESOLUTION BUT ON THE COMPARISON OF AFFIRMATIVE AND NEGATIVE POLICIES.

Thus, there isn't an automatic presumption against the affirmative.

5. GAMING CONSIDERATIONS ARE INSUFFICIENT.

Resolving theory on the basis of side equity is ultimately arbitrary. Each theory issue should be determined on its own merits.

6. DOING BOTH SHOULD ALWAYS HAVE PRESUMPTION VERSUS THE COUNTERPLAN ALONE.

If the two policies aren't mutually exclusive, there is always a small presumption in favor of redundant safeguards and backup mechanisms, in case one of the two options fails.

SECOND NEGATIVE COUNTERPLANS ARE ILLEGITIMATE

1. LIMITING COUNTERPLANS TO FIRST NEGATIVE MAXIMIZES DEPTH OF DISCUSSION.

If the counterplan comes in the second negative, the affirmative no longer has a constructive speech to attack the negative's policy position. The result is more superficial policy analysis.

2. SECOND NEGATIVE COUNTERPLANS AREN'T JUSTIFIED TO ANSWER 2AC UNIQUENESS ARGUMENTS OR TURNS.

A well-prepared negative should be able anticipate such arguments against its disadvantage and preempt them with its counterplan, just as the affirmative is expected to anticipate disadvantages to its plan.

3. IF 2AC PLANS ARE ILLEGITIMATE, THEN 2NC COUNTERPLANS SHOULD BE AS WELL.

In fact, a 2AC plan would be more legitimate because the negative would still have a constructive speech.

4. IF THE NEGATIVE RETAINS THE OPTION OF A 2NC COUNTERPLAN, THE AFFIRMATIVE SHOULD BE ABLE TO ADD TO ITS PLAN IN 2AC.

If the negative can add to the policy it will defend in its second constructive, the affirmative should be able to as well.

SECOND NEGATIVE COUNTERPLANS ARE LEGITIMATE

1. 2NC IS STILL A CONSTRUCTIVE SPEECH, SO THE NEGATIVE SHOULD BE ABLE TO CONTINUE CONSTRUCTING ITS POSITION.

2. THE 2NC COUNTERPLAN IS A RATIONAL RESPONSE TO UNIQUENESS AND TURNS.

- A. Turns are new advantages presented for the first time in 2AC. 2NC is therefore the negative's first opportunity to respond to them with a counterplan.
- B. Counterplanning out uniqueness arguments is legitimate. The counterplan represents a rational policy response to the argument the 2AC presents.

3. 2NC COUNTERPLANS DON'T JUSTIFY 2AC PLAN ADDITIONS.

- A. The plan is the focus of the debate; thus, it needs to stay fixed throughout the round. The negative policy position can more legitimately evolve in response to affirmative arguments.
- B. The affirmative has a large preparation advantage. The negative can't be expected to anticipate every case specific affirmative turn or uniqueness argument.
- C. Non-reciprocity on counterplan placement is justified by the general affirmative side advantage. Even now, with 2NC counterplans generally allowed and 2AC plans generally rejected, the affirmative wins well over half the time. New theories should be rejected if they increase the side bias in favor of the affirmative.

COUNTERPLANS NEED A WRITTEN TEXT

1. THE AFFIRMATIVE IS EXPECTED TO HAVE A WRITTEN PLAN.

This is because the plan is its policy, and specificity is needed for intelligent analysis. The same reasons justify a written negative counterplan.

2. IF NOT WRITTEN DOWN IT IS TOO EASY FOR THE COUNTERPLAN TO CHANGE AS THE DEBATE GOES ON.

A written text provides an objective reference point regarding what the negative is advocating.

3. NOT PROVIDING A WRITTEN COUNTERPLAN TEXT IS SIMPLY LAZY OR SLEAZY DEBATING.

There's no good reason the negative shouldn't provide a text for its counterplan.

PERMUTATIONS NEED A WRITTEN TEXT

1. PERMUTATIONS ARE TREATED AS POLICY OPTIONS WHICH THE JUDGE CAN VOTE FOR AT THE END OF THE ROUND.

Policy options should be clear and specific in order to facilitate intelligent comparison.

2. PLANS ARE EXPECTED TO BE WRITTEN DOWN.

A permutation is just as much of a policy option as a plan, so it should be written down too.

3. PERMUTATIONS OFTEN BECOME CONFUSED.

They are usually read rapidly and there may be several. In many debates there is a great deal of doubt about what the permutation actually says. Requiring written permutations avoids this problem.

4. NOT WRITING OUT THE PERMUTATION IS EITHER LAZY OR SLEAZY DEBATING.

There's no good reason the affirmative shouldn't provide a text for its permutation.

COUNTERPLANS AND PERMUTATIONS DON'T NEED A WRITTEN TEXT.

1. A WRITTEN TEXT IS SIMPLY A FORMALISTIC CONVENTION.

As long as the ideas at stake are clearly communicated, a text is unnecessary.

2. EVEN PLANS WOULDN'T NEED TO BE WRITTEN DOWN, IF THEIR CENTRAL IDEAS WERE CLEARLY PRESENTED.

The written plan is simply a convention.

ANSWERS TO THE STUDY COUNTERPLAN**1. YOU SHOULD BOTH ACT AND STUDY.**

The plan's effects can be more adequately studied if it is put in place. If study reveals flaws or superior alternatives, it can be modified or repealed.

2. STUDY IS LIKELY TO FAIL.

- A. If the case turns on a moral question, more study won't help. We've been studying moral philosophy for over 2000 years.
- B. Studying basic theories of power or Being won't solve. Policy makers lack the qualifications to study such issues. Also, such high level philosophical abstractions are probably irresolvable.
- C. If the affirmative harm area has been studied a lot already, further study won't help. New research will simply follow the contours of present ideology.
- D. New information must overcome affirmative inherency. The motives we isolate are unlikely to be overcome just by new data.

3. STUDY ENSURES DELAY.

This means that the affirmative harms continue throughout the period of the study.

4. DISADVANTAGE RISK IS NEEDED TO JUSTIFY FURTHER STUDY.

If there's no net risk, there's no point in studying just to see how big the affirmative advantage is going to be.

5. STUDY IS TOPICAL.

If the probable effect of study is the adoption of the affirmative plan, then it is topical and plan inclusive.

SIGNIFICANCE SHOULD BE A VOTING ISSUE

1. TO PREVENT TRIVIALIZATION OF DEBATE.

Debate should focus on important public policy issues; however, the desire to avoid disadvantages has led to increasingly trivial cases. To prevent further trivialization, a standard of inherent worthiness of discussion is necessary.

2. IN LIGHT OF THE INHERENT RISK OF CHANGE.

Any policy action involves potential unforeseeable side effects. The risk of the unknown should not be undertaken for trivial potential benefits.

3. BECAUSE OF RESOURCE TRADEOFFS.

All policies involve political and economic tradeoffs. A policy with trivial benefits should be rejected because it could potentially preempt a more effective solution.

4. TO PROMOTE REASONABLE TOPIC LIMITS.

Given expansive standards of topic interpretation, the resolution alone is insufficient to define an acceptably researchable topic area. A significance standard can provide an effective check on topic scope.

5. PARADIGMATIC ANALOGIES

A. Policy making. Policy makers should focus on the significant issues within their jurisdiction, not trivial ones.

B. Judicial analogy. The Supreme Court accepts cases for review only if they raise important legal issues.

C. Scholarship. Scholars should investigate the important problems in their field, not the trivial ones.

6. STANDARDS FOR ASSESSING SIGNIFICANCE.

A. Comparison to other cases on the topic. Significance depends on context, so the range of resolutive options available provides the relevant comparison for assessing significance.

B. Residual significance should be rejected. If the negative takes out almost all of affirmative significance and/or makes any remaining significance extremely probabilistic, the affirmative should be rejected.

STRICT SIGNIFICANCE STANDARDS ARE UNDESIRABLE

1. SIGNIFICANCE IS A POLICY ISSUE WHICH MUST BE ALWAYS SEEN IN RELATION TO OTHER POLICY ISSUES.

If there is no DA, a case with minimal significance is justified.

2. COURTS AND CONGRESS DO OFTEN DEAL WITH RELATIVELY MINOR MATTERS.

3. TOPICS SHOULD BE WRITTEN SO AS TO PROVIDE LIMITS; ARTIFICIALLY ADDING LIMITS TO THE TOPIC IS UNDESIRABLE.

4. THE CASE HAS BEEN DISCUSSED IN PRINT; THIS SUGGESTS IT'S INHERENTLY WORTHY OF DISCUSSION.

5. DRAWING THE LINE ON SIGNIFICANCE IS INHERENTLY ARBITRARY.

Voting for any net advantage is a far less subjective standard.

6. THE RISK OF CHANGE SHOULD NOT WEIGH HEAVILY.

There are also potential unknown benefits which might arise from the plan.

7. RESOURCE TRADEOFFS AREN'T A REASON TO VOTE NEGATIVE.

If these tradeoffs are important, it should be possible to translate them into a disadvantage. It's also possible that the plan would preempt bad future policies.

8. SIGNIFICANCE SHOULDN'T BE ASSESSED RELATIVE TO OTHER CASES.

There's no reason everyone needs to run the biggest case on the topic. This encourages artificial and unrealistic impact claims.

9. RESIDUAL SIGNIFICANCE SHOULD BE ACCEPTED.

If there's any chance that someone will be benefited by the plan, it's unacceptable to deny them that potential benefit. If the case impact is large, then even a very small probability of its occurring justifies change. We shouldn't take chances with millions of lives or human extinction.

ARGUMENTS FAVORING THE CORE MOTIVE VIEW OF INHERENCY

1. UNLESS THE UNDERLYING REASONS FOR THE CONTINUATION OF A PROBLEM ARE UNDERSTOOD, THEN CONTINUATION OF THE PROBLEM CANNOT BE PREDICTED.

Past failure to deal with the problem might simply be due to neglect, and the present system might well deal with the problem tomorrow.
 2. UNLESS THE CORE MOTIVES ARE ESTABLISHED, SOLVENCY IS UNCLEAR.

The same attitudes which block effective status quo solutions might well preclude the effective functioning of the affirmative plan.
 3. THE PROPER SOLUTIONS TO A PROBLEM CAN BEST BE EVALUATED AND ADDRESSED WHEN THE CAUSES UNDERLYING THAT PROBLEM ARE THOROUGHLY UNDERSTOOD.
-

ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE CORE MOTIVE VIEW OF INHERENCY

1. THE CONTINUATION OF A PROBLEM OVER TIME PROVIDES AT LEAST SOME PROBABILITY THAT IT WILL CONTINUE INTO THE FUTURE.
2. OFTEN SOLUTIONS ARE EFFECTIVE EVEN ABSENT KNOWLEDGE CONCERNING UNDERLYING CAUSES.

For example, successful pilot programs allow us to predict solvency, even if we don't know why those programs haven't been more widely emulated.
3. OFTEN THE FAILURE TO ADDRESS A PROBLEM IS MULTI-CAUSAL AND THE DIFFERENT ELEMENTS CANNOT BE CLEARLY AND CONCEPTUALLY ISOLATED.

Thus, no "core" motive can be shown.
4. OFTEN FAILURE TO ADDRESS A PROBLEM IS NOT DUE TO DISTINCT, POSITIVE MOTIVES BUT IS A FUNCTION OF INERTIA AND INDIFFERENCE.

The lack of motives rather than the existence of motives explains the continuation of the problem.
5. OFTEN UNDERLYING MOTIVES FOR FAILURE TO ADDRESS A PROBLEM ARE KNOWN ONLY BY THE INDIVIDUAL ACTOR WITHIN WHOSE PURVIEW THE PROBLEM FALLS.

In some instance those motives may be unconscious. To insist on the affirmative showing core motives may require mind reading. In any case, the motive may not be discernable or demonstrable.
6. INSISTENCE ON CORE MOTIVES RESULTS IN THE CONTINUED TOLERATION OF EVIL.

The unexplained failure of present agents to address a problem doesn't justify allowing the problem to continue.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST STRUCTURAL INHERENCY ARGUMENTS

1. INHERENCY IS MERELY THE BURDEN OF PREDICTING THE CONTINUED EXISTENCE OF THE HARM.
Specific structures don't need to be isolated in order to make that prediction. Historical experience is enough to make that judgment.
 2. AFFIRMATIVE INHERENCY IS STRUCTURAL.
The affirmative plan is a structure the absence of which permits the harm to continue.
 3. THE LACK OF A STRUCTURE IS AS MUCH A STRUCTURAL INHERENCY AS THE PRESENCE OF ONE.
 4. IT'S ABSURD TO REQUIRE A LAW PRECLUDING THE AFFIRMATIVE PLAN.
It's rarely illegal for Congress to enact a policy. The affirmative shouldn't have to violate the constitution to be inherent.
-

INHERENCY DOESN'T REQUIRE PROVING THE PLAN WON'T BE DONE

1. THIS IS A SHOULD WOULD ARGUMENT.
The affirmative is required to show that the plan should be done. The argument that the plan will be done isn't a reason that it shouldn't be.
2. IT'S ABSURD TO REQUIRE AS A PART OF THE JUSTIFICATION FOR A PLAN PROOF THAT IT'S POLITICALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO ENACT THAT PLAN.
3. IF THE PLAN DOESN'T NOW EXIST, THERE'S AT LEAST SOME CHANCE IT WON'T BE ADOPTED.
This provides a comparative advantage of certainty for the affirmative.

SOLVENCY CAN BE AN ABSOLUTE ARGUMENT

1. TOTAL CERTAINTY OF ZERO SOLVENCY NEED NOT BE ESTABLISHED.

This is impossible. A preponderance of proof standard should be used to determine whether or not a plan can solve.

2. THE ANY RISK OF SOLVENCY STANDARD JUSTIFIES AN ANY RISK OF A DISADVANTAGE STANDARD TOO.

If solvency takeouts are never absolute, neither are uniqueness, link or impact takeouts.

3. PRESUMPTION OVERCOMES EXTREMELY SPECULATIVE SOLVENCY CLAIMS.

The risk of the unknown means you shouldn't just give the plan a whirl.

4. IF SOLVENCY IS NEVER ABSOLUTE, THE AFFIRMATIVE WOULDN'T EVEN NEED TO HAVE EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT ITS PLAN.

There would always be a chance the plan would solve, even if no one says it will.

SOLVENCY TAKEOUTS ARE ALMOST NEVER ABSOLUTE

1. TO BE ABSOLUTE, THE SOLVENCY ARGUMENT MUST TAKE ALL OF THE ADVANTAGE WITH 100% CERTAINTY.

It's almost never the case that zero solvency can be established with total certainty.

2. WITH NO DISADVANTAGE, IT'S APPROPRIATE TO ACT ON THE BASIS OF POTENTIAL SOLVENCY.

Things can't get worse, and they could get better.

3. THERE'S ALWAYS A CHANCE AFFIRMATIVE SOURCES ARE RIGHT.

If we have any solvency evidence, this creates a non-zero chance the plan can produce an advantage.

RISK ANALYSIS SHOULD BE REJECTED

1. PROBABILITY ASSESSMENTS ARE OFTEN PURE GUESSWORK.

Such guesses shouldn't be the basis of policy decisions.

2. DECISION MAKERS ARE PRONE TO MISCALCULATE SMALL RISKS.

Very small risks are outside the range of our ordinary experience; thus, we're especially prone to misjudge them.

3. MISCALCULATION OF SMALL PROBABILITIES IS ESPECIALLY LIKELY IN DEBATE.

Given time limits, it's impossible to precisely calibrate degrees of risk. Only rough, order of magnitude calculations are possible, justifying the rejection of very small probabilities.

4. EMPHASIS ON LOW PROBABILITIES DISTORTS POLICY ANALYSIS.

It leads to absurd policy conclusions, as when a tiny plan is said to risk nuclear war.

5. RISK ANALYSIS LEADS TO THE TYRANNY OF SURVIVAL.

All other human values, from justice to liberty, would have to be sacrificed in order to reduce the risk of extinction by the tiniest amount.

6. POLICY PARALYSIS RESULTS FROM RISK ANALYSIS.

If every tiny risk provides a reason not to act, nothing would ever be done.

7. CERTAIN IMPACTS SHOULD OUTWEIGH.

If one group is clearly being harmed, it's immoral to sacrifice their interests to the highly speculative interests of others. It treats current sufferers as means rather than ends.

8. RISK OF REMOTE DISASTERS IS OVERRATED.

Shankar Vedantam, Knight-Ridder Washington Bureau, LEXINGTON HERALD-LEADER, April 6, 1996, p.A3.
"Events that are common in our daily lives are underestimated in terms of the risk they present to us," said Mary Wilson, assistant professor in Harvard's public health department. "Strange and bizarre things that conjure up images of the unknown cause great anxiety." "We end up spending money on problems that may pose a trivial risk," she said.

9. PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF RISK IS BADLY SKEWED.

Shankar Vedantam, Knight-Ridder Washington Bureau, LEXINGTON HERALD-LEADER, April 6, 1996, p.A3, A9
"The public perception of risk bear no relation to the real risks in terms of the probability of the event occurring," said Victor John Yannacone Jr., a New York lawyer who has studied risk. "People are convinced that the utility of their automobiles are worth any risk." Experts point to people who cheerfully live with great risks because they have gotten used to them.

RISK ANALYSIS IS JUSTIFIED

1. ALL POLICY OUTCOMES ARE UNCERTAIN.

Public policy decisions are inherently probabilistic.

2. THERE'S NO JUSTIFICATION FOR IGNORING SMALL PROBABILITIES.

If a disaster is involved, even a small risk merits grave concern.

3. REAL WORLD DECISION MAKERS CONSIDER SMALL PROBABILITIES.

Nuclear reactor experts consider the smallest risk of a meltdown. Debates over nuclear weapons strategy inherently deal with scenarios involving low probabilities. But because the future of the human race is at stake, even these small probabilities need to be considered.

4. PROBABILITY TIMES IMPACT IS A GOOD RISK CALCULATION.

Since both of these factors need to be evaluated, this is the most intuitive approach. There's no other plausible standard.

5. THE UNCERTAINTY OF PROBABILITY ASSESSMENTS DOESN'T JUSTIFY NOT MAKING THEM.

Decision makers inevitably have to make crude, qualitative judgments.

6. AT MOST, ONLY THE TINIEST OF RISKS SHOULD BE DISMISSED OUTRIGHT.

Risks in debate are always grounded in some form of evidence and analysis. If the risk isn't minuscule, it ought to be considered.

7. RISK ANALYSIS ENCOURAGES CONSIDERATION OF IMPORTANT ISSUES.

Absent risk analysis, affirmatives would have too much of an incentive to run tiny cases with very small disadvantage links.

8. RISK ANALYSIS IS IMPORTANT COMPETITIVELY.

Affirmative advantages are almost always more certain than disadvantages. Without risk analysis, the affirmative would usually win.

9. RISK DOESN'T PRODUCE POLICY PARALYSIS.

Risk calculations might lead to extremely radical policy departures, such as unilateral nuclear disarmament.

10. CERTAIN IMPACTS DON'T OUTWEIGH.

It's logical to insure ourselves both individually and collectively against catastrophic risks. If the cost of purchasing that insurance is much less than the potential impact of not doing so, it's imprudent not to take precautions. It's immoral to risk posterity in order to eliminate much smaller, short term harms.

11. ANALYSIS OF LOW PROBABILITY RISKS HELPS OVERCOME FAULTY RISK PERCEPTIONS.

Shankar Vedantam, Knight-Ridder Washington Bureau, LEXINGTON HERALD-LEADER, April 6, 1996, p.A9. Understanding risk, in other words, comes down to understanding the difference between small numbers. "The whole issue of risk is in distinguishing between 1 in 10,000 and 1 in 10 billion," said Amos Tversky, a Stanford professor of behavioral science. "This is something that requires analysis, not intuition." "People have very poor conception of how to think of very small probabilities," he said. "What they respond to are images or pictures or stories."

RISK ANALYSIS IS JUSTIFIED cont'd

12. LOW PROBABILITIES ARE WORTHY OF CONCERN.

William Ophuls, Yale political science Ph.d., ECOLOGY AND THE POLITICS OF SCARCITY, 1977, p.124.

It is sometimes said that the probability of any one of these disastrous events happening is so low as to be not worth worrying about. Of course some risk must be run in order to reap the fruits of technology, but dismissing the problem in this fashion shows a potentially fatal misunderstanding of the laws of probability, for an apparently low probability of accident may be illusory. First, as explained in the discussion of reactor safety in Box 3-2 whether a risk is large or small depends greatly on how many sources of risk there are. That is, if the chances of some kind of reactor accident are one in a thousand per reactor year, then one accident a year is a certainty (on an average) if there are a thousand reactors in operation.

13. FAILURE TO CONSIDER LOW PROBABILITIES IS LIKE PLAYING RUSSIAN ROULETTE.

William Ophuls, Yale political science Ph.D., ECOLOGY AND THE POLITICS OF SCARCITY, 1977, p.124-5.

Even when the probabilities are truly small we cannot afford to relax, for the million-to-one shot may occur at the first event, at the millionth, or well beyond the millionth with equal probability; if the result of failure is potentially catastrophic, then we are simply engaged in playing a highly recondite version of Russian roulette.

14. INCREMENTAL RISK OF CATASTROPHE IS IMPORTANT.

William Ophuls, Yale political science Ph.D., ECOLOGY AND THE POLITICS OF SCARCITY, 1977, p.124.

Since we already do so many things that have some potential, however small, of altering the climate or unleashing other disasters, we should not be complacent about the apparently highly improbable.

15. GAME THEORY SUPPORTS AVOIDANCE OF HIGH IMPACT RISKS.

William Ophuls, Yale political science Ph.D., ECOLOGY AND THE POLITICS OF SCARCITY, 1977, p.125.

As game theorists have shown, a course of action that risks very serious loss is unlikely to be sound, no matter how attractive the potential gain; a prudent strategist limits his risks even if this also limits his gains.

16. NUCLEAR RISKS ARE UNDERRATED.

Richard Benedetto, columnist, USA TODAY, April 22, 1996, p.A6.

So why the indifferent attitude? Graham Allison of Harvard's Center for Science and International Affairs and author of the book Nuclear Anarchy says Americans are in denial: Having gone through the Cold War and lived under the threat of nuclear holocaust for years, they figure they deserve a chance to enjoy their victory. Besides, he says, "until an incident actually happens, the concept of the threat becomes almost inconceivable."

17. BALANCING PROBABILITIES IS AN INEVITABLE PART OF LIFE.

H.O.J. Brown and George Mavrodes, Prof. of Theology, Trinity Divinity School and Prof. of Philosophy, University of Michigan, WAR AND HUMAN NATURE, David Bender and Bruno Leone, eds., 1983, p.93-4.

Generally, if something has a certain cost, then a chance of that thing will have a lower cost. If a prize is worth a dollar, then a lottery ticket for that prize will generally be worth less than a dollar. If my house is sure to burn down this year, then it is worth a lot to insure it. But if it has only a small chance of burning down, then an insurance policy is worth much less. In a similar way, nuclear strike against the Soviet Union would impose, and therefore "cost," an enormous Russian suffering. A ten percent chance of such a strike, however, should be assigned ten percent of that cost. And that might make an important difference. For suppose we estimate that by threatening a counter-strike--and really being ready and determined to do it--we have a ninety percent chance of deterring a similar attack on the U.S. The good purpose to be achieved, then, is equal to avoiding ninety percent of the U.S. destruction. The cost of the means is equal to ten percent of the Soviet destruction. And that means may very well turn out to be "proportionate" and just according to just-war theory. This requires, of course, an additional estimate: that of the probability of succeeding and failing. Some people will find this distasteful, and it is certainly difficult to do. But that is not exclusive to war. Life is full of chances, and we are continuously required to balance one chance against another.

RISK ANALYSIS IS JUSTIFIED cont'd

18. SECOND ORDER IMPACTS ARE OFTEN KEY.

Eli Ginsberg, Professor of Economics, Columbia, ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF LARGE PUBLIC PROGRAMS, 1976, p.30.

A unique and provocative exploration of NASA is the American Academy of Arts and Sciences study of the social impact of the space program initiated in 1962. Because the Academy working group believed that second-order social consequences of the actions are often more important than the original action, the project was directed toward anticipating and detecting the second-order effects of massive technological innovation.

19. ANY RISK OF EXTINCTION SHOULD BE TREATED AS ABSOLUTE.

Jonathan Schell, THE FATE OF THE EARTH, 1982, p.95.

But the mere risk of extinction has a significance that is categorically different from, and immeasurably greater than, that of any other risk, and as we make our decisions we have to take that significance into account. Up to now, every risk has been contained within the frame of life; extinction would shatter the frame. It represents not the defeat of some purpose but an abyss in which all human purposes would be drowned for all time. We have no right to place the possibility of this limitless, eternal defeat on the same footing as risks that we run in the ordinary conduct of our affairs in our particular transient moment of human history. To employ a mathematical analogy, we can say that although the risk of extinction may be fractional, the stake is, humanly speaking, infinite, and a fraction of infinity is still infinity. In other words, once we learn that a holocaust might lead to extinction we have no right to gamble, because if we lose, the game will be over, and neither we nor anyone else will ever get another chance. Therefore, although, scientifically speaking, there is all the difference in the world between the mere possibility that a holocaust will bring about extinction and the certainty of it, morally they are the same, and we have no choice but to address the issue of nuclear weapons as though we knew for a certainty that their use would put an end to our species.

STANDARDS FOR ASSESSING RISK PROBABILITIES

1. MULTIPLE LINKS IN AN ARGUMENT REDUCE SCENARIO CREDIBILITY.

If every link is only a matter of probabilities, the ultimate link is a multiple of all those probabilities. If there are five initial and internal links in the argument, each 50% probable, the bottom line risk is only about 3%. If there are five links, each only 10% probable, the cumulative risk is only one in 100,000.

2. SINGLE SOURCE ENDORSEMENT ENHANCES SCENARIO CREDIBILITY.

If an advantage or disadvantage scenario is credible, at least one expert should endorse the total position. If no one does, it's reasonable to suppose that this is just a story concocted by debaters without real world plausibility.

3. MULTIPLE SOURCES ENDORSING A POSITION MAKE IT MORE CREDIBLE.

If many experts believe something, it's more credible than if only one or two do.

4. CONSENSUS ENHANCES CREDIBILITY.

Consensus of experts is the best device for determining the overall credibility of a position.

5. SOURCE QUALIFICATIONS.

Everyone can put information into the public domain--you just need to start your own home page. The fact that something is in print therefore doesn't make it credible. The whole point of reading evidence in debate is to secure expert opinion. If no qualifications are read, there's no reason to give that evidence more credibility than a mere assertion. If both sides read evidence, the more credible evidence should be believed.

6. EMPIRICISM.

Scenarios based on historical or empirical research have added plausibility. They outweigh mere speculation.

7. THOROUGHNESS OF DEVELOPMENT ENHANCES SCENARIO CREDIBILITY.

An advantage developed for eight or nine minutes should have more credibility than a two or three card disadvantage or turn. Likewise a well-developed disadvantage should have more credibility than a underdeveloped affirmative turn or advantage.

8. PROBABILITY INDICATORS IN EVIDENCE ARE KEY.

Evidence couched in terms of likelihood outweighs evidence expressing possibilities.

9. PROBABILITY REDUCING ARGUMENTS ARE IMPORTANT.

If one side's scenario is much reduced and the other side's isn't, the latter should be given more credibility.

10. MAGNITUDE OF LINK IS IMPORTANT IN ASSESSING SCENARIO CREDIBILITY.

Very small links are unlikely to trigger major impacts.

11. LIKELIHOOD OF SYSTEM RESPONSE INFLUENCES SCENARIO CREDIBILITY.

If the problem is highly visible and a matter of significant public concern, it is more likely to be solved. For example, there are numerous ways the system can respond to an economic downturn.

12. SPECIFIC SCENARIOS SHOULD HAVE MORE CREDIBILITY.

If one side explains exactly how an outcome could be produced, it is far more plausible.

13. SYSTEMIC SCENARIOS ARE THE MOST PLAUSIBLE.

If something affects the overall system, to make it, for example, more war prone, then the impact has the potential to come about in any future situation of risk. This should outweigh a single specific scenario.

14. ONGOING IMPACTS OUTWEIGH.

If the harm will continue indefinitely, for years and years, this outweighs a one time risk.

ANSWERS TO RISK ASSESSMENT STANDARDS

1. ANSWERS TO SINGLE SOURCE ENDORSEMENT.

- A. If a qualified source endorses each step in the argument it should still have credibility.
- B. The whole story of an advantage or disadvantage is almost never told by one source. Most sources don't draw out the full impact of their arguments the way debaters do. This isn't at reason to ignore those impacts.
- C. This standard discourages debater creativity. If debaters can fashion original arguments drawn from a variety of authors, they should be rewarded, not discouraged.

2. ANSWERS TO CONSENSUS.

- A. This standard is anti-intellectual. Debate is an activity concerned with giving reasons. If we simply deferred to expert consensus, there would be no reason to debate. The reasons given in the round should be decisive.
- B. The consensus can be wrong. It was once believed that the earth was flat. Over-reliance on consensus would stop intellectual progress.

3. ANSWERS TO SOURCE QUALIFICATIONS.

External credibility of evidence is less importance than internal credibility. The reasons given, not who gives them, should be decisive.

4. ONGOING IMPACTS DON'T NECESSARILY OUTWEIGH.

If the one time impact is much larger, it can still outweigh even an ongoing impact. Also, you can't predict that the harm will go on forever; someone will probably eventually get around to fixing it.

IMPACTS WITH SHORT TIME FRAMES OUTWEIGH

1. GREATER PREDICTABILITY.

Short term outcomes can be predicted with much greater certainty than long term outcomes. The extreme uncertainties of long term predictions make long term impacts less weighty.

2. LONGER TIME FRAMES MEAN THERE IS MORE TIME TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM.

You should deal with the most immediate problem first.

3. IF WE'RE ALL DOOMED ANYWAY, WE MIGHT AS WELL LIVE AS LONG AS WE CAN.

4. KEYNESIAN ECONOMICS JUSTIFIES FOCUSING ON SHORT TIME FRAMES.

Paul Krugman, Professor of Economics, MIT, FOREIGN AFFAIRS, January/February 1999, p.59.

True, as early as 1923 John Maynard Keynes famously took his colleagues to task, admonishing them not to ignore the short run:

This long run is a misleading guide to current affairs. In the long run we are all dead. Economists set themselves too easy, too useless a task if in tempestuous seasons they can only tell us that when the storm is long past the sea is flat again. But not until the Great Depression did economists realize that "short run" shortfalls of demand were crucially important. Perhaps slumps were still self-correcting in the long run, but would the economy survive to reach that long run?

IMPACT AND PROBABILITY ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN TIME FRAME

1. IT'S IRRESPONSIBLE TO RISK LONG TERM DISASTER, JUST TO SECURE A MUCH SMALLER SHORT TERM BENEFIT.

That means you would die of cancer rather than undergo the short term pain of surgery.

2. PROBABILITIES ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN TIME FRAME.

Most people would accept a 10% risk of death this year, rather than a 90% risk next year.

3. THE SHORT TERM IS MORE PREDICTABLE ARGUMENT ISN'T A REASON TO REJECT PROBABILITIES.

It's simply one factor in the probability calculus. If, despite the uncertainty of a longer time frame, the impact is still determined to be more probable, it should outweigh.

4. THE GREATER UNCERTAINTY OF LONG TERM PREDICTIONS NEEDS TO BE PROVEN.

We've made specific arguments why our long term impact can be reliably predicted. These arguments can't be undermined just by the assertion that the future is uncertain.

5. THE LONGER TIME TO SOLVE ARGUMENT ISN'T DECISIVE.

If you don't act now, it may well be too late. The effectiveness of future action needs to be proven. It can't just be assumed, especially in the face of counter-evidence and analysis.

6. FATALISM IS ABSURD.

No scenario for world destruction is certain. There's always a question of probability that needs to be assessed.

7. ONLY MAJOR DIFFERENCES IN TIME FRAME SHOULD MATTER AT ALL.

Differences in time frame of a few months or even a few years are trivial in an overall impact assessment.

LOW PROBABILITIES SHOULD BE TREATED AS ZERO

1. IN THE REAL WORLD, LOW PROBABILITIES ARE TREATED AS EFFECTIVELY ZERO.

Nicholas Rescher, Professor of Philosophy, University of Pittsburgh, RISK, 1983, p.36.

Where human dealings in real-life situations are concerned, sufficiently remote possibilities can -- for all sensible purpose -- be viewed as being of probability zero, and possibilities with which they are associated set aside. In "the real world" people are prepared to treat certain probabilities as effectively zero, taking certain sufficiently improbable eventualities as no longer representing real possibilities." In such cases our handling of the probabilities at issue is essentially a matter of fiat, of deciding as a matter of policy that a certain level of sufficiently low probability can be taken as a cut-off point below which we are no longer dealing with "real possibilities" and with "genuine risks."

2. IN LAW, VERY LOW PROBABILITIES ARE TREATED AS ZERO.

Nicholas Rescher, Professor of Philosophy, University of Pittsburgh, RISK, 1983, p.36.

In real-life deliberations, in the law (especially in the context of negligence) and indeed throughout the setting of our practical affairs, it is necessary to distinguish between real and unreal (or "merely theoretical") possibilities. Once the probability of an eventuation gets to be small enough, the event at issue may be seen as no longer a real possibility (theoretically possible though it may be). Such an event is something we can simply write off as being "outside the range of appropriate concern," something we can dismiss for "all practical purposes."

3. CONSIDERING VERY LOW PROBABILITIES LEADS TO DECISIONAL PARALYSIS.

Nicholas Rescher, Professor of Philosophy, University of Pittsburgh, RISK, 1983, p.39-40.

But in decision theory there are two different, more pressing reasons for dismissing sufficiently improbable possibilities. One is that there are just too many of them. To be asked to reckon with such remote possibilities is to baffle our thought by sending it on a chase after endless alternatives. Another reason lies in our need and desire to avoid stultifying action. It's simply "human nature" to dismiss sufficiently remote eventualities in one's personal calculations. The "Vacationer's Dilemma" of Figure I illustrates this. Only by dismissing certain sufficiently remote catastrophic possibilities as outside the range of real possibilities -- can we avoid the stultification of action on anything like standard decision-making approach represented by expected-value calculations. The vacationer takes the plausible line of viewing the chance of disaster as effectively zero, thereby eliminating that unacceptable possible outcome from playing a role by way of intimidation. People generally (and justifiedly) proceed on the assumption that the probability of sufficiently unlikely disasters can be set at zero; that unpleasant eventuations of "substantial improbability" can be dismissed and taken to lie outside the realm of "real" possibilities.

EVEN LOW PROBABILITIES SHOULD BE ASSESSED

1. RESCHER'S THRESHOLD FOR ASSESSING ZERO PROBABILITY IS ONE IN A MILLION FOR AN INDIVIDUAL LIFE.

Nicholas Rescher, Professor of Philosophy, University of Pittsburgh, *RISK*, 1983, p.37-8

Of course, the question remains: How small is small enough for being "effectively zero"? With what value of x does x begin: just exactly where does the threshold of effective zerohood lie?

Rescher continues: In deliberating about risks to human life, for example, there is some tendency to take as a baseline the chance of death by natural disasters (or "acts of God"), roughly 1/1,000,000 per annum in the U.S.A. This would be seen as something akin to the "noise level" of a physical system and fatality probabilities significantly smaller than this would thus be seen as negligible. Such an approach seems to underlie the Food and Drug Administration's proposed standard of "1 in 1 million over a lifetime." People's stance in the face of the probability that when embarking on a commercial airplane trip they will end up as an aviation fatality (which stands at roughly 3×10^{-8} for the U.S.A.) also illustrates this perspective. (Most neither worry -- nor insure unless "the company pays.")

2. LARGER THREATS JUSTIFY CONSIDERING LOWER PROBABILITIES.

Nicholas Rescher, Professor of Philosophy, University of Pittsburgh, *RISK*, 1983, p.37.

This is clearly not something that can be resolved in a once-and-for-all manner. It may vary from individual to individual, changing with the "cautiousness" of the person involved, representing an aspect of an individual's stance towards the whole risk-taking process. And it may also vary with the magnitude of the stake at issue. For it seems plausible to allow the threshold of effective zerohood to be readjusted with the magnitude of the threat at issue taking lower values as the magnitude of the stake at issue increases. (Such a policy seems in smooth accord with the fundamental principle of risk management that greater potential losses should be risked only when their chances for realization are less.)

3. FOR LARGE SCALE CATASTROPHES, RESCHER CONSIDERS PROBABILITIES AS LOW AS ONE IN 300 MILLION.

Nicholas Rescher, Professor of Philosophy, University of Pittsburgh, *RISK*, 1983, p.38.

But an important point must be noted in this connection. The probability values that we treat as effectively zero must be values of which, in themselves, we are very sure indeed. But real-life probability values are seldom all that precise. And so in general there will be considerable difficulty in sustaining the judgment that a certain probability indeed is effectively zero. A striking instance is afforded by the Atomic Energy Commission-sponsored "Rasmussen report" (named after Norman C. Rasmussen, the study director) on the accident risks of nuclear power plants: From the viewpoint of a person living in the general vicinity of a reactor, the likelihood of being killed in any one year in a reactor accident is one chance in 300,000,000 and the likelihood of being injured in any one year in a reactor accident is one chance in 150,000,000.

4. ANY CONSEQUENTIALIST ETHIC MUST CONSIDER PROBABILITIES.

Peter Singer, Centre for Human Bioethics, Monash University, *PRACTICAL ETHICS*, 1993, p.238.

If triage is to be rejected it must be tackled on its own ground, within the framework of consequentialist ethics. Here it is vulnerable. Any consequentialist ethics must take probability of outcome into account. A course of action that will certainly produce some benefit is to be preferred to an alternative course that may lead to a slightly larger benefit, but is equally likely to result in no benefit at all. Only if the greater magnitude of the uncertain benefit outweighs its uncertainty should we choose it. Better one certain unit of benefit than a 10 per cent chance of five units; but better a 50 per cent chance of three units than a single certain unit. The same principle applies when we are trying to avoid evils.

5. EXPECTED BENEFITS SHOULD BE DETERMINED BY MULTIPLYING PROBABILITY TIMES IMPACT.

Jamie Mayerfeld, Department of Political Science, University of Washington, *JOURNAL OF SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY*, Spring 1997, p.11.

Many people think that when we are evaluating actions in terms of their effects, we should really evaluate them in terms of their expected benefit (or expected harm). The expected benefit of an action is calculated by multiplying the value of each of its potential outcomes by the probability of that outcome, and adding together all the products. According to the original version of the incrementalist argument, by contributing \$100 to Oxfam America, I have a certain chance of saving a modest number of people from extreme suffering. On a more realistic view, I have a much smaller chance of saving a much larger number of people from extreme suffering. The upshot is that I have reason to believe that the expected benefit of my contribution is roughly the same in both cases.

PRESUMPTION SHOULD REST AGAINST RISK OF CHANGE

1. CHANGE ALWAYS INVOLVES UNKNOWN RISKS AND UNFORESEEABLE DISADVANTAGES.

Presumption should therefore rest with the known.

2. PRESUMPTION FAVORS STATUS QUO EXPERIENCE.

The present system represents the considered result of years of trial and error; such experience is likely to have lead us to a relatively effective system.

3. PRESUMPTION FAVORS PRESENT POLICY JUDGMENTS.

Present policy makers have decided on the desirability of what we have. Since they are presumably rational individuals, the system they have selected carried presumptive validity.

4. SYSTEMS THEORY JUSTIFIES.

The present system involves a complex set of interrelationships. Tinkering with parts may have unforeseen impacts on the whole. Chaos theory supports the same conclusion.

5. EVEN IF CHANGE IS INEVITABLE, THERE SHOULD BE A PRESUMPTION AGAINST ANY PARTICULAR CHANGE.

It's important to carefully choose which changes will be undertaken.

6. UNFORESEEN BENEFITS ARE LESS LIKELY THAN UNFORESEEN DISADVANTAGES.

Tinkering with your car engine is more likely to make it worse than better. Whatever can go wrong usually will go wrong.

PRESUMPTION SHOULD NOT REST AGAINST RISK OF CHANGE

1. CHANGE IS INEVITABLE.

There's no point in presuming against it.

2. THERE IS A CHANCE OF UNFORESEEN BENEFITS AS WELL AS UNFORESEEN DISADVANTAGES.

3. DISREPUTABLE MOTIVES MAY EXPLAIN THE PRESENT SYSTEM.

It may be the result of inertia, indifference, or perverse motivations. There's no reason to presume its validity.

PRESUMPTION SHOULD REST AGAINST THE RISK OF PREMATURE COMMITMENT

1. IT'S BETTER TO RECOGNIZE YOUR RELATIVE IGNORANCE THAN TO ACCEPT AS TRUE SOMETHING THAT MAY BE FALSE.
2. SUSPENSION OF JUDGMENT ALWAYS ALLOWS RECONSIDERATION; PREMATURE COMMITMENT MAY CUT OFF NEEDED INQUIRY.
3. COMMITMENTS ARE REINFORCING.

Once committed to something, it's hard to retract your views.

PRESUMPTION SHOULD NOT REST AGAINST COMMITMENT

1. ALL DEBATE DECISIONS ARE MERELY PROVISIONAL.
They are tentative judgments based on the arguments in one round. They involve no substantial intellectual commitment.
2. REFUSING CHOICE IS A FORM OF MORAL COWARDICE.
As the existentialists argue, authentic existence requires commitment.
3. DEFINITIVE CONCLUSIONS ARE IMPOSSIBLE; ALL WE CAN EVER MAKE ARE TENTATIVE ONES.
4. INFORMATION IS NEVER COMPLETE.
It's always necessary to act in the face of partial data.

ANSWERS TO COUNTERWARRANTS

1. THE RESOLUTION SHOULDN'T BE THE FOCUS OF THE DEBATE.
 - A. Time limits preclude discussing the resolution as a whole.
 - B. Attempts to discuss the whole resolution breed superficiality.
 - C. All resolutions allow awful examples. For example, reduce juvenile crime by killing all juveniles.
 - D. Resolutions are too vague to endorse as a whole.
 - E. Bidirectionality undermines resolutional focus. A resolution can't be endorsed as a generalization if it entails contradictory examples.
 - F. Specific plan focus is better. It enhances depth of discussion. The values of breadth are gained across the universe of debates on a topic.
2. THE RESOLUTIONAL FORM OF DEBATE TOPICS ISN'T DECISIVE.
 - A. It's just an anachronism. By contemporary convention we discuss plans.
 - B. Insistence on resolutional form is too legalistic. If plan focus is better, it should be stressed.
 - C. Empirically, we select topics with multiple case areas. Narrow topics are generally rejected. This implies topics are intended to serve as problem areas.
 - D. The ballot doesn't indicate endorsement of the resolution, only who won the debate.
3. INDUCTIVE REASONING TO PROVE A RESOLUTION ISN'T WHAT GOES ON IN DEBATE.
 - A. One example proves the resolution. If there is one good program to reduce juvenile crime, then the federal government should adopt a program to reduce juvenile crime. It doesn't matter if there are a million bad ones.
 - B. Other analogies support. If the topic were resolved: there is a six foot tall person in this room, one example would prove the resolution true.
 - C. Successful induction is impossible in the context of an academic debate. Most resolutions permit thousands of variations. You could never test enough in a single round to reasonably generalize. It would always be a hasty generalization.
 - D. Counterwarrants do little to improve the inductive process. At most two or three examples will be considered in a round, rather than one.
 - E. There are always numerous bad examples of the resolution. Induction would always conclude negative. There's no objective line about how bad an example has to be in order to be disregarded.
 - F. Not even stock cases are immune to counterwarrants. They still reason just from one example.
4. COUNTERWARRANTS KILL CLASH.
 - A. They give the negative little incentive to attack the case. It's easier to present several more counterwarrants.
 - B. Clash is the essence of debate. Debate is all about the conflict of ideas.
 - C. Resolutional clash is inferior. It merely becomes a matter of counting examples for and against the resolution.
5. COUNTERWARRANTS PRODUCE SUPERFICIAL DEBATES.
 - A. They emphasize number of examples. There's no way to define which example is more representative.
 - B. Case debates need not be superficial. The negative is often prepared to engage in an in depth case debate.

PUNISHMENT IS LEGITIMATE

1. CERTAIN PRACTICES CAN SO DISTORT A DEBATE THAT POLICY ANALYSIS IS HOPELESSLY DESTROYED.

At this point the team that wrecked the round should be held liable.

2. BAD THEORY SERIOUSLY DAMAGES DEBATE.

It distorts consideration of real policy issues. The punishment fits the crime.

3. THE LOGIC OF DETERRENCE SUPPORTS.

Though teams always assert they won't be deterred, wins and losses are the primary currency of the activity. Teams abandon tactics that don't win.

PUNISHMENT IS ILLEGITIMATE

1. IT OVERSTRESSES THEORY.

Theory arguments should carry their logical weight in the policy calculus of the round. Giving them more weight than that makes theory the central focus of debate, not policy. Debate theory is just rules of the game; it's less important than issues of real world policy.

2. TIME DISTORTIONS AREN'T SUFFICIENT REASON FOR PUNISHMENT.

Time tradeoffs are inherent part of debate strategy; teams engage in them all the time. Also, since teams determine their own time allocation, the harm is somewhat self-inflicted. Finally, it hinders education to abandon the consideration of policy just because a suspect practice has occurred in the debate.

3. PUNISHMENT IS ULTIMATELY ARBITRARY.

It's impossible to set a clear line as to when a certain practice or theory is sufficiently abusive to be a voting issue.

4. PUNISHMENT SHOULD BE RESERVED FOR ETHICAL ABUSES SUCH AS EVIDENCE FALSIFICATION.

It trivializes serious offenses to vote on something minor like skewing time allocation.

5. THERE SHOULD BE PRIOR NOTICE FOR CAPITAL CRIMES.

Teams know they'll lose for fudging evidence. Since there's no prior notice for most other offenses, they shouldn't be voting issues.

6. PUNISHMENT IS ANALYTICALLY INTOLERANT.

Debaters should be free to make arguments without fear of being preemptorily punished with a loss.

7. PUNISHMENT CHILLS THEORY INNOVATION.

If this standard were widely applied, teams would be afraid to try new theory constructs for fear of being punished.

8. PUNISHMENT HIGHLIGHTS JUDGE PREJUDICES.

Concepts of good theory and practice vary massively from judge to judge. Punishment arguments highlight subjective judge predilections.

9. PUNISHMENT IS SILLY FROM A POLICY STANDPOINT.

Policy makers wouldn't vote for a bill because opponents made bad arguments against it or used a somewhat sleazy legislative strategy.

10. PUNISHMENT IS SILLY FROM A SCHOLARLY OR CRITICAL STANDPOINT.

Scholars wouldn't endorse a theory just because opponents made one especially bad argument against it.

11. PUNISHMENT SHOULD BE A REVERSE VOTING ISSUE.

Superficial punishment arguments are abusive; so they provide their own rationale for punishment. Also, if a team raises a bad theory argument, claims it as a voting issue, and loses the argument, they are guilty of bad theory and by their own analysis should be punished. The intolerant have no defense against intolerance. Harvard philosopher John Rawls in 1971: "an intolerant sect has no title to complain when it is denied an equal liberty." (A THEORY OF JUSTICE, p.217)

ANSWERS TO PLAN: PLAN

1. THE CONCEPT OF PLAN FOCUS DENIES THIS THEORY.

The focus of debate is the affirmative plan. The negative arguments need to provide a reason to reject the plan. A non-competitive policy option with more total advantage doesn't provide a reason to reject the plan. You should endorse both.

2. NO REAL WORLD ANALOGUES.

If one plan is proposed, opponents of the plan wouldn't respond with another plan unrelated to the first. It simply wouldn't be considered germane.

3. SUPERFICIAL ANALYSIS RESULTS FROM THIS THEORY.

In effect, this approach collapses three debates into one, a debate over the affirmative plan, one over the negative plan, and a third debate over the comparison of the two. Each plan presented can be countered by a conventional, competitive counterplan, which can generate permutations and an assorted host of theory and policy issues. The result is far too many policies to encompass within one round.

4. DIRECT CLASH IS MINIMIZED.

Rather than clashing with the affirmative, the negative is encouraged to simply find a plan with a bigger advantage. Even if clash occurs over the negative plan, that clash will be in less depth because the 1AC has been wasted.

5. TOPICS WILL BE OVERLY NARROWED.

Debate will inevitably be focused round after round on the largest cases on the topic. Debaters will be encouraged to make even more exaggerated impact claims than usual. The result is that policies that aren't world ending in their impacts but which are still worthy of attention will be neglected. The tyranny of survival will prevail.

6. PLAN: PLAN UNDERMINES EFFECTIVE DEBATE OVER OPPORTUNITY COSTS.

One policy is a reason to reject another only if they are structurally exclusive, mutually undesirable, or if one policy undermines the ability to adopt the other. This debate over opportunity costs is an essential one both in business and government, but it will never be considered if policies are just considered in terms of their raw advantages rather than in terms of how they trade off.

7. THERE ARE NO CLEAR STANDARDS FOR RESOLVING THE COMPARISON OF PLANS.

Comparing net benefits is one possibility, but there are others. Arguably, the plan that has the highest probability of being a good idea should be endorsed first and further thought should be given to the less clearly desirable policy, even if it has bigger impacts. Or maybe the more politically feasible plan should be endorsed first, if both are desirable, because it requires less investment of political capital to adopt. At any rate, these and other factors generate a morass of theory issues which would have to be debated round after round, distracting from substantive debate.

ANSWERS TO THE NARRATIVE

1. PURE NARRATIVE DOESN'T JUSTIFY A BALLOT.
 - A. Debate is an activity involving directly comparable claims. It requires specific argument in favor of specific conclusions.
 - B. Narratives fail to make explicit claims. At most, they suggest conclusions, but the conclusion is in the hands of the judge, not the debaters.
 - C. Narrative can be a mode of proof if used to support specific conclusions, but to be meaningful it needs to be accompanied by reason and analysis.
2. LACK OF A PLAN IS A VOTING ISSUE.
 - A. The resolution calls for a policy change. Policy change requires a policy alternative.
 - B. All policies are imperfect. To simply indict the status quo doesn't justify change; it merely supports the truism that the status quo is imperfect.
 - C. You shouldn't change unless a better alternative is proven. No matter how bad a policy is, it can't be rejected unless there's another option. Whatever is substituted might be still worse.
 - D. Lack of a plan makes the debate too amorphous. A plan gives the debate a specificity needed to have good policy discussion.
 - E. Lack of a plan is unfair to the negative. It puts them in a purely defensive position--they have nothing to attack. The affirmative can always find something wrong with the status quo, and if the negative can't run disadvantages to a plan, the affirmative will always win.
 - F. A plan is needed to determine topicality. Absent a plan, the affirmative has failed to implement (or even advocate) the resolution.
3. NARRATIVES SHOULD CARRY LITTLE PERSUASIVE WEIGHT.
 - A. Fictional narratives are simply illustrative stories. They don't need to bear any relationship to reality, and they could always be changed to point to the opposite conclusion.
 - B. Factual stories may be completely unrepresentative. Policy shouldn't be made on the basis of individual anecdotes. The Willie Horton case is an example of how one, unrepresentative example can distort policy assessment.
 - C. Narratives don't empower marginalized groups. They appeal to those with similar experiences, but are unlikely to persuade those outside the inner circle.
4. NON-ANECDOTAL EVIDENCE IS SUPERIOR.
 - A. Expert testimony draws on experience encompassing a wide range of anecdotes and draws an overall conclusion.
 - B. Statistical evidence is best. It encompasses a number of examples and assures representativeness.
 - C. Discursive arguments are more easily evaluated and are more open to direct response.
5. CURRENT DEBATE CAPTURES THE VALUES OF NARRATIVE.

In every round, debaters tell stories. Narrative is a broad form of argument that extends beyond fiction or personal testimonial. But the present use of narrative is superior because it involves explicit discursive claims, and articulates explicit reasons.

ANSWERS TO THE NARRATIVE cont'd

6. NARRATIVES MUST AT LEAST PROVIDE A REASON TO ENDORSE THE RESOLUTION.
- A. If it doesn't, it isn't a germane argument within this debate.
 - B. Requiring topicality doesn't silence relevant voices. There are billions of voices in the world, but not all of them are relevant to a specific issue. Listening to all voices at once is impossible and produces a meaningless cacophony.
 - C. The voices the affirmative raises must still support the resolution. They can't simply be interested parties; they must support the conclusion the resolution calls for.
 - D. The silencing rationale destroys topicality. By this logic, the affirmative could run anything on any topic. This destroys the function of the resolution in terms of directing discussion to new, important, and balanced areas for debate each year.
 - E. To just say we should listen to opposing voices is a truism with no policy impact. Debate by common consensus agrees we should listen to all relevant voices. But the arguments those voices make must then be considered in terms of the resolution.

KRITIK UNDERMINES OR TURNS THE AFFIRMATIVE HARM

1. THE KRITIK DEMONSTRATES THAT THE AFFIRMATIVE VALUE IS ON BALANCE HARMFUL.
This turns the case at the most fundamental level.
2. THE KRITIK DEMONSTRATES THAT AN ALTERNATIVE, COMPETING VALUE IS MORE IMPORTANT.
This turns the values of the case.
3. VALUE TURNS DON'T NEED TO BE UNIQUE.
In undermining the core affirmative value, the kritik disproves a necessary assumption of the affirmative. Any movement, even at the margin, towards the affirmative value is undesirable.
4. AT MINIMUM, THE KRITIK SHOWS THAT THE AFFIRMATIVE VALUE IS RELATIVELY UNIMPORTANT.
Thus, any risk of a negative net benefit outweighs.
5. CONSENSUS IN FAVOR OF THE AFFIRMATIVE VALUE IS IRRELEVANT.
Consensus is sometimes wrong. Consensus once supported slavery and human sacrifice. It's also anti-intellectual to decide questions of moral philosophy based on a nose count.
6. VALUING SOMETHING DOESN'T MAKE IT TRULY VALUABLE.
Sadists and masochists value pain, but that doesn't make it truly good. Racists value white supremacy, but that doesn't make it valid.
7. NEGATIVE EVIDENCE IS SUPERIOR, EVEN IF MORE GENERIC.
It attacks premises underlying the affirmative value claims and demonstrates that they are in error.

KRITIK UNDERMINES OR TURNS AFFIRMATIVE SOLVENCY

1. THE KRITIK ISOLATES UNDERLYING STRUCTURAL CONDITIONS THAT THE PLAN CAN'T SOLVE.
2. THE KRITIK TURNS SOLVENCY.
It shows that embracing the affirmative approach actually makes matters worse.
3. THE SOLVENCY ARGUMENT IS ABSOLUTE.
It proves that necessary assumptions undergirding the affirmative are wrong. Since the affirmative rests on fundamentally flawed assumptions, you shouldn't ascribe to them any chance of solvency.
4. SPECIFICITY OF AFFIRMATIVE EVIDENCE IS IRRELEVANT.
The kritik undermines the theory on which the specific affirmative solvency rests. It disproves their theoretical framework.
5. EMPIRICAL SOLVENCY EVIDENCE IS SUSPECT.
Even if the plan has short term benefits, the kritik explains why countervailing forces will cause the plan to fail in the longer run.

KRITIK SHOWS THE AFFIRMATIVE PLAN IS TANGIBLY DISADVANTAGEOUS

1. KRITIK LINK AND IMPACT ANALYSIS DEMONSTRATE THE DISADVANTAGEOUSNESS OF THE PLAN.
2. UNIQUENESS IS UNNECESSARY.

Uniqueness is always probabilistic. If we win the link, there is at least some linear link to the plan.

3. THE KRITIK IMPACT IS OVERWHELMINGLY SIGNIFICANT.

It indicates that we are in a try or die situation. You should therefore make every effort possible to avoid the disadvantage.

4. THE KRITIK SOLVES THE IMPACT.

We will show that the kritik is a viable alternative and that embracing the kritik can solve.

KRITIK FUNCTIONS AS A DEONTOLOGICAL DISADVANTAGE

1. THE KRITIK DEMONSTRATES THAT THE AFFIRMATIVE APPROACH IS MORALLY WRONG ON FACE AND THEREFORE SHOULD BE REJECTED.

2. UNIQUENESS IS IRRELEVANT.

Every instance of immoral conduct is uniquely evil. Even though murder is common, each instance of murder should be rejected.

3. THE KRITIK DOESN'T REJECT ALL CONSIDERATION OF CONSEQUENCES.

But the pursuit of good consequences should take place only within the context of morally acceptable means.

4. VIOLATION OF BASIC MORAL PRINCIPLES SHOULD NEVER TAKE PLACE UNLESS THERE IS A CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER.

Basic values shouldn't be violated based on speculation or political expediency.

5. USING BAD MEANS CONTAMINATES THE ENDS BEING SOUGHT.

Both Nazis and communists thought the end justified the means and therefore murdered millions while trying to achieve their speculative utopia.

6. GIVING ABSOLUTE PRIORITY TO SURVIVAL PRODUCES A TYRANNY OF SURVIVAL.

Sacrificing all your moral standards to survive leads to a life not worth living.

KRITIK FUNCTIONS AS A PARADIGMATIC DISADVANTAGE

1. THE KRITIK SHOWS THAT THE AFFIRMATIVE PARADIGM, ITS FRAMEWORK OR PHILOSOPHY, IS FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED.
2. THE KRITIK ALSO DEMONSTRATES OUR ALTERNATIVE PARADIGM, FRAMEWORK, AND PHILOSOPHY IS SUPERIOR.
3. OPERATING WITHIN THE NEGATIVE PARADIGM, THE PLAN IS A BAD IDEA.
Thus, if we persuade you to accept our paradigm, you should reject the affirmative plan.
4. VIEWING KRITIKS AS PARADIGMATIC DISADVANTAGES IS DESIRABLE.
 - A. It maintains plan focus. We still are demonstrating that the plan is bad by showing that it would be rejected within the best available framework.
 - B. Kritik as paradigmatic disadvantage offers an alternative and a comparison. You can compare our philosophy with that of the affirmative.
 - C. The paradigmatic disadvantage approach is fair to the affirmative. The affirmative has the options of defending their paradigm and defeating ours or of defending the desirability of their plan within our framework.
5. INCREMENTALISM IS AN INFERIOR APPROACH.
Incrementalism can never solve a fundamentally flawed system.
6. RADICAL IDEOLOGIES ARE SOMETIMES CORRECT AND SUCCESSFUL.
It used to be radical to criticize the divine right of kings. Thus, without radicals like John Locke, Queen Elizabeth II might have as much power as Queen Elizabeth I did.
7. DEBATE IS BEST SEEN AS INVOLVING INTELLECTUAL ENDORSEMENT.
Debaters and judges aren't real decision makers. Instead, debate is an intellectual competition within an academic context, and it has the most intellectual value if it lets us argue for and refine our fundamental world views.
8. ISSUES OF POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY ARE LOGICALLY PRIOR TO QUESTIONS OF SPECIFIC POLICY.
Without establishing a general framework, specific policy questions can't be meaningfully evaluated.

KRITIK OFFERS A RATIONALE FOR RETHINKING

1. THE KRITIK SHOWS THE PLAN IS BASED ON HIGHLY PROBLEMATIC ASSUMPTIONS.
Thus, it's foolhardy to act until those assumptions have been rethought.
2. RETHINKING CAN WORK.
Negative evidence calling for rethinking obviously assumes it can be effective. Also, ideas have consequences. Gorbachev's "new thinking" clearly transformed the Soviet Union.
3. FAILURE TO RETHINK CAN BE DISASTROUS.
Acting without rethinking may lead to going in exactly the opposite of the right direction. If you're lost, it makes more sense to stop and look at a map than to keep on driving.

KRITIK UNDERMINES CRITICAL AFFIRMATIVE ASSUMPTIONS

1. IF AFFIRMATIVE ASSUMPTIONS ARE PROVEN PROBLEMATIC OR UNEXAMINED, THEIR ANALYSIS OFFERS NO RELIABLE BASIS FOR ACTION.

The conclusions they draw can be no stronger than the premises on which they are based.

2. THIS GIVES THE KRITIK PRAGMATIC POLICY IMPACT.

Bad assumptions clearly make bad policy. Falsely believing that there was a "missile gap" between the U.S. and the USSR fueled the arms race.

3. THE NEGATIVE NEED NOT DEMONSTRATE THAT AFFIRMATIVE ASSUMPTIONS ARE DEFINITELY WRONG.

Proving them to be uncertain is enough to make them unreliable guides to policy. Also, it is the affirmative burden to justify its basic assumptions.

4. UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS TO DEBATE.

They do the most to structure our basic understanding of the world and condition all of our more specific policy judgments.

KRITIK JUSTIFIES VOTING NEGATIVE TO REJECT AFFIRMATIVE DISCOURSE

1. LANGUAGE STRUCTURES OUR REALITY.

The way we view the world is determined by the way we think and speak about it. This makes it prior to and more important than specific political judgments.

2. OUR LANGUAGE USE IS SOMETHING THAT WE ACTUALLY CAN CONTROL.

No policy is really enacted at the end of the round, but the way we speak and think about certain matters can actually be changed.

3. FOCUSING ON WHAT WE CAN ACTUALLY CONTROL MAKES THE MOST SENSE.

Debaters aren't actual policy makers or opinion leaders, making their policy judgments less important than the words they use in their actual lives.

4. LANGUAGE CHOICES MATTER.

Words can and do really hurt people. Ethnic and racial slurs are wrong and should be rejected on face.

5. TOPICALITY AND EVIDENCE FALSIFICATION STANDARDS PROVE QUESTIONS OF DISCOURSE ARE PRIOR TO QUESTIONS OF POLICY.

Judges vote against desirable plans if they don't meet the words of the topic, and they vote against teams misrepresenting the words of their evidence even if the plan is a good idea.

ENDORISING THE KRITIK MAKES A POLITICAL STATEMENT

1. VOTING FOR THE KRITIK IS A POLITICAL STATEMENT OFFERING COMMITMENT TO ITS VALUES AND VIEWS.

It validates the negative's speech act and gives force to the negative performance.

2. THE SUM OF OUR SPEECH ACTS AND OUR PERSONAL COMMITMENTS SHAPE THE WORLD.

Endorsing the kritik is one way of acting locally to influence those around you.

3. USING THE BALLOT AS A POLITICAL TOOL DOESN'T UNDERMINE FAIRNESS IN DEBATE.

You should endorse our speech act only if you think we have actually won the kritik.

KRITIK PROVIDES A BETTER GUIDE TO POLITICAL ACTIVISM

1. DEBATERS SHOULD CONSTRUCT THEMSELVES AS POLITICAL ACTIVISTS.

Merely thinking about the world isn't enough. We also have a responsibility to act on our knowledge to try to improve things.

2. TRAINING IN ACTIVISM IS IMPORTANT FOR DEBATERS.

Many debaters go on to be political activists and more probably should. We should reject the ivory tower framework of mere analysis and try to improve the world.

3. THE KRITIK OFFERS A SUPERIOR ACTIVIST STRATEGY.

Even if the affirmative plan is a good idea, the way in which it is discursively framed and the rationales it employs are key to securing its acceptance in the real world. You should vote negative if the kritik offers a superior way of framing and promoting the plan.

4. THIS THEORY OF THE KRITIK CAPTURES THE "POLICY DEBATE IS GOOD" ARGUMENT.

If policy debate is good, we should consider how to actually put our policy conclusions into effect.

5. THE ACTIVISM APPROACH ISN'T EXCLUSIVE WITH DEBATING THE MERITS OF POLICIES.

Probably most debates will continue to be about the desirability of the plan as a policy. But it is more educational to engage in different kinds of debates and therefore to have some debates about activist strategy as well as the specifics of the affirmative plan.

6. THE ACTIVISM OPTION AVOIDS FORCING THE NEGATIVE TO DEFEND UNTENABLE OPTIONS OR OPTIONS TO WHICH THEY ARE MORALLY OPPOSED.

It permits sincere rather than devil's advocacy.

KRITIK OFFERS A BETTER PERFORMANCE

1. AT THE END OF THE DEBATE, THE JUDGE VOTES FOR WHOEVER DID THE BETTER JOB OF DEBATING.

In doing so, s/he should evaluate the total performance of the two teams, that is, their whole speech act as a persuasive instrument.

2. EMOTIVE AS WELL AS PURELY RATIONAL APPEALS ARE IMPORTANT.

Empathy and emotion are important aspects of human life and choice. Pure rationalism without emotive commitments easily becomes instrumental and amoral.

3. DEBATE SHOULD OPEN SPACE FOR NEW MODES OF PERSUASION.

The narratives and voices of oppressed peoples should not be silenced because they are "anecdotal" or fail to employ the idiom of "objective rationality."

4. NARRATIVE AND ARTISTIC MODES OF EXPRESSION ARE APPROPRIATE FOR DEBATE.

They help us keep in touch with our true values and emotions and encourage empathy. They help link us to the tangible experiences of the subjects of our debates and avoid treating them as simply another number.

5. NARRATIVE IS POWERFUL.

UNCLE TOM'S CABIN did more to end slavery than all the rationalistic appeals of the abolitionists. Orwell's 1984 did more to illuminate the dangers of totalitarianism than all the analyses of academic political scientists.

6. SUCCESSFUL CRITICAL ANALYSIS CONSTITUTES A SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE.

It explores underlying roots and causes of the conditions that the affirmative describes more superficially. In depth genealogical analysis is more intellectually illuminating and therefore constitutes a superior performance.

THE KRITIK OFFERS AN ALTERNATIVE

1. PURE CRITICISM IS AN ALTERNATIVE.

Criticism can destabilize existing categories and modes of thought, opening room for better approaches to emerge.

2. THE KRITIK OFFERS AN ALTERNATIVE PARADIGM.

We defend a specific alternative ideology and worldview and are prepared to defend that the plan is a bad idea within that worldview. This gives the affirmative plenty of ground. They can defend their paradigm or attack ours, or they can try to show that their plan makes sense within our framework.

3. RETHINKING IS AN ALTERNATIVE.

It constitutes an action you can undertake at the end of the round, and we will defend that it constitutes a better ALTERNATIVE than committing yourself to a specific course of action now.

4. THE KRITIK OFFERS AN ALTERNATIVE DISCOURSE.

We provide a different way of speaking and thinking about the issues the affirmative raises. The discursive choice we offer is something you can vote FOR.

5. ENDORSING THE PLAN AS A POLITICAL STATEMENT IS AN ALTERNATIVE.

It is a course of action you can undertake at the end of the round, and it is one which we will argue is net beneficial.

6. THE KRITIK OFFERS AN ALTERNATIVE STRATEGY FOR POLITICAL ACTIVISM.

We offer different grounds for embracing and different avenues for pursuing the affirmative plan. Our alternative strategy is something you can vote for at the end of the round.

7. THE KRITIK OFFERS AN ALTERNATIVE PERFORMANCE.

You should compare our speech act with the speech act undertaken by the affirmative in terms of the depth of its analysis as well as in its use of the range of persuasive appeals -- emotive as well as "rational."

8. OUR EXPLICIT COUNTERADVOCACY OFFERS AN ALTERNATIVE.

We have specifically outlined which aspects of affirmative analysis we accept and which we reject. This clearly defines areas of clash or difference between the two teams. You can endorse our advocacy at the end of the round as well as theirs.

KRITIKS NEED NOT OFFER AN ALTERNATIVE

1. THE NEGATIVE'S ONLY RESPONSIBILITY IS TO NEGATE.

As long as we can invalidate the affirmative, we've fulfilled that function.

2. ALTERNATIVES AREN'T ALWAYS NEEDED.

If we know that one answer to a question is wrong, we know to keep looking for another answer, not to blindly maintain that one.

3. SOME MORAL AND POLITICAL CHOICES ARE OBVIOUSLY WRONG.

You would reject slavery or genocide even if there were no clear "alternative."

4. REQUIRING A CLEAR ALTERNATIVE IS A CONSERVATIVE TRAP TO COOPT CRITICAL THOUGHT.

The kritik shows that we need to keep looking, even if we don't have a blueprint prepared.

ANSWERS TO "POLICY DEBATE IS GOOD"

1. CRITICAL DEBATE IS ALSO GOOD.

One of debate's most important educational missions is to encourage critical thought by challenging prevailing paradigms and underlying assumptions.

2. DEVELOPING SKILLS ASSOCIATED WITH CRITICAL ANALYSIS IS ALSO IMPORTANT.

Many debaters go on to be philosophers, academics, social critics and political activists. The skills they'll need are as important to teach as those needed by lawyers and policy makers.

3. KRITIKS DON'T DESTROY POLICY DEBATE; THEY SUPPLEMENT IT.

Kritiks aren't run in every round. A mix is best: you can learn policy skills in some rounds and critical skills in others.

4. KRITIK DEBATES ARE RELEVANT TO LAW AND POLICY.

Critical legal studies has been a leading force in the legal academy for over two decades. The kritik also demonstrates why the plan is bad as a policy.

5. CRITICAL DEBATE IS JUSTIFIED BY THE ACADEMIC NATURE OF OUR FORUM.

Arguments concerning critical theory and postmodernism are central to most contemporary controversies in the academy.

6. KRITIK FOCUSES DEBATE ON UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES.

For students, this kind of fundamental inquiry is more educational than focus on policy specifics over which we have no real world influence.

ANSWERS TO "THE KRITIK IS NIHILISTIC"

1. NIHILISM IS JUST A SCARE TERM.

We should follow the logic of our thought wherever it leads and not worry about disparaging labels.

2. ACCORDING TO NIETZSCHE, TRUE NIHILISM MEANS BELIEVING IN SOMETHING THAT ISN'T REAL.

If the kritik uncovers the true lack of foundational values, that's a reality we should face.

3. WE AREN'T SAYING THERE ARE NO LEGITIMATE VALUES, JUST CHALLENGING THE AFFIRMATIVE TO DEFEND THEIRS.

This is a logical burden of affirmative advocacy.

4. THE KRITIK ISN'T NIHILISTIC.

Our position and our sources possess a commitment to basic moral values.

ANSWERS TO "THE KRITIK IS UTOPIAN"

1. "UTOPIANISM" IS A SCARE TERM DESIGNED TO DISCOURAGE INNOVATIVE THOUGHT.
 2. DEBATE IS NORMATIVE -- IT'S ABOUT WHAT SHOULD BE, NOT WHAT IS.
Intrinsically, the idea of fiat contains a utopian element.
 3. IDEAS DISMISSED AS UTOPIAN ARE OFTEN ULTIMATELY VALIDATED.
The socialist ideas of the early twentieth century were labelled utopian, but most were eventually adopted in the form of the welfare state.
 4. UTOPIAN THOUGHT CAN BE GOOD.
If the kritik is right and we really are in dire straights, we need to engage in truly radical thinking. It's a try or die situation.
 5. UTOPIAN THOUGHT OFFERS AN IDEAL TO AIM AT, EVEN IF WE NEVER GET THERE.
Plato's REPUBLIC inspired political thinkers for millennia without ever being realized.
 6. THE AFFIRMATIVE IS UTOPIAN IN A NEGATIVE SENSE.
They pretend that the system can be patched up, which is truly a utopian fantasy.
-

ANSWERS TO "INFINITE REGRESS"

1. THAT OBJECTION DOESN'T APPLY TO THIS KRITIK.
We do more than question; we offer alternative theories and explanations.
2. THE AFFIRMATIVE RISKS REGRESSION IN THE OTHER DIRECTION -- BY REFUSING TO QUESTION ANY OF THEIR ASSUMPTIONS.
3. QUESTIONING UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS IS IMPORTANT.
The decision of when to stop questioning is a pragmatic one, but critical thought requires that some level of questioning be allowed.

ANSWERS TO "THE KRITIK IS OPERATING IN THE WRONG FORUM"

1. THE NATURE OF THE FORUM IS PRECISELY WHAT IS AT STAKE IN THEORETICAL DEBATE.
The affirmative begs the question by presuming that their view of the forum is necessarily correct.
 2. WE MAKE ARGUMENTS CONCERNING WHAT THE BASIC FRAMEWORK OF DEBATE OUGHT TO BE.
If we win our framework, then we are in the right forum.
 3. DEBATE IS AN ACADEMIC ACTIVITY.
We aren't policy makers; we're scholars and students. The kinds of debates that involve kritik are at the heart of current academic controversy. They're at the center of the academic forum.
 4. LOTS OF OTHER DEBATE ARGUMENTS DON'T OPERATE WITHIN THE FORUM OF PRACTICAL POLICY MAKING, INCLUDING MALTHUS, GROWTH BAD, ETC.
We still think it would be anti-intellectual to exclude such arguments.
-

ANSWERS TO "DEBATE IS THE WRONG FORUM FOR PHILOSOPHY"

1. PHILOSOPHICAL QUESTIONS ARE FUNDAMENTAL TO HOW WE LIVE AND UNDERSTAND THE WORLD.
"The unexamined life is not worth living."
2. POLICY CHOICES ULTIMATELY RELY ON ONTOLOGICAL AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL ASSUMPTIONS; IF THOSE ASSUMPTIONS ARE GROUNDLESS OR IRRESOLVABLE, SO ARE THE POLICY JUDGMENTS.
3. WE DEBATE OTHER DIFFICULT IDEAS IN ACADEMIC DEBATE.
We don't reject the climate debate because it's so challenging.
4. THE ISSUES THE KRITIK RAISES ARE CENTRAL TO CONTEMPORARY THOUGHT.
Any aspiring intellectual needs to come to grips with them.
5. DEBATERS CAN LEARN PHILOSOPHY; THEY HAVE EMPIRICALLY BECOME MUCH MORE SOPHISTICATED SINCE CRITICAL ARGUMENTS BEGAN TO APPEAR.
6. PHILOSOPHY IS APPROPRIATE FOR HIGH SCHOOL DEBATE.
High school debaters are bright and motivated. The French learn philosophy in high school, so there's no reason Americans can't.
7. THERE'S NO BRIGHT LINE BETWEEN PHILOSOPHICAL AND NON-PHILOSOPHICAL ARGUMENTS.
If pursued far enough, all arguments merge into philosophy.
8. BANISHING PHILOSOPHY FROM DEBATE IS HIGHLY ANTI-INTELLECTUAL.
Moral philosophy is essential for analyzing our underlying values, and political philosophy is needed to give policy debates a context.

ANSWERS TO "PERFORMATIVE CONTRADICTION"

1. THE KRITIK IS AN IF/THEN STATEMENT.

If the affirmative framework is bad, they should lose. If their plan is a bad idea within their framework, they should also lose.

2. THE NEGATIVE ADVOCACY BURDEN IS SOLELY TO OPPOSE THE AFFIRMATIVE.

As long as we disagree with them, we've met our burden.

3. EVEN IF WE'RE CONTRADICTORY, YOU SHOULD REJECT THE AFFIRMATIVE IF ONE SIDE OF THE CONTRADICTION DISPROVES THE AFFIRMATIVE.

4. CONTRADICTION DOESN'T FORCE THE AFFIRMATIVE TO DEBATE AGAINST ITSELF.

They should be prepared to defend their original advocacy from attack from all angles.

5. PERSPECTIVISM JUSTIFIES CONTRADICTION.

No one perspective can encompass all of a vastly complex reality. We should be able to entertain a variety of perspectives, especially if all of them tend to negate the affirmative.

6. CONCEPTUAL CATEGORIES CAN BE LEGITIMATELY USED TO KRITIK THOSE CATEGORIES.

Wittgenstein used the categories of traditional philosophy to critique traditional philosophies. The categories are a ladder to climb up on, which can then be pushed away.

ANSWERS TO "THE KRITIK IS CONDITIONAL"

1. THE KRITIK ISN'T A CONDITIONAL POLICY SINCE IT ISN'T A FIATED POLICY POSITION.

2. LOGICALLY CONDITIONAL ARGUMENTS ARE COMMON TO DEBATE.

Teams attack solvency while running disadvantages predicated on solvency. Affirmatives both permute and attack the desirability of counterplans.

3. CONDITIONALITY IS GOOD.

We're most likely to find the best alternative if the affirmative is subject to criticism from multiple vantage points.

4. CONDITIONALITY NEED NOT FORCE CONTRADICTION.

The affirmative can simply defend the optimality of their plan versus all alternatives.

5. TIME IS IRRELEVANT.

Any one argument is necessarily run to the exclusion of others.

ANSWERS TO PERMUTATIONS

1. THE KRITIK CAN'T BE PERMUTED.

- A. The kritik isn't a counterplan. Permutations rely on fiat, and the kritik isn't a fiat policy position.
- B. The advocacy of the kritik is simply the rejection of the affirmative. This makes it mutually exclusive. You can't simultaneously affirm and reject the same thing.

2. THE PERMUTATION IS ILLEGITIMATE.

It severs an element of the initial affirmative advocacy. Affirmative advocacy is the focus of the debate. Severing it is illegitimate because it makes the affirmative a moving target.

3. THE PERMUTATION IS ILLEGITIMATE.

It adds an element (like rethinking) not found in either the kritik or the initial affirmative advocacy. Intrinsicness permutations are illegitimate because they destroy negative ground and permit an infinite regress of arguments.

4. THE PERMUTATION IS UNDESIRABLE.

The permutation blunts the force of our criticism. It stakes out a middle ground which coopts the radical and disruptive nature of the kritik.

5. THE PERMUTATION STILL LINKS TO THE KRITIK.

Even if the affirmative embraces our framework, the initial link to the affirmative discourse and assumptions still applies. This renders the affirmative, even at the margin, morally unacceptable.

6. THE PERMUTATION HAS NO NET BENEFIT.

The kritik alone can solve, so the permutation isn't better than the kritik. In fact, it's worse, because it risks undercutting the kritik's solvency.

7. EVEN WITH THE KRITIK, THE NEGATIVE PERFORMANCE IS SUPERIOR.

A negative speech act establishing the kritik framework is superior to an affirmative speech act agreeing with it. We offer original, critical analysis; they merely copy it.

ANSWERS TO "THE CASE OUTWEIGHS THE KRITIK"

1. THE KRITIK HAS REAL WORLD IMPACTS OF A DISCURSIVE AND POLITICAL NATURE.

Impacts in the real world take precedence over impacts in the hypothetical world of fiat.

2. THE KRITIK CAPTURES THE AFFIRMATIVE ADVANTAGE.

We show how the kritik functions as an alternative and can solve.

3. THE KRITIK UNDERCUTS THE AFFIRMATIVE ADVANTAGE.

By indicting their framework and assumptions we render their policy advantage moot.

4. THE KRITIK TURNS THE ADVANTAGE.

As an indictment of affirmative values and solvency, the kritik shows that the affirmative is on balance undesirable as a policy.

DEBATE SHOULD CONSIDER FUNDAMENTAL ALTERNATIVES

1. IDEOLOGY LOGICALLY DICTATES POLICY.

A. Political action has no meaning outside an ideological framework.

Kenneth Dolbeare, U Mass political scientist, 1976, AMERICAN IDEOLOGIES, p.10-1.

But in another sense, a political system has no true nature except in terms of one's values and goals. It is what it is because we see it against a background of our own hopes and fears. In other words, ideology establishes the "facts," gives them meaning, and motivates us toward goal-seeking action.

B. Ideology provides a legitimate basis for decision-making.

Kenneth Dolbeare, U Mass political scientist, 1976, AMERICAN IDEOLOGIES, p.3.

Obviously, an ideology may serve important political purposes for those who hold to it. An ideology provides not only cues for understanding and evaluating public affairs, but also serves as a guide to action, as a means of self-expression, and/or as a means of relating to other people. Ideology may thus become integrated with an individual's personality. This is neither unusual nor undesirable, either for the individual or for the political system as a whole. Quite naturally, all people develop images of the world around them; they cannot help but see things in terms of their life experience, values, and aspirations. Some political activists disparage ideology as the antithesis of reason, but this may be merely because they hold a different ideology. All established political systems generate ideologies that explain, justify, and mobilize support for their practices.

C. Values and goals logically condition policy pursuits.

Kenneth Dolbeare, U Mass political scientist, 1976, AMERICAN IDEOLOGIES, p.7.

The goals of each ideology reflect its perception of the distance between the conditions of the society today (as understood in its world view) and the values to which it subscribes. In general, ideologies seek to attain the conditions, institutions, and policies that will permit realization of their values. In some cases, this may mean defending the status quo in every respect. In others, it may require drastic changes and the development of a series of interim goals. Out of the interplay of world view, values, and goals emerges a conception of the scope and direction of social change that will be necessary to achieve the ends to which the ideology is committed.

D. Underlying philosophy determines particular outcomes.

Eugene Rostow, Yale law prof, 1962, THE SOVEREIGN PRINCIPLE, p.3-4.

The argument of this essay can be summed up in four simple propositions: First, we are all ultimately the creatures of our philosophies. We dance in patterns determined by our pasts, to tunes we hardly know we know. Our acts are governed by an anthology of principles, myths, illusions, and memories which jostle together in our heads and in our hearts. Sometimes, at rare moments in the history of civilization, if good philosophers ever actually did become kings, the dominant working rules of a culture might be dignified as rational and consistent systems of ideas. Normally, they represent a far more human mixture of the sensible and the absurd. From time to time, as we have bitter reason to know, the springs of action have been demonic creeds of hatred and conquest, based on driving beliefs about the supremacy of race, or faith, or class, or nation. Whatever their philosophical quality, however comfortable or uncomfortable they make us or others, we are possessed by our ideas. They determine how we see and respond to the circumstances of our lives. And, through our responses, the notions in our minds in their turn help to shape the world in which we have our being.

2. PARADIGM CHOICE IS PRIMARY.

A. Government is based on political paradigms.

Ophuls and Boyan, political scientists, ECOLOGY AND THE POLITICS OF SCARCITY REVISITED, 1992, p.4.

The political theories and institutions by which people govern themselves have a high degree of intellectual, emotional, moral, and practical coherence. A political society is characterized by definite institutional arrangements, both explicit and- tacit standards for political behavior, and widely shared understandings on such issues as what makes political power legitimate and how constituted authority ought to treat members of society (especially how the norms of the political association are to be enforced). We can speak of this; ensemble of institutions, practices, and beliefs as the political "paradigm" of the society.

DEBATE SHOULD CONSIDER FUNDAMENTAL ALTERNATIVES cont'd

2. PARADIGM CHOICE IS PRIMARY. cont'd

B. Politics progresses through the process of paradigm displacement.

Ophuls and Boyan, political scientists, *ECOLOGY AND THE POLITICS OF SCARCITY REVISITED*, 1992, p.4. Because political paradigms have the same kind of internal consistency as scientific theories, the process of political change is analogous to scientific change. Most scientific inquiry--so-called normal science--aims at routine puzzle solving under the conceptual umbrella of a fundamental scientific theory or paradigm; (Kuhn 1970), like the famous DNA or double-helix model of gene replication in molecular biology. As long as such basic (and partly metaphysical) theories are successful in solving the puzzles thrown up by nature, allowing normal science to make apparent progress, all is well. However, once the puzzles can no longer be solved and disturbing anomalies resist all efforts to incorporate them into normal theory then the community of scientists sharing this paradigm is ripe for revolution. Scientists begin to cast around outside the framework of the old paradigm for answers to the crucial anomalies; from this episode of "extraordinary" science emerges a new paradigm that overthrows the old, just as one regime replaces another in a political revolution.

3. PRINCIPLE BASED POLICIES ARE BEST.

A. Gradualist alternatives inherently fail.

Richard Falk, Princeton political scientist, *ANARCHISM*, Pennock and Chapman eds. 1978, p.78. Such a value depends on some degree of plausibility, but also on whether or not there are any preferable alternatives. Given the established bankruptcy of statist solutions on the right and left, given the vulnerability of the state system as a whole to catastrophic and, quite possibly, irreversible damage, and given the insufficiency of gradualist strategies of amelioration, the case for some variant of radical anarchism seems strong despite the inability of the anarchist to provide skeptics with a credible timetable.

B. Principle based decisions are best given current global uncertainty.

Richard Falk, Princeton political scientist, *ANARCHISM*, Pennock and Chapman, eds., 1978, p.77-8. But the argument from ignorance cuts the other way as well. We have no real way to assess the degrees of progress along the transition path. Perhaps the collapse of statism is closer than we think. As Paul Goodman wrote: It will be said that there is no time. Yes, probably. But let me cite a remark of Tocqueville. In his last work, *L'Ancien Regime*, he notes "with terror," as he says, how throughout the eighteenth century writer after writer and expert after expert pointed out that this and that detail of the Old Regime was unviable and could not possibly survive; added up, they proved that the entire Old Regime was doomed and must soon collapse; and yet there was not a single man who foretold that there would be a mighty revolution. In the face of such uncertainty, compounded by the many evidences of pressure on the state system, it makes political as well as moral sense to pursue a principled set of conclusions even if their realization cannot be immediately foreseen. In one sense Herbert Read is correct in saying that "the task of the anarchist philosopher is not to prove the imminence of a Golden Age, but to justify the value of believing in its possibility."

4. UTOPIANISM IS GOOD.

Utopian thought furthers political ends.

David Friedman, University of Chicago law professor, *THE MACHINERY OF FREEDOM*, 1973, p.202-3. We are a long way from the objective of a severely limited government and a longer way still from anarchy. Even if anarcho-capitalism is ideally a better system, is it not wise to focus on the more immediate goal of reducing the government and put off to the future any discussion of abolishing it? I think not. It is important to know what road we must take, but it is also important to know where we want to go. If we are to understand our position ourselves and explain it to others, we must know what ultimately we want, not just what compromises we may be forced to accept. I suspect that one reason for the enormous success of the socialist ideas of fifty and a hundred years ago--ideas which in many cases are the orthodoxy of today--was the willingness of socialists to be utopian. Their politics were Fabian, but their polemic was not. Their vision of an ultimate perfection was one of the most effective weapons in the practical struggle.

DEBATE SHOULD CONSIDER FUNDAMENTAL ALTERNATIVES cont'd

5. INCREMENTALISM IS INFERIOR.

A. Incremental decision-making produces long-term tragedy.

Ophuls and Boyan, political scientists, *ECOLOGY AND THE POLITICS OF SCARCITY REVISITED*, 1992, p.245.

Most important, because decisions are made on the basis of immediate self-interest, muddling through is almost guaranteed to produce policies that will generate the tragedy of the commons. It is perfectly possible to come up with a series of decisions that all seem eminently reasonable on the basis of short-term calculation of costs and benefits and that satisfy current preferences but that yield unsatisfactory results in the long run, especially because the future is likely to be discounted in the calculation of costs and benefits. In fact, that is just how we have gotten ourselves into an ecological predicament. Thus the short-term adjustment and stability achieved by muddling through is likely to be achieved at the expense of long-term stability and welfare.

B. Incrementalism leads to ultimate catastrophe.

Ophuls and Boyan, political scientists, *ECOLOGY AND THE POLITICS OF SCARCITY REVISITED*, 1992, p.246.

Disjointed incrementalism, then, provides an almost sufficient explanation of how we have proceeded step by step into the midst of ecological crisis and of why we are not meeting its challenges at present. As a normative philosophy of government, it is a program for ecological catastrophe; as an entrenched reality with which the environmental reformer must cope, it is a cause for deep pessimism. At the very least, the level or quality of muddling through must be greatly upgraded, so that ecology and the future are given due weight in policy making. But goal-oriented muddling through comes close to being a contradiction in terms (especially within a basically democratic system). Moreover, incrementalism is adapted to status-quo, consensus politics, not to situations in which policy outcomes are of critical importance or in which the paradigm of politics itself may be undergoing radical change.

C. Incremental decision-making ignores long term problems.

Ophuls and Boyan, political scientists, *ECOLOGY AND THE POLITICS OF SCARCITY REVISITED*, 1992, p.244.

The logic of the commons is enshrined in a system of process politics obedient to the demands of both consumer and producer for economic growth. The ecological vices of this system are further intensified by the decision-making style characteristic of all our institutions--disjointed incrementalism or, to use the more honest and descriptive colloquial term, "muddling through." Incremental decision making largely ignores long-term goals; it focuses on the problem immediately at hand and tries to find the solution that is most congruent with the status quo. It is thus characterized by comparison and evaluation of marginal changes (increments) in current policies, not radical departures from them; by consideration of only a restricted number of policy alternatives (and of only a few of the important consequences for any given alternative); by the adjustment of ends to means and to what is "feasible" and "realistic"; by serial or piecemeal treatment of problems; and by a remedial orientation in which policies are designed to cure obvious immediate ills rather than to bring about some desired future state. Moreover, analysis of policy alternatives is not disinterested, for it is carried out largely by partisan actors who are trying to improve their bargaining position with other partisan actors.

D. Incrementalism perpetuates underlying evils.

Alan Ritter, Indiana U political scientist, *ANARCHISM*, 1980, p.154-5.

While incrementalism must surely be preferred to complacency or indolence as a guide to action, it is not obviously preferable to an ideal like anarchy, which, though exigent, hedges action in its service with constraints. For incrementalism, because it eschews reference to exigent ideals, ignores or tolerates objectionable features of established social systems which practice guided by such ideals contests. Any exigent social model identifies underlying sources of misery in the existing society which may not elicit much alarm, and which, being inherent in its nature, cannot be eliminated unless the whole society is replaced. The anarchist social model, to take the exigent ideal with which we are now fully acquainted, identifies inherent features of modern society, such as law and hierarchy, as the taproots of its members' stunted, estranged existence. The incrementalist, because he accepts the existing social system and tries to improve it only by diminishing its most immediate sources of felt misery, leaves undisturbed the inherent, underlying evils to which an exigent ideal like anarchy calls attention. Thus, though incrementalism offers comforting protection against fanatical excess, its repudiation of ideals as guides to action is a burdensome source of dread. For incrementalists are condemned to live with the daily apprehension that promising opportunities to augment human welfare are being missed.

GENERAL ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF KRITIKS

1. EVERYTHING IS DEBATABLE, INCLUDING THE FRAMEWORK AND SUBJECT MATTER OF DEBATE.
Debate need not be a policy forum if we don't want it to be, and the plan need not be the central focus of debate.
2. FIAT IS UTOPIAN.
No policy is enacted at the end of the round. Thus, impacts on in round participants should take priority.
3. POLICY DEBATE ISN'T THAT WORTHWHILE.
Debaters have no real political influence, and there's no reason they should become preoccupied with the political soap opera.
4. NON-POLICY ISSUES ARE IMPORTANT.
Questions of language and philosophy matter.
5. NON-POLICY IMPACTS CAN BE WEIGHED.
If the policy debate is extremely close, they can at least tip the balance. Unlike impacts, such as liberty and life, often have to be weighed.
6. REJECTING THE KRITIK IS INTELLECTUALLY INTOLERANT.
Anti-kritik arguments mainly take the form of "policy debate--love it or leave it."
7. TOPICALITY AND ETHICS ARGUMENTS SHOW POLICY ISSUES AREN'T ALWAYS PARAMOUNT.
Both operate outside the realm of normal policy evaluation.
8. THE EXAMINING OF ASSUMPTIONS IS LIBERATING AND EMPOWERING.
 - A. Even questions like the value of life are worth considering. There should be no sacred cows that we refuse to consider.
 - B. Even if ultimate metaphysical assumptions can't be justified, that doesn't mean the moral and political and linguistic assumptions underlying policy shouldn't be considered.
9. ANSWERS TO THE NON COMPARISON ARGUMENT.
 - A. Rethinking is an alternative. We call on the judge and policy makers to rethink at the end of the round.
 - B. You can fiat the rethinking. If you can get a specific policy, there's no reason you can't fiat that policy makers rethink the whole issue.
 - C. It's necessary to kritik before you can find an alternative. Discovering what's wrong is a prerequisite to finding a solution.
 - D. An alternative opens the negative up to attack. There's no reason strategically why they should do so.
10. KRITIKS CAN BE ABSOLUTE.
 - A. They can deny the value underlying the case.
 - B. They can prove that the plan is at least as likely to be counterproductive as effective.
 - C. If the assumption on which the affirmative rests is wrong, it should logically be rejected.
 - D. You need not be certain that the affirmative assumption is wrong. If it's probably wrong that's sufficient reason to vote negative.

GENERAL ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF KRITIKS cont'd

11. KRITIKS CAN BE RUN WITH NON-KRITIK ARGUMENTS.

Winning its core assumptions is a threshold the affirmative must overcome, like topicality. If it does, the substantive policy debate can proceed.

12. NEW THINKING IS GOOD.

Policy debate is stagnating. It has become preoccupied with nuclear wars and Presidential popularity. New theories of debate and new types of argument are needed to intellectually reinvigorate the activity.

13. THE KRITIK DEBATE IS AT THE HEART OF PRESENT ACADEMIC CONTROVERSY.

Post-modernism and deconstruction are the central intellectual issues of our time. It would be intellectually backward for debate to ignore them. Also, it's important for debaters as future academics to understand these issues.

14. UNIQUENESS HAS BECOME A CULT.

Debate consistently exaggerates uniqueness arguments relative to the real world. Uniqueness is never absolute, so most kritikis have at least some potential turn impact.

ANSWERS TO THE KRITIK AS HARM TAKEOUT OR TURN

1. THE KRITIK ISN'T ABSOLUTE.

All our specific harm evidence needs to be weighed against their generic kritik evidence. There's at least some chance our authors are right.

2. CONSENSUS SUPPORTS THE AFFIRMATIVE VALUES.

This is sufficient. Since the critical perspective denies the possibility of foundational values, intersubjective agreement is the most that can be hoped for.

3. SUBJECTIVISM SUPPORTS THE AFFIRMATIVE.

Things have value ultimately simply because people value them. The fact that people value their rights and their lives gives them value.

4. MORAL PLURALISM SUPPORTS THE AFFIRMATIVE.

Even if the negative countervalue is important, it doesn't deny all merit to the affirmative value claim. If, as the critical perspective suggests, you reject moral absolutism, then you should seek the optimal mix of values. This is best achieved by a permutation combining affirmative and negative views.

5. THE AFFIRMATIVE HAS A LARGER LINK INTO ITS VALUE.

Even if the negative value is ultimately more important, endorsing the kritik does relatively little to advance it. In contrast, the affirmative advantage demonstrates a strong link between our plan and the value we seek to advance.

6. THE TURN IS NON-UNIQUE.

The value perspective the negative indicts is entrenched, and voting for the kritik won't displace it. Thus, voting for the kritik gets you nothing, whereas voting affirmative garners an advantage.

ANSWERS TO THE KRITIK AS A SOLVENCY TAKEOUT OR TURN

1. THE KRITIK ISN'T ABSOLUTE.

There's always some chance that affirmative solvency authors are right. Absent a unique disadvantage, there's no reason not to try to solve.

2. SPECIFICITY AND EMPIRICISM GIVE THE AFFIRMATIVE SOLVENCY EVIDENCE MORE CREDIBILITY.

The kritik offers high level theoretical abstraction, and this is inherently less reliable than situationally specific analysis.

3. THE SOLVENCY TURN IS NON-UNIQUE.

They don't deny that the harm is occurring in the present system. Things can only get better.

4. CHALLENGES TO ASSUMPTIONS ARE RARELY ABSOLUTE.

Fundamental assumptions can never be decisively proven to be right or wrong. They are only more or less useful or plausible.

5. LONG TERM TURNS PREDICTED BY THE KRITIK SHOULD BE VIEWED SKEPTICALLY.

By nature, such turns are speculative and theoretical. You shouldn't sacrifice a tangible, empirical advantage based on some theoretical long term effect.

ANSWERS TO THE KRITIK AS A TANGIBLE DISADVANTAGE

1. THIS KRITIK HAS NO NON-POLICY IMPACT, MAKING IT AT MOST A NON-UNIQUE DISADVANTAGE.
2. WHEN KRITIKS FUNCTION WITHIN THE POLICY FRAMEWORK, THEY HAVE THE SAME LOGICAL BURDENS AS ANY OTHER POLICY ARGUMENT.

If the harm the kritik isolates will occur with or without the plan, then it doesn't offer a reason to reject the plan.

3. IF THE KRITIK LINK IS LINEAR, THE NEGATIVE MUST STILL DEMONSTRATE THE DEGREE OF LINEAR INCREASE THE PLAN BRINGS ABOUT.
4. EVEN IF THE KRITIK IMPACT IS LARGE IN ABSOLUTE TERMS, IT DOESN'T OFFER A REASON TO REJECT THE AFFIRMATIVE.

The affirmative advantage is also important, so you should try to achieve it while finding other ways to attack the problem the kritik isolates.

5. THE KRITIK IMPACT IS EMPIRICALLY FALSE.

It hasn't actually destroyed the world.

6. ENDORSING THE KRITIK WON'T SOLVE.

Despite their "constant criticism," the authors of the kritik haven't solved the problem they indict. The force of a ballot in a competitive academic debate among high school students, or undergraduates is minuscule compared to the published writings of the negative sources.

ANSWERS TO THE KRITIK AS A DEONTOLOGICAL DISADVANTAGE

1. CONSEQUENCES MATTER TOO.

Though Rawls defends a deontological theory of justice, he says that ignoring consequences is "crazy." (A THEORY OF JUSTICE, 1971, p.30.) Even Kant said we have a duty to seek world peace and to promote the well-being of others. (KANT'S POLITICAL WRITINGS, 1970, p.33 and 65.)

2. CATASTROPHIC CONDITIONS CREATE AN EXCEPTION TO CONVENTIONAL MORALITY.

Conventional moral norms break down under extreme circumstances.

3. LIFE IS THE ULTIMATE VALUE AND THE RIGHT TO LIFE THE MOST IMPORTANT RIGHT.

Life is the ultimate end which morality exists to serve, and life is the precondition of all other values.

4. NO VALUES ARE ABSOLUTE.

It's almost always best to sacrifice a little of one value to secure a great deal of another. One small injustice doesn't justify human extinction, for example.

5. REJECTING CONSEQUENTIALISM MEANS ACCEPTING AVOIDABLE HUMAN MISERY FOR THE SAKE OF A MORAL RULE.

This is perverse rule-worship. Moral rules exist to serve humans, not vice versa.

6. UNIQUENESS MATTERS EVEN WHERE MORAL PRINCIPLES ARE INVOLVED.

If lying were a universal practice, one more little lie wouldn't matter much.

7. DECISION MAKERS HAVE A UNIQUE DUTY TO CONSIDER CONSEQUENCES.

They have a responsibility to uphold the interests of those they represent, and doing so outweighs considerations of personal moral principle.

ANSWERS TO THE KRITIK AS A PARADIGMATIC DISADVANTAGE

1. INCREMENTAL DECISIONS ARE BETTER THAN IDEOLOGICAL DECISIONS.

The world is too large and complex to encompass within any one philosophy. Pragmatic reform avoids the dangers of utopianism while tangibly advancing human welfare.

2. YOU SHOULDN'T BE AN IDEOLOGUE.

All perspectives have their strengths and weaknesses. You should draw on different paradigms as relevant not completely embrace or reject any one.

3. COMMITMENT TO RADICAL IDEOLOGIES PRODUCES POLITICAL IMPOTENCE.

If you only think about public policy from a Marxist perspective, you'll have no real world political influence.

4. YOU SHOULD ACCEPT THE THEORY OF THE SECOND BEST.

Even if the kritik isolates the optimal political philosophy, if that philosophy can't be practically implemented, you should still try to improve things within the framework that now exists. If Marxist revolution is impossible, even convinced Marxists should try to improve the system we have.

5. IDEOLOGY NEED NOT DETERMINE SPECIFIC POLICY JUDGMENTS.

An anarchist might prefer a world with no governments, but still think that in a world of nation states, governments should seek to promote peace.

6. THE NEGATIVE FRAMEWORK ISN'T A REASON TO REJECT THE AFFIRMATIVE PLAN.

A. Our plan is compatible with their framework.

B. You can embrace their overall framework and still endorse our plan as an exception. The overriding affirmative advantages offer a justification. The advantage outweighs one violation of the negative framework.

7. THE KRITIK STILL DOESN'T OFFER A POLICY ALTERNATIVE.

Negative counter-advocacy needs to function at the same level of specificity and abstraction as the affirmative to be competitive. We advocated a plan, not a philosophy. Only a counterplan can compete with a plan. If their philosophy is viable, they should be able to give it a specific policy embodiment.

ANSWERS TO RETHINKING

1. RETHINKING SHOULD BE THE STARTING POINT FOR THE DEBATE, NOT ITS END POINT.

Debate calls on both sides to rethink the issues of the topic. At the end of the debate we should come to the best considered judgment possible based on the rethinking that has come before. Calling for rethinking at the end of the round, asks the judge or other decision-makers to do what the debaters should have been doing before and during the debate itself.

2. VOTING AFFIRMATIVE DOESN'T STOP RETHINKING.

- A. The most sensible view of fiat is that the judge offers a tentative intellectual endorsement based on the arguments in the round. The judge can clearly continue to think about these issues and always retains the option to change his or her mind.
- B. Policy makers can also act and rethink. Adoption of a plan doesn't preclude further thought and policy revision. If it did, then the last policy adopted would stop the rethinking the negative calls for.
- C. You should make your best provisional judgment about the best policy while you rethink. If there is an on balance reason to think the plan is better than the status quo, it should be the starting point for rethinking.
- D. Radical rethinking especially justifies making provisional judgments. You can't reject all policy opinions while you search for Being or invent post-humanism.

3. RETHINKING IS AN ONGOING PROCESS.

You can rethink or deconstruct forever if you want, but you still need to act in the interim.

4. THE PROVISIONAL ENDORSEMENT OF THE PLAN ISN'T VERY RISKY.

The judge is simply saying that it probably should be done, based on these arguments. Since it isn't actually done, it doesn't interfere with the rethinking process.

5. RETHINKING BY THE ROUND'S PARTICIPANTS WON'T SOLVE.

The debaters don't make actual decisions, nor are they in a position of influence.

6. RETHINKING BY POLICY MAKERS WON'T SOLVE.

- A. Core philosophical assumptions aren't susceptible to a definitive answer. Philosophers have been thinking about being and power for thousands of years. Congress won't resolve those issues next session.
- B. Politicians are poorly equipped to deal with these kinds of issues. Very few policy makers are philosophers or able to effectively engage in this kind of highly abstract thought.
- C. Political motives and cognitive preconceptions will distort the rethinking. To rethink is the vaguest commitment imaginable. If you simply tell someone to rethink something, they are most likely to simply reaffirm their old opinion.
- D. The affirmative inherency thwarts the rethinking. The motives that have lead to the problem in the first place will prevent the rethinking from solving.
- E. The negative at least needs to prove that rethinking will solve. This requires more than just a card calling for rethinking. They must show that policymakers can effectively rethink this issue and that they will act on the basis of that rethinking.
- F. Faith in rethinking requires a highly rationalistic view of the world. Humans are cognitively ill-equipped to engage in comprehensive rethinking. They function best when they engage in incremental adaptation.

ANSWERS TO RETHINKING cont'd

7. RETHINKING IS LIKELY TO FAIL UNLESS THERE IS A TANGIBLE ALTERNATIVE TO RETHINK.

Unless the negative has been able to prove there are credible alternatives to the affirmative, the call to rethink is empty. There's no reason to think there is a better alternative out there.

8. DOUBT AT THE END OF THE ROUND DOESN'T JUSTIFY RETHINKING.

Every policy debate leaves some questions in doubt, so if this were the standard the negative would always win.

9. POSTMODERN THOUGHT UNDERMINES THE EFFECTIVENESS OF RETHINKING.

A. Anti-foundationalism means that rethinking will never produce an ultimate conclusion.

B. The idea of situational truth undermines rethinking. If truth is always relative to a certain context, and determined by the set of one's prior background assumptions, rethinking will be circular. The assumptions of the paradigm within which you rethink will always determine the outcome.

C. Foucault's theory of knowledge denies rethinking. If knowledge is simply an expression of power, those who rethink will simply redefine truth to satisfy their own power purposes.

10. RETHINKING IS UNNECESSARY.

A. If there isn't a meaningful risk of a disadvantage, rethinking is unnecessary. You should go ahead and secure the advantages of change.

B. Most kritiks possess an alternative theory, even if they don't propose an alternative policy. By the logic of the kritik, rethinking has already occurred. This means that the negative's theory should be evaluated.

11. RETHINKING BY POLICY MAKERS IS UNDESIRABLE.

The affirmative harms continued throughout the period of rethinking. If it's a fundamental issue like power that's being rethought, this could go on for a really long time. This shows why it's best to adopt the most promising policy now, while continuing to rethink.

12. COMPREHENSIVE RETHINKING IS UNDESIRABLE.

A. Comprehensive analysis of public policy is impossible.

Charles Lindblom, Yale political scientist, *THE INTELLIGENCE OF DEMOCRACY*, 1965, p.138.

Nevertheless, for complex public policy problems no one can approximate the synoptic ideal. Policy makers invariably have to make policy in the face of an incomplete formulation of governing values, typically in the face of some significant disagreement on values. Moreover, we all know that no one can complete or even reach a high degree of comprehensiveness in the analysis of a complex policy issue, where consequences run on forever and where they also run off in a wide variety of directions. Not all of the important possible consequences of recent American policy decisions on Cuba, the NATO, on Angola, on taxation, on social security, on farm policy, or on antitrust can be incorporated into the analyses of these policies before decisions are taken.

B. The human intellect is too limited for comprehensive analysis.

Charles Lindblom, Yale political scientist, *THE INTELLIGENCE OF DEMOCRACY*, 1965, p.138-9.

The synoptic ideal is not adapted to man's limited intellectual capacities. If, as is the case, puzzles and mathematical problems can easily be constructed that outrun human intelligence, we cannot doubt but that many policy problems will run beyond man's intellectual capacity, even when he extends these capacities, as he does, with analytical aids of various kinds ranging from new words or concepts to electronic computation. A specific failure of the adaptation of the synoptic ideal is that in the face of man's limited capacities, it offers simply a prescription: "Be comprehensive!" Such a prescription is one that advises problem solvers simply to disregard a fundamentally important characteristic of man and its consequences for his problem-solving activity.

ANSWERS TO RETHINKING cont'd

12. COMPREHENSIVE RETHINKING IS UNDESIRABLE. cont'd

- C. Incomplete-information undermines comprehensive analysis.

Charles Lindblom, Yale political scientist, *THE INTELLIGENCE OF DEMOCRACY*, 1965, p.139.

If, as is typically the case, some important information is not available and either cannot be made available or can be had only at great expense, the admonition to be comprehensive fails badly. Some kind of adaptation to the situation is necessary: some pieces of information, presumably, are sufficiently critical to be worth the cost of their acquisition, others not; and some account has to be taken of the absence of those pieces not available in the way conclusions are drawn. We do not deny that men make these adaptations--indeed it will be a major point that they do somehow make them--but we point out that inadequate information is inescapable and that the synoptic ideal is simply not adapted to this fact. Moreover, wholly complete information, if one can conceive of it, is indigestible. To the extent that information becomes complete, it imposes increasingly severe strains on man's cognitive faculties. Hence, the demands of the synoptic method on man's intellectual capacities and its demands for information are related: insofar as the second can be met, the first is less well met.

- D. There's no single "correct" policy solution.

Charles Lindblom, Yale political scientist, *THE INTELLIGENCE OF DEMOCRACY*, 1965, p.139-40.

In synoptic analysis the common requirement that values be clarified and systematized in advance of analysis is impossible to meet in many circumstances in which, on the one hand, the relevant values are unknown until the analysis is far advanced or in which, on the other hand, disagreement on values guarantees that no stated principles or welfare function can command the agreement of those whose values are presumed to be governing. Moreover, no one has been able to construct a set of criteria adequate to specify formally the "correct" solution for a complex policy alternative; hence what an analyst or policy maker requires, in the absence of such criteria, is some looser criteria or guidelines. But he cannot turn to the synoptic ideal for them.

- E. No comprehensive set of values can be arrived at to resolve policy.

Charles Lindblom, Yale political scientist, *THE INTELLIGENCE OF DEMOCRACY*, 1965, p.140.

Disagreement on values calls for some special attention because of its importance to later chapters. Those who espouse the synoptic ideal assume that those whose values are to count agree. Otherwise, the prescription to clarify the values that are to govern choice is not only often impossible to follow but would also in many cases be an obstruction. In the United States, for example, at least two groups of citizens with quite different values agree on the gradual extension of Social Security benefits. One group, of generally conservative opinions, favors extension in order to avoid union demands for employer-financed pension schemes; the other group, of generally less conservative opinions, favors extension out of equalitarian sympathies. Policy making in this field would be paralyzed by an attempt to clarify values in the way called for in the synoptic ideal, for there is no formulatable set of values that policy makers can take as governing from which the desirability of extending Social Security can be inferred. An often better and nonsynoptic prescription asks that policy analysts and policy makers work directly toward agreement on policy without regard to a prior establishment of a set of governing values.

- F. Values can't be effectively resolved prior to empirical investigation.

Charles Lindblom, Yale political scientist, *THE INTELLIGENCE OF DEMOCRACY*, 1965, p.141-2.

The synoptic method is not adapted to the closeness of observed relationship between fact and value in policy making. In the actual process of policy making fact and value elements are in fact closely intertwined in ways proscribed by the synoptic ideal. As already noted a decision maker often will not know what values are relevant to his problem until he has undertaken an empirical analysis of the possible consequences of the alternative policies under consideration. To prescribe that he clarify his values before undertaking his analysis implies that he is capable of organizing in his mind all the values that might possibly turn out to be relevant--in short, all values. And, indeed, such an assumption is implicit in prescriptions that values be organized into a set of principles or in the form of a welfare function. Because no one has ever been able to achieve such a feat, a reasonable question might be how to move more modestly back and forth from the empirical element in analysis to the value element as each throws light on the other.

ANSWERS TO RETHINKING cont'd

12. COMPREHENSIVE RETHINKING IS UNDESIRABLE. cont'd

- G. The potential effects of a policy can never be comprehensively resolved.

Charles Lindblom, Yale political scientist, *THE INTELLIGENCE OF DEMOCRACY*, 1965, p.142-3.

The synoptic ideal is not adapted to the openness of systems of variables with which it must contend. If we ask what the important possible consequences of a choice among several alternative policies for dealing with racial discrimination in the public schools are, we should have to concede that they might easily include consequences, first, for the quality of education for Negroes and whites, a consequence that spills into further private consequences for the students immediately concerned, and into consequences for, say, their economic productivity, which in turn spills into consequences for our economic rivalry with the Soviet Union, and its consequences for a variety of intangible values we think linked to the survival of a free society in the United States. They might, secondly, include consequences for social relations in areas in which Negroes and whites are mixed, which are consequences that spill over in a variety of directions, including consequences for the structure of political parties, the performance of local governments, the power of trade unions, and the indoctrination of Americans in the aspects of their social and moral codes that bear on such issues as equality, fair play, and opportunity. They might, thirdly, include consequences for altering the distribution of citizens between urban and rural areas, which in turn will have consequences for the severity of business fluctuations, for a variety of political institutions and even for such a specific phenomena as tax revenues to local, state, and national governments. Now it cannot be hoped that an analysis can follow through such an open system of variables. An important question then is: How does the analyst close his own analysis? How can he satisfy himself that he can work his way to useful answers to policy questions without following through each of a multitude of variables? All that the synoptic ideal has to offer is, again, the impossible prescription to be comprehensive, which is blind to the problem here posed.

13. INCREMENTAL PROBLEM SOLVING IS BEST.

- A. Policies should be made through successive approximation, not comprehensive analysis.

Charles Lindblom, Yale political scientist, *THE INTELLIGENCE OF DEMOCRACY*, 1965, p.148-9.

To be sure, his assumptions will not always be correct, and sometimes a great deal of damage will be done permanently or before a corrective next step can be taken. Neither his strategy nor synoptic problem solving is infallible. He does find, however, that his strategy is often desirable and unavoidable in view of the failures of the synoptic method. His view of problem solving as successive approximation is a practical and sophisticated adaptation to the impossibility of actually attaining the synoptic ideal, and to the consequent need for moving to an alternative concept of problem solving whenever he judges, on the basis of the multiple adaptive features present in successive approximation, that the degree to which he can approximate the synoptic ideal leaves him with a poorer solution than can be had with successive approximation.

- B. Policy should be made in a step by step fashion, not once and for all.

Charles Lindblom, Yale political scientist, *THE INTELLIGENCE OF DEMOCRACY*, 1965, p.147.

Characteristically, public decision makers pursue, for any policy problem, a never-ending series of attacks on it. Thus labor legislation, for example; is not simply enacted but reenacted endlessly. Decision makers know, therefore, that they need not understand all aspects of a problem and find its "right" solution. Given a problem's complexity and the inevitable opportunities to return to it, they would be foolish to try to accomplish more than a serial step in the attack on it. Moreover, if they return again and again to the same problem area their neglect of certain consequences and values at any one step is less alarming.

- C. Problem solving is a continuous process, not a one time action.

Charles Lindblom, Yale political scientist, *THE INTELLIGENCE OF DEMOCRACY*, 1965, p.143.

The synoptic ideal, lastly, is not adapted to the diverse forms in which policy problems actually arise. Public policy problems like inflation, unemployment, social security, reform of the judiciary, relief of urban congestion, and segregation each encompass a host of disparate but interlocked problems of individuals and groups. If what is to be achieved, then, is not simply (as in the usual concept of a problem) removal or substantial reduction of the frustrations in a goal-seeking activity, but also, and sometimes instead, reconciliation of interests, then problem solving is a more continuous process than it is ordinarily conceived to be. For whether a possible reconciliation is satisfactory today will depend not solely on the characteristics of today's problem, but also on what yesterday's pattern of reconciliation was and what tomorrow's might be made to be.

ANSWERS TO RETHINKING cont'd

13. INCREMENTAL PROBLEM SOLVING IS BEST. cont'd

- D. Policies should be evaluated at the margins, not comprehensively.

Charles Lindblom, Yale political scientist, *THE INTELLIGENCE OF DEMOCRACY*, 1965, p.145.

A focus on evaluation at margins where small amounts of values are exchanged renders unnecessary either the construction of a social welfare function or a set of principles that cover all possible situations. One need not try to organize all possible values into a coherent scheme, but, instead, can evaluate only what is relevant in actual policy choices; one need not determine priorities even among these limited number of values, but, instead, can choose more or less of one as against more or less of another in a concrete case; and one need not try to conceive of values and take a position on them abstractly, but, instead, can choose directly among those embedded in actual policy choices.

- E. Incrementalism best accords with human intellectual capabilities.

Charles Lindblom, Yale political scientist, *THE INTELLIGENCE OF DEMOCRACY*, 1965, p.144-5.

Incremental problem solving enormously reduces the range of investigations that the decision maker must undertake, and enormously reduces the strains on his cognitive capacity that attend the attempt to comprehensively evaluate social states. Thus it adapts to his limited intellect, reduces his demands for information, and makes concessions to the costliness of analysis. Moreover, incremental analysis turns his attention to materials which are most familiar to him, least speculative, and relatively concrete.

- F. Policy making must proceed incrementally.

Charles Lindblom, Yale political scientist, *THE INTELLIGENCE OF DEMOCRACY*, 1965, p.144.

Decision makers do not attempt a comprehensive survey and evaluation. In the examination of the consequences of possible alternative policies they do not investigate all of them, but only, at most, those with respect to which the policies are thought to differ. In these senses, therefore, attention is focused on increments by which social states and policies differ. For example, a farm-policy decision maker does not ask about all the implications of present and possible alternative farm policies, but only about those aspects by which each differs from the other. Moreover, policy making in many political systems is typically, though not always, a part of a political process in which the only feasible political change is that which changes social states only by relatively small steps. Hence, decision makers typically consider, among all the alternative policies that they might be imagined to consider, only those relatively few alternatives that represent small or incremental changes from existing policies. In this sense, too, decision making is incremental. In short, policy makers and analysts take as their starting point not the whole range of hypothetical possibilities, but only the here and now in which we live, and then move on to consider how alterations might be made at the margin.

- G. Incrementalism represents the best strategy for policy making.

Charles Lindblom, Yale political scientist, *THE INTELLIGENCE OF DEMOCRACY*, 1965, p.148.

In such a society the strategic concept of problem solving would be this: The decision maker makes an incremental move in the desired direction and does not take upon himself the difficulties of finding a solution. He disregards many other possible moves because they are too costly (in time, energy, or money) to examine; and, for the move he makes, he does not trouble to find out (again, because it is too costly to do so) what all its consequences are. He assumes that to the extent that his move was a failure or was marked by unanticipated adverse consequences, someone's (perhaps even his) next move will attend to the resulting problem. If policy making is remedial and serial, his assumptions will be correct.

ANSWERS TO RETHINKING (short version)

1. YOU CAN ACT AND RETHINK.

You should tentatively endorse the plan as the best idea on the floor, while rethinking its philosophical underpinnings. Since, within a critical framework, nothing is actually done at the end of the round, this tentative endorsement has no disadvantages.

2. RETHINKING WON'T SOLVE.

Philosophers have been thinking about issues of being and power for thousands of years. These kinds of issues aren't ultimately resolvable..

3. ENDLESS RETHINKING IS BAD.

It allows ongoing human suffering to remain in place without any practical effort to address it.

ANSWERS TO THE KRITIK AS AN INDICTMENT OF AFFIRMATIVE ASSUMPTIONS

1. THE KRITIK MISUNDERSTANDS THE NATURE OF ASSUMPTIONS.

We assume things because they can't be decisively proven true or false. This is especially true of ultimate philosophical assumptions. If our assumptions are plausible or useful, that is enough.

2. ASSUMPTIONS AREN'T WON OR LOST LIKE CHESS PIECES.

Casting doubt on an assumption makes it less probable, but doesn't reduce its probability to zero.

3. LOSS OF ONE OR MORE ASSUMPTIONS ISN'T NECESSARILY ABSOLUTE.

The whole case doesn't rest on the assumption they indict. Both teams lose arguments in every round, implying they had some flawed assumptions. If none of the assumptions you lose is critical, the plan can still be a good idea.

4. INDICTING AN ASSUMPTION ISN'T TANTAMOUNT TO PROVING A DISADVANTAGE.

If the affirmative assumption tangibly matters, the negative should be able to demonstrate this by means of a disadvantage.

5. DEBATE SHOULD CONSIDER PROBABILITIES, INCLUDING LOW PROBABILITIES.

Both modernists and postmodernists recognize there are no absolute certainties in the world. And prudence dictates concern over even low probabilities of catastrophic outcomes. The kritik of assumptions only reduces the probability of the affirmative advantage, it doesn't reduce it to zero. Thus, it isn't a reason to vote negative, absent a greater disadvantage.

6. THE DEBATE OVER ASSUMPTIONS IS SECONDARY IN A POLICY FRAMEWORK.

We think the plan is the focus of the debate, so assumptions only matter in so far as they implicate the desirability of the plan.

ANSWERS TO DISCURSIVE IMPACTS

1. **FLAWED DISCOURSE ISN'T A REASON TO REJECT THE PLAN AS A POLICY.**
Even if the affirmative used flawed discourse, the plan can still be a good idea.
2. **THE PLAN IS THE FOCUS OF THE DEBATE.**
Flawed discourse may be a reason to lower speaker points, but not to reject the desirability of the plan.
3. **ONLY INTENTIONALLY OFFENSIVE LANGUAGE SHOULD BE PUNISHED WITH A BALLOT.**
If speakers don't intend to offend, it is appropriate to correct them, but not to punish them.
4. **USE OF LANGUAGE IN COMMON ACADEMIC USAGE SHOULD NOT BE A VOTING ISSUE.**
If scholars commonly use the terms we employ, their use isn't egregious enough to justify a ballot.
5. **VOTING AGAINST MAINSTREAM ACADEMIC DISCOURSE IS INTELLECTUALLY INTOLERANT.**
If a source displays linguistic biases, it may be appropriate to treat that source as less credible, but it silences us and our authors to base the round solely on a certain linguistic construction.
6. **VOTING AGAINST FLAWED DISCOURSE IS HARMFUL.**
 - A. It devalues policy debate. It implies that the use of a single word or term is so bad that the resolution of all the substantive issues in the round should be foregone.
 - B. Punishment causes backlash. Imposing politically correct language standards increases antagonism and frustrates consciousness raising.
 - C. It trivializes truly abusive language, such as intentional racial slurs.
7. **THE LOGIC OF OTHER FORUMS SUPPORTS OUR POSITION.**
 - A. Rational decision makers wouldn't reject a policy conclusion because its proponent used a suspect term.
 - B. Academic standards also support. Scholars wouldn't ignore everything else a colleague had to say because of the use of one dubious term.
8. **VOTING ON DISCOURSE UNDERMINES CIVILITY WITHIN THE DEBATE COMMUNITY.**
Claiming that language use is a voting issue constitutes an ethical indictment of the other team. Debaters shouldn't be encouraged to make moral indictments of their opponents unless the abuse is clear and compelling.
9. **USAGE SHOULD BE EVALUATED IN CONTEXT.**
We shouldn't ignore what older scholars and philosophers had to say just because they employ an outdated idiom.
10. **EXCESSIVE SENSITIVITY OF LANGUAGE SHOULD BE DISCOURAGED.**
Excessive sensitivity creates a disabling sense of victimization.
11. **YOU SHOULDN'T CENSOR LANGUAGE SERIOUSLY INTENDED TO ADVANCE AN IDEA.**
Intellectual freedom is an important value debate should seek to advance.
12. **INTENT IS AN IMPORTANT DETERMINANT OF WHAT DISCOURSE MEANS.**
All discourse is subject to a range of interpretations. We should be able to clarify our intent.

ANSWERS TO DISCURSIVE IMPACTS cont'd

13. DISCURSIVE CHOICES IN THIS ROUND HAVE NO REAL WORLD POLICY IMPACT.

The indicted discourse will continue to be used by real decision makers and scholars regardless of what happens in this debate.

14. THE AFFIRMATIVE ALSO HAS A DISCURSIVE IMPACT.

Endorsing the affirmative speech act is as likely to produce positive change as endorsing negative discourse.

15. DISCURSIVE CHANGE ISN'T A PANACEA.

How people speak can change without it altering underlying attitudes or changing actual social inequities.

16. TOPICALITY IS A POOR ANALOGY.

Topicality advances policy debate by defining appropriate limits for discussion. It's a tool of policy debate, not an end in itself.

17. THE EVIDENCE FALSIFICATION ANALOGY SUPPORTS THE AFFIRMATIVE.

It shows only clearly immoral practices, which undermine the integrity of debate, should be punished with a ballot.

18. PREOCCUPATION WITH LANGUAGE DISTRACTS FROM SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS.

19. THE FOCUS ON WORDS IS IVORY TOWER.

It leads to ignoring real problems which engender real suffering.

20. THE AFFIRMATIVE ISN'T ACCOUNTABLE FOR RESOLUTIONAL LANGUAGE.

They need not endorse the wording of the topic, just defend their plan as ad desirable example of the topic.

21. LANGUAGE FOCUS CAN BE TRIVIALIZING.

The grammatical status of "and/or" for example isn't important enough to vote on.

22. LANGUAGE IN EVIDENCE ISN'T ABSOLUTE.

A. Teams need not endorse every incidental use of language found in a card. They are only responsible for the claim they are making with the card.

B. You can reject the language but still endorse the plan.

23. LANGUAGE KRITIKS AREN'T UNIQUELY RELEVANT TO OUR LIVES.

Most of the language kritiked in debates is the language of public policy, so it has impacts only in the context of policy options.

24. ENDORSING OR REJECTING A POLICY IS AS MUCH A SYMBOLIC SPEECH ACT AS ENDORSING OR REJECTING A MODE OF EXPRESSION.

Both are linguistic acts involving opinion formation.

25. POLICY DISCOURSE IS A MEANS NOT AN END.

Words like terrorism are used as tools of policy analysis. It's reasonable to question whether they are useful tools, but the debate over language should be evaluated in terms of its ultimate policy impact, not as an end in itself.

ANSWERS TO DISCURSIVE IMPACTS cont'd

26. LINGUISTIC IMPACTS CAN'T BE WEIGHED AGAINST POLICY IMPACTS.

They are completely unlike. Since we are debating a question of policy, not a question of discourse, the policy issues should be primary and discursive impacts only instrumental in resolving policy questions.

27. LANGUAGE FOCUS LEADS TO POLITICAL SCAPEGOATING.

Cal Thomas, syndicated columnist, LEXINGTON HERALD-LEADER, April 12, 1996, p.A1.

Since many liberals attempted to establish a cause-and-effect relationship between speech and action, where are their cries against radical extremism now that one of their own has been implicated in the horrid deed of bombs by mail? Why not denounce liberal institutions that turn out people like this? Where are the warnings about Earth-Firsters who see the planet as something sacred and those they claim violate it as infidels worthy of death? Weren't we told last year that Oklahoma City, Waco and Ruby Ridge were caused by radical Christian fundamentalist and conservative fanatics? Where are the comparisons between radical religious and liberal fanaticism and the Unabomber? Only ABC's Brian Ross suggested such a link. If speech and action are related, is the Clinton Administration culpable because it denounced conservatives for making war on the environment? During the two government shutdowns, the president said that Gingrich and company wanted to starve our children, kill our grandmothers, withdraw treatment for the sick and rape the environment. So why isn't Bill Clinton being blamed, in part, for the bombs mailed by the Unabomber during his administration? And why hasn't Kaczynski been labeled a left-wing radical environmental extremist? It is because "left" is considered good and "right" is considered wrong by the political and media elites.

28. RHETORICAL FOCUS MAKES RUSH LIMBAUGH RESPONSIBLE FOR WACO AND BILL CLINTON RESPONSIBLE FOR THE UNABOMBER.

Cal Thomas, syndicated columnist, LEXINGTON HERALD-LEADER, APRIL 12, 1996, p. A11.

Does anyone doubt the president and his friends would have been heard from if, instead of allegedly mail bombs to technocrats, Kaczynski had targeted abortion-clinic doctors? Carried to its illogical extreme, if Gordon Liddy, Newt Gingrich and Rush Limbaugh were responsible for Waco, Ruby Ridge and Oklahoma City, why aren't Bill Clinton and his like-minded friends responsible for the Unabomber? The Justice Department should investigate!

ANSWERS TO THE KRITIK AS A POLITICAL STATEMENT

1. YOU SHOULD ONLY ENDORSE AN ARGUMENT FOR ITS REAL WORLD POLITICAL EFFECT IF YOU TRULY BELIEVE THE ARGUMENT.

The negative says your ballot can impact on real people outside of this round. If so, you shouldn't use a tool of that power just because one side wins a debate argument.

2. IF THE BALLOT HAS REAL WORLD POLITICAL EFFECTS YOU SHOULDN'T CARE WHO ACTUALLY WON THE ARGUMENTS IN THE ROUND.

The real world effects are more important than fairness.

3. THE PRECEDING ARGUMENTS SHOW WHY THIS IS A TERRIBLE STANDARD FOR JUDGING.

It destroys fairness. Voting your politics makes you a political partisan, not a debate judge.

4. DEBATE JUDGES ARE COMMONLY UNDERSTOOD TO VOTE ON THE ARGUMENTS IN THE ROUND.

They are provisional endorsements based on the execution of specific argumentative strategies. Thus, the ballot doesn't carry the weight of personal conviction.

5. DECISIONS IN ACADEMIC DEBATES DON'T CHANGE THE WORLD.

We're not scholars or policy makers. The rest of the world doesn't care about us.

6. THE OUTCOMES OF COMPETITIVE DEBATES SHOULDN'T INFLUENCE THE WORLD.

Debates are too short, too fast, and too competitively motivated to provide a reliable basis for real world effects.

7. IF THE KRITIK CAN HAVE REAL WORLD EFFECTS, SO CAN THE AFFIRMATIVE CASE, IT COULD ALSO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO GO OUT AND SEEK REFORM.

ANSWERS TO THE KRITIK AS POLITICAL ACTIVISM

1. ISSUES OF ACTIVIST STRATEGY ARE IRRELEVANT TO THE TOPIC WE AS A DEBATE COMMUNITY HAVE CHOSEN TO DEBATE.

The topic asks if certain actions are desirable, not what is the best activist strategy for pursuing such a change.

2. OUR SUBJECT MATTER -- THE TOPIC -- DETERMINES THE RELEVANCE OF ARGUMENTS.

Ignoring the logic of the topic destroys predictability and preparation and ignores what the community consensus chose as the best issue for the year's discussion.

3. IF THE NEGATIVE WANTS TO TALK ABOUT ACTIVIST STRATEGIES, THEY SHOULD CALL FOR TOPICS ABOUT SUCH STRATEGIES RATHER THAN TOPICS ABOUT THE SUBSTANTIVE DESIRABILITY OF POLICIES.

4. DEBATERS SHOULD ENGAGE IN ACTIVISM BASED ON WHAT THEY LEARN IN DEBATES RATHER THAN MAKING DEBATES THE FOCUS OF THEIR ACTIVISM.

Arguments about activism in a debate round won't change the world -- only action outside of debates will.

5. PREMATURE COMMITMENT TO ACTIVISM IS DANGEROUS.

we should thoroughly debate through the issues of the topic in terms of their desirability before we commit ourselves to activism. The negative approach risks premature closure and commitment.

6. CONSTRUCTING DEBATE AS ACTIVISM IS INTELLECTUALLY IMMODEST.

As students we aren't experts in the substantive issues of this topic or in activist strategy. It's presumptuous to give so much weight to our opinions.

7. COMPETITIVE DEBATE IS A POOR FORUM FOR DESIGNING REAL WORLD ACTIVIST STRATEGIES.

In competitive debates we talk fast for a short time while trying to trick or surprise our opponents. Thus, debates aren't a reliable guide to real world activism.

8. THE NEGATIVE'S ARGUMENTS ARE ACADEMIC, NOT ACTIVIST.

Critical perspectives like those the negative employs are popular in the university but aren't persuasive rhetorical strategies in the real world.

9. THE NEGATIVE DOESN'T REALLY OFFER AN ACTIVIST STRATEGY.

They indict specific things the affirmative said but don't offer a real prescription for advancing change.

10. THE NEGATIVE APPROACH IS POOR ACTIVISM.

Successful activism requires solidarity, not divisiveness. By picking away at marginal elements of our analysis, the negative weakens the solid front successful activism requires.

11. THE REAL AND EFFECTIVE PLOTTING OF AN ACTIVIST STRATEGY REQUIRES A NON-COMPETITIVE CONTEXT.

We therefore propose that if the negative is sincerely concerned about advancing real world activism in the area of the affirmative that they concede the debate. We are then prepared to discuss activist strategy for the rest of the time allotted to this debate, free from competitive pressures. Willingness to concede the competitive part of the debate would make the negative's advocacy far more compelling -- it would prove they really care about effects in the real world, not just winning debates. Otherwise, we will regard their strategy as just a competitive ploy.

ANSWERS TO THE KRITIK AS PERFORMANCE

1. DEBATE IS A PARTICULAR KIND OF PERFORMANCE -- ONE INVOLVING SKILL IN POLICY ARGUMENT.

The criterion for evaluating our performance as debaters ought to be success in defending the superiority of a specific policy alternative.

2. THE TOPIC SUPPORTS THIS VIEW OF THE DEBATE PERFORMANCE.

We are given a topic, a specific policy proposition, which sets the conditions for the kind of performance we are expected to give. Unless the negative answers the question raised by the topic, their performance is inappropriate to this context.

3. THE CONVENTIONS OF THE ACTIVITY DEFINE APPROPRIATE PERFORMANCE.

Every activity has its own defining conventions which determine whether or not a performance is effective. Performing a vigorous gymnastic routine isn't a good performance if you have been hired to play in a symphony orchestra. Similarly, a performance that doesn't display skill in policy argument isn't a good performance in policy debate.

4. THE NEGATIVE PERFORMANCE MUST BE COMPETITIVE WITH THE AFFIRMATIVE PERFORMANCE.

This means it must be the same kind of performance both for clash and for meaningful comparison of performances to occur.

5. THE BETTER JOB OF DEBATING IS A POOR STANDARD, ONE THAT IS TOO SUBJECTIVE.

The "better debating" should be defined as whoever most successfully sustains a germane policy position.

6. WE DON'T DENY THE NEGATIVE'S RIGHT TO MAKE NON-RATIONAL OR EMOTIVE APPEALS, BUT WE THINK SUCH APPEALS SHOULD HAVE LIMITED WEIGHT IN DEBATE.

A. Emotive appeals, not grounded in good reasons, are the hallmark of every dictator and demagogue from Hitler on down.

B. Emotion without reason frequently expresses prejudice. Every bigot feels strongly and can express him or herself with emotional vehemence.

C. Reasons can be directly compared and evaluated. Conflicting emotions can never be effectively compared and resolved.

D. Debate judges are skilled evaluators of arguments. Their role is to be as objective and impartial as possible. Judges can't maintain impartiality if they are too subject to emotional appeals.

7. WE DON'T DENY THE NEGATIVE'S RIGHT TO EMPLOY NARRATIVES AS A MODE OF PERSUASION, BUT WE RETAIN THE RIGHT TO INDICT THE PERSUASIVENESS OF THEIR PARTICULAR NARRATIVES OR NARRATIVE AS A GENERAL MODE OF PERSUASION.

This is, after all, a debate. It isn't "silencing" them to indict their arguments.

8. NARRATIVE IS AN UNCOMPELLING FORM OF ARGUMENT.

However forceful a personal narrative may be, it is a poor basis for policy unless it can be proven to be representative.

ANSWERS TO THE KRITIK AS PERFORMANCE cont'd

9. OTHER ARTISTIC PERFORMANCES AREN'T RELEVANT IN A SITUATION WHERE AN ARGUMENTATIVE PERFORMANCE IS CALLED FOR.

Vietnam war opponents wouldn't have gotten anywhere if they had just sung "Blowin' in the Wind" instead of making arguments against the war.

10. THE POWER OF NARRATIVE CAN'T BE WELL CAPTURED IN DEBATES.

Debate is too short for sustained narratives. Also, the oppositional format of debate weakens the force of narrative. UNCLE TOM'S CABIN wouldn't have had the same force if slave owners had gotten a rebuttal after every chapter.

11. SOPHISTICATED NEGATIVE ANALYSIS, "GENEALOGICAL" OR OTHERWISE, ISN'T AN END IN ITSELF.

It must be brought to bear on the policy issues at hand in order to be relevant. Showing sophisticated understanding of some issue not directly related to the debate isn't a good argumentative performance.

KRITIKS MUST OFFER AN ALTERNATIVE

1. ALL POSITIONS AND POLICIES ARE IMPERFECT.

If the negative is merely allowed to criticize they will always win -- they can always find something imperfect about the affirmative.

2. RELATIVE MERIT CAN ONLY BE DETERMINED BY COMPARISON.

Democracy is a highly flawed form of government, but comparison still demonstrates its superiority over its alternatives.

3. COMPARISONS ARE ALSO NEEDED WITH REGARD TO ACADEMIC THEORIES.

Most theories fail to explain all of the facts. But the theory that offers the best explanation is still the one we should tentatively maintain.

4. PROBLEM SOLVING IS IMPORTANT.

Debate should teach constructive as well as critical thinking if it's really to be a tool of human betterment.

5. CRITICS WHO DON'T OFFER ALTERNATIVES ARE GENERALLY UNPERSUASIVE.

They are seen as purely negative and unconstructive.

6. THE NEGATIVE ALTERNATIVE MUST BE AT THE SAME LEVEL OF SPECIFICITY AS THE AFFIRMATIVE.

Since we advocate a policy, they need to advocate a counterpolicy, not just an alternative discourse or philosophy. Only one policy can directly clash and compete with another.

7. IF THE NEGATIVE DOESN'T ADVOCATE A POLICY, THEY LOSE.

They have failed in their basic burden of advocacy. Or at least, if they don't advocate a fiated policy change, they are stuck with the status quo.

8. PURE CRITICISM DOESN'T CONSTITUTE AN ALTERNATIVE.

It offers nothing for the judge to vote for at the end of the round and is subject to all of the above difficulties.

NEGATIVE COUNTERADVOCACY CANNOT BE INCLUSIVE OF AFFIRMATIVE ADVOCACY

1. TO COMPETE, THE NEGATIVE MUST OFFER REASONS TO REJECT AFFIRMATIVE ADVOCACY.

Aspects of the negative counteradvocacy which agree with the affirmative therefore don't compete.

2. COUNTERADVOCACY WHICH INCLUDES ALL OF THE AFFIRMATIVE PLAN IS UNIQUELY ILLEGITIMATE.

Even defenders of partially plan inclusive counterplans don't think that the negative counterplan can incorporate all of the plan -- that constitutes agreement, not competition.

3. PARTIALLY INCLUSIVE COUNTERADVOCACY SUFFERS FROM THE SAME FLAWS AS PARTIALLY INCLUSIVE COUNTERPLANS.

- A. It can lead to trivializing distinctions. It allows the negative to agree with all but a potentially tiny aspect of the affirmative. They could literally agree with all but one word of what the affirmative said.
- B. It encourages affirmative vagueness. They are encouraged not to take specific positions so as to give the negative less ground.
- C. It tilts the playing field too far toward the negative. It basically means the negative need to win only one argument. They can coopt everything else the affirmative said simply by agreeing with it.

4. AT MINIMUM, ADVOCACY INCLUSIVE COUNTERADVOCACY BY THE NEGATIVE (AIC) LEGITIMIZES PERMUTATIONS.

If the negative can agree with all or most of what the affirmative advocates, the affirmative should be able to agree with aspects of the negative analysis.

POLICY DEBATE IS GOOD

1. DEBATERS USE POLICY DEBATE SKILLS IN THE REAL WORLD.

Many former debaters are in politics, think tanks, involved in constitutional litigation or in policy related branches of academia. These people have real world influence, making the policy skills they learned in debate especially important.

2. UNDERSTANDING OF PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES IS IMPORTANT FOR EVERYONE.

As citizens in a democracy we have some ability to influence government and some responsibility to be informed about what it is doing.

3. UNDERSTANDING OF SPECIFIC POLICIES IS IMPORTANT FOR ACTIVISM.

Activism without specific understanding is irresponsible and likely to be ineffective.

4. SPECIFIC POLICY UNDERSTANDING IS ALSO IMPORTANT FOR SOCIAL CRITICISM.

Without specific knowledge criticism is likely to be blind and dogmatically ideological.

5. SPECIFIC POLICY DEBATE ENCOURAGES AWARENESS OF THE COMPLEXITY OF THE REAL WORLD AND THE LOOSE FIT BETWEEN REALITY AND ANY GENERAL THEORY.

KRITIK CAN ENCOURAGE NIHILISM

1. KRITIK ENCOURAGES US TO DOUBT EVERYTHING.

Doubting everything can easily lead to the belief in nothing.

2. IF NOTHING IS TRUE, EVERYTHING IS PERMITTED.

This kind of radical moral skepticism can even lead to murder, as it does in CRIME AND PUNISHMENT, THE POSSESSED, and THE STRANGER.

KRITIK IS UTOPIAN

1. THE KRITIK POSTULATES AN IDEAL BUT OFFERS NO PRACTICAL POLICY SUGGESTION FOR ACHIEVING THAT IDEAL.

2. SEARCHING FOR AN UNREALIZABLE IDEAL LEADS TO NEGLECT OF PRACTICAL GAINS WHICH CAN BE ACHIEVED IN THE REAL WORLD.

It allows human suffering to go unabated while we fantasize about the future.

3. THE PURSUIT OF UTOPIA LEADS TO TYRANNY.

Fascism and communism both killed millions of people in their pursuit of a "utopian" future.

4. MANY KRITIKS ARE NO DIFFERENT THAN UTOPIAN COUNTERPLANS LIKE ANARCHY AND WORLD GOVERNMENT.

These counterplans are rejected because they are too farfetched to constitute germane policy alternatives. Calling these same arguments kritiks doesn't make them any more relevant.

KRITIK LEADS TO INFINITE REGRESS

1. SKEPTICISM IS INFINITELY REGRESSIVE.

You can always keep questioning why things are the way they are.

2. SUCH ENDLESS QUESTIONING IS INTELLECTUALLY STERILE.

Concern with philosophical questions such as "why is there something rather than nothing?" leads neither to clear conclusions nor practical actions.

3. ANTIFOUNDATIONALISM SUPPORTS OUR POSITION.

If there are no certain philosophical foundations, it is necessary at some point simply to make plausible assumptions and act on the basis of them.

KRITIK IS INAPPROPRIATE WITHIN THE FORUM OF POLICY DEBATE

1. DIFFERENT FORMS OF SPEECH HAVE DIFFERENT STANDARDS AND CONVENTIONS.

You don't judge a scientific statement and a poetic utterance by the same criteria.

2. POLICY DEBATE AND CRITICAL INQUIRY ARE TWO DIFFERENT LANGUAGE GAMES.

Policy debate analyzes policies in terms of their desirability. Critical analysis looks at assumptions and discourses but doesn't mainly focus on policy desirability.

3. THE KRITIK IS NON-GERMANE IF IT DOESN'T PLAY THE LANGUAGE GAME OF POLICY DEBATE.

In any language game only certain moves are coherent, as defined by the logic of the game. For the negative argument to make sense within policy debate, it must meet the normal standards of policy argument, such as uniqueness and specificity of alternative.

4. POLICY DEBATE IS THE LANGUAGE GAME WE SHOULD PLAY.

A. The resolution is a proposition of policy. Our subject matter puts us in the policy debate language game.

B. The choice of a topic or subject matter is one of the few rules of the game on which the debate community collectively decides. In choosing a policy topic, we've chosen to play the policy debate language game.

C. For over fifty years the focus on policy topics has been a defining feature of our activity. This history of selecting policy topics is what defines our language game as "policy debate."

5. THE BURDEN OF LOGICAL RESPONSE MEANS THE NEGATIVE SHOULD PLAY THE AFFIRMATIVE'S LANGUAGE GAME.

ANSWERS TO PURE PHILOSOPHICAL KRITIKS

1. METAPHYSICAL AND BASIC EPISTEMOLOGICAL QUESTIONS ARE OUTSIDE THE REALM OF POLICY DISCOURSE.
They involve high level abstractions which would never be raised in a specific policy debate.
2. A FIELD CONTEXT STANDARD PROVES THESE ISSUES ARE IRRELEVANT HERE.
These types of issues are never raised in the context of the resolution's literature.
3. POLICY DEBATE IS THE WRONG FORUM FOR THESE ARGUMENTS.
Abstract philosophy is a specialized activity of interest only to a few. Policy debate is a broader public forum, dealing with issues of more general interest.
4. THESE KRITIKS ARE ESPECIALLY INAPPROPRIATE FOR HIGH SCHOOL DEBATE.
Most high school debaters have never even had a philosophy class. They, therefore, shouldn't have to deal with these kinds of arguments.
5. METAPHYSICAL QUESTIONS ARE IRRESOLVABLE.
Thinkers have argued about the nature of being and cause for thousands of years. No definitive answer is possible.
6. KNOWLEDGE IS POSSIBLE.
 - A. Empiricism offers at least probabilistic knowledge. If its logical foundations can't be ultimately proven, it's still the best tool we have for understanding the world.
 - B. Natural science is based on empiricism. Repeated observation can provide relatively certain knowledge.
 - C. Social knowledge is possible. Again, repeated observations, whether historical or statistical, allow at least probabilistic judgments.
 - D. Foundations for knowledge aren't necessary. Whatever works can be functionally defined as "true."
7. REASON IS A VALID FORM OF ARGUMENT.
 - A. Indictments assume too narrow a view of rationality. Rationality need not be narrowly instrumental.
 - B. Reason is a proper part of the thought process. Thoughts begin as intuitions, but to check our intuitions we need to rationally reflect on them.
 - C. There's no alternative to reason. Emoting or intuiting at each other will never solve disagreements.
 - D. Non-rational factors support the affirmative. The harms which the case indicates also provide emotional as well as rational warrants for action.
 - E. The indictment of reason is overbroad. This treats "Reason" as if it is all one thing. There are all kinds of reasons, and they need to indict ours specifically.
 - F. The idea of good reasons is essential to making choices. Without reasons, a choice is completely arbitrary.
 - G. Argument allows inter-subjective agreement, even if it doesn't discover ultimate foundational truth. But inter-subjective agreement still requires the consideration of reasons.
8. EPISTEMOLOGICAL ARGUMENTS ARE STERILE.
Skepticism allows us to doubt the existence of the world, of other minds, of the past, and of the future. It even allows us to doubt the existence of ourselves. But in our actual lives we inevitably make these assumptions. Doubting them in a debate round leads nowhere.

PERFORMATIVE CONTRADICTION IS ILLEGITIMATE

1. CONTRADICTION VIOLATES THE BASIC NOTION OF ADVOCACY -- THAT EACH TEAM SHOULD STAKE OUT A POSITION AND DEFEND IT CONSISTENTLY.
2. ARGUING WITHIN TWO INCONSISTENT WORLDVIEWS IS A PERFORMATIVE CONTRADICTION.

The negative kritik indicts the framework of policy debate. They should therefore not be allowed to make another set of arguments within the framework of policy debate.
3. ARGUING WITHIN DIFFERENT WORLDVIEWS CONDITIONALLY IS UNDESIRABLE.

It inherently makes the debate more superficial. Especially if the kritik wants to focus on truly fundamental assumptions of the affirmative, we should try to talk about those assumptions in as much depth as possible.
4. CONTRADICTION IS A REASON TO VOTE AGAINST THE NEGATIVE.

Even if both sides violate the kritik, they do so knowingly and in contradiction to their own advocacy. Even if we're guilty of manslaughter, they're guilty of premeditated murder.
5. CONTRADICTION AND CONDITIONALITY DEMONSTRATE THAT THE KRITIK IS JUST AN ARGUMENTATIVE STRATEGY IN THE DEBATE GAME.

It undermines all plausibility to arguments that the kritik can have real world impact. True activists don't argue inconsistently within the framework they indict.
6. FAILURE OF CONSISTENT ADVOCACY IS A REASON TO VOTE AFFIRMATIVE.

If the negative doesn't advocate a consistent position, then there is nothing to vote negative for and the affirmative wins by the default.
7. THE KRITIK IS HYPERCONDITIONAL.

They not only defend inconsistent policy alternatives, they defend inconsistent worldviews. The affirmative shouldn't have to debate in more than one world at a time.

PERMUTATIONS ARE A LEGITIMATE RESPONSE TO KRITIKS

1. IF THE KRITIK CLAIMS TO SOLVE, IT IS FUNCTIONING LIKE A COUNTERPLAN -- THAT IS, IT PROPOSES AN ALTERNATIVE COURSE OF ACTION.

If it functions like a counterplan, then the logic of counterplan theory becomes appropriate.

2. THE KRITIK SUGGESTS THAT DEBATE SHOULD BE ABOUT THE COMPARISON OF IDEAS, NOT OF FIATED POLICY POSITIONS.

If so, we should be able to answer the kritik by showing how elements of the negative analysis aren't competitive with our position. Whether you call this a "permutation" or a "no link" argument, it is a logical way of responding to a criticism.

3. THE PERMUTATION DOESN'T SEVER.

The affirmative advocacy is simply the affirmative plan. We make arguments in support of that advocacy, but the plan, not our individual arguments are what we ultimately advocate. Thus, as long as the permutation includes all of the plan, it doesn't sever.

4. THE PERMUTATION DOESN'T SEVER ANY OF OUR INITIAL ASSUMPTIONS.

The negative is trying to impose assumptions on us that we never explicitly endorsed. We should be able to define our advocacy rather than having them define it for us.

5. THE PERMUTATION CAPTURES THE FORCE OF THE CRITICISM.

If endorsing the kritik has force, so does endorsing the kritik along with the affirmative plan.

6. YOU CAN ENDORSE THE PLAN AS WELL AS THE OVERALL WORLDVIEW OF THE KRITIK.

The two aren't incompatible.

7. YOU CAN ENDORSE THE IDEOLOGY OF THE KRITIK WHILE ENDORSING THE PLAN AS A SINGLE EXCEPTION.

No ideological perspective works in every situation. The permutation captures most of the kritik's impact, and the case outweighs what we don't capture.

8. THE PERMUTATION NEED NOT LEAD TO COOPTION.

Even if it is slightly less radical than the kritik itself, it is still radical enough to make a major statement.

9. THE AFFIRMATIVE NEED NOT CLASH WITH EVERYTHING THE NEGATIVE SAYS.

Absent an intellectual process like permutation, there is no way to demonstrate the non-competitiveness of a negative position. Also, the negative agrees with certain aspects of affirmative analysis. The legitimacy of permutation follows from their use of an advocacy inclusive counteradvocacy.

THE CASE OUTWEIGHS THE KRITIK

1. WE'VE ESTABLISHED THE DESIRABILITY OF THE PLAN WITHIN A POLICY FRAMEWORK.

If argument within the critical framework is close, you should vote for the clear policy rationale.

2. VOTING AFFIRMATIVE OFFERS THE ONLY HOPE OF A SOLUTION.

Since the negative offers no hope of uniqueness, the only possibility for improving things is with the affirmative.

3. THE KRITIK DOESN'T SOLVE THE CASE.

Ongoing criticism has empirically failed to make a dent in this problem.

4. OUR PERMUTATION CAPTURES MOST IF NOT ALL OF THE KRITIK'S NET BENEFIT.

The case outweighs the residual amount that is left.

5. THE AFFIRMATIVE HAS AS MUCH REAL WORLD IMPACT AS THE KRITIK.

Endorsing our advocacy could also encourage activism to attack the harms we indict.

6. THE CASE ALSO CARRIES DISCURSIVE WEIGHT.

Our discourse at least displays concern about real world suffering. The negative uses the discourse of the ivory tower to justify not even thinking about how to solve the harms we describe. They in effect embrace a discourse of indifference.

GENERAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST KRITIKS

1. KRITIKS MUST PROVIDE A REASON TO REJECT THE AFFIRMATIVE PLAN.
If they don't, they aren't competitive with what the affirmative is arguing for.
2. ALL ARGUMENT MUST FUNCTION WITHIN THE POLICY FRAMEWORK.
 - A. Subject matter determines the relevance of arguments. Arguments occur within realms of discourse, and those realms determine what arguments are relevant.
 - B. The subject matter of policy debate is public policy. The specific resolution being debated is a question of policy. Furthermore, our activity has been defined for decades as policy debate because it ALWAYS selects questions to policy.
3. POLICY DEBATE IS WORTHWHILE.
 - A. Citizens in a democracy have a responsibility to be informed about the policies of their government.
 - B. To combat oppression it's necessary to know what the government is doing.
 - C. Abandoning public policy concerns guarantees oppression. There would be no checks on government.
 - D. Policy debate is of general interest. Most debaters enter the activity because they are interested in these questions.
 - E. Ideas have consequences. Debaters often become influential, either as policy makers, policy analysts, or opinion leaders.
 - F. Our community consensus supports this value. If truth is socially constructed, this is our truth.
4. FIAT ISN'T UTOPIAN.
 - A. No one thinks plans are actually adopted at the end of the round.
 - B. Fiat is merely a shorthand for saying we are debating about what should be.
 - C. To endorse or reject the desirability of a plan isn't utopian. We engage in this process of opinion formation all the time.
5. POLICY IMPACTS CAN'T BE WEIGHED AGAINST NON-POLICY IMPACTS.
The two are totally incommensurate. You can't weigh a misuse of language against a risk of war. One has to take priority. Unless there is an ethical violation, policy focus should be maintained.
6. WE SHOULDN'T NECESSARILY DEBATE ABOUT WHAT'S MOST RELEVANT TO OUR LIVES.
 - A. Even if it's important, it's not relevant to the topic.
 - B. Personal focus legitimates unpleasant ad hominem, such as kritiks of clothing or hygiene.
7. REJECTING THE KRITIK ISN'T INTELLECTUALLY INTOLERANT.
 - A. Arguments that the kritik isn't a reason to reject the plan are certainly legitimate. They simply attack the impact of the kritik.
 - B. Arguments that kritiks aren't germane are also legitimate. Debates over relevance occur all the time in debate from topicality to questions of fiat.
8. TOPICALITY AND ETHICS ARGUMENTS AREN'T EXAMPLES OF ABANDONING POLICY DEBATE.
 - A. Topicality determines the relevance of policies to a particular debate.
 - B. Ethics issues ensure the integrity of policy debate by maintaining the integrity of argument.

GENERAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST KRITIKS cont'd

9. NOT ALL ASSUMPTIONS SHOULD BE EXAMINED.

- A. This can lead to nihilism. It encourages questioning whether life has value, whether racism or sexism are bad. It can easily lead to belief in nothing.
- B. Infinite regression. According to postmodern thought there are no secure foundations for knowledge. It's possible to even question the existence of the individual self. The existence of other minds is unprovable. It's unprovable that the future will repeat the past. It's even impossible to prove that the past exists. By this logic the negative would always win because they can always regress to some ultimately unprovable assumption.
- C. All action requires certain assumptions. As a matter of practical reason, we have to assume that we exist, that the world exists, and that we can make choices that have an impact in the world.
- D. The appropriate assumptions to make depend on the situation. Radical epistemological doubt may be valid in abstract philosophy, but it isn't in a policy discussion.

10. NON-COMPARATIVE ARGUMENT IS INHERENTLY UNPERSUASIVE.

- A. All policies are flawed. None is perfect; all have drawbacks.
- B. If the negative merely needs to point out flaws in the affirmative policy, they will always win.
- C. Non-comparative thought is too utopian. It indicts the reality of a system by comparing it to the ideal of another--and it may not even specify what that alternative ideal actually is.
- D. Constructive thought is important as well as critical thought. Thinking how to solve problems is at least as important as discovering them.
- E. If no comparison is offered, there is nothing to vote negative for. Even a flawed theory is better than no theory at all.

11. KRITIKS AREN'T ABSOLUTE AS POLICY ARGUMENTS.

- A. They aren't unique disadvantages. A kritik provides no reason to believe that things will be worse after the plan.
- B. They aren't absolute as solvency arguments. No argument can establish with 100% certainty that the plan will have zero solvency. Because of this the kritik can never reduce the advantage to absolute zero.
- C. The claim that the plan is as likely to make things worse as to make things better isn't persuasive. This might be an absolute argument, but only if the negative world view is correct. There's always some chance that the basic perspective of affirmative authors is right and that of the kritik's authors is wrong. Any chance of this provides a net benefit for the affirmative.
- D. Policy analysis should consider probabilities. Everything in life is uncertain, so questions of probability are inevitable. In order to minimize the risk of catastrophes it's also necessary to consider low probabilities.

12. KRITIKS RUN IN CONJUNCTION WITH NON-KRITIK ARGUMENTS SHOULD BE REJECTED.

- A. They violate advocacy in the most radical way possible. They don't defend a consistent world view but argue within the world view they attack.
- B. A team violating its own kritik should lose. Not only have they incurred the impact of the kritik, they have done so knowingly. Their opponent at least wasn't intentionally abusive.

13. DEBATE ISN'T STAGNANT.

New topics assure the consideration of new ideas of each year. Theory and practice also always continue to evolve; for example, the emphasis on world ending impacts has declined somewhat over the past several years.

GENERAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST KRITIKS cont'd

14. THE KRITIK RISKS MORE INTELLECTUAL STAGNATION.

It would allow us to debate the same philosophical issues year after year--many of them questions that philosophy has been debating for thousands of years.

15. NEW IDEAS AREN'T NECESSARILY GOOD.

Every bad idea -- from Nazism to apartheid -- was new once.

16. FREE INQUIRY EXTENDS ONLY TO RELEVANT IDEAS; IT'S LEGITIMATE TO EXCLUDE IDEAS WHICH ARE IRRELEVANT.

17. THE KRITIK EXCLUDES AND MARGINALIZES.

It excludes all those not immersed in kritikgeist and makes debate even harder for the non-initiate to enter.

18. TABULA RASA IS UNDESIRABLE.

A. It leads to a clerical speed and accuracy model of debate. The most likely to win is the one that has proliferated the most cheap shots.

B. This undermines the intellectual values of debate.

C. Debate is more educational when the judge open-mindedly but critically evaluates arguments in terms of formal proof standards rather than blindly giving absolute weight to every unsupported assertion.

19. IT'S ACADEMIC PROMINENCE DOESN'T VALIDATE THE KRITIK.

A. Postmodernism is making the academy ever more detached from the rest of society. It's purely ivory tower and relies on language that's unintelligible to almost everyone else.

B. Trends in philosophy shouldn't necessarily impact on policy debate. Advanced social philosophy theory occurs on a much higher plane of abstraction than does policy debate. It also assumes an intellectual background much different than is shared by most debaters.

C. Postmodernism is a passing fad. It has already faded in France, the place where it began.

20. QUESTIONING ALL ASSUMPTIONS CAN BE PROFOUNDLY ALIENATING.

Question the value of life too extensively and you end up like Curt Cobain. Become too anti-statist and you may bomb federal buildings. This is a real impact.

21. UNIQUENESS IS AN IMPORTANT ARGUMENT.

There may be instances where uniqueness is overstressed--where there is still a risk of some incremental impact. In that case the uniqueness argument shouldn't be absolute. But if the impact of a disadvantage already occurs or is going to occur inevitably with or without the plan, it isn't a reason not to do the plan.

22. MOST CONTROVERSIAL ASSUMPTIONS AREN'T SIMPLY TRUE OR FALSE; THEY ARE EITHER MORE OR LESS PLAUSIBLE.

The kritik falsely assumes an absolute dichotomy: that assumptions are either absolutely right or absolutely wrong. If there's even a chance that an assumption is right that will probably be enough to generate a comparative advantage.

23. CITIZENSHIP CREATES A DUTY TO BE INFORMED ABOUT PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, French philosopher, *THE SOCIAL CONTRACT* (Penguin edition), 1762, p.49.

Born as I was the citizen of a free state and a member of its sovereign body, the very right to vote imposes on me the duty to instruct myself in public affairs, however little influence my voice may have in them.

24. KRITIKS HAVE MINIMAL INFLUENCE ON THE ATTITUDES OF THOSE WHO THEY ARE RUN AGAINST.

The competitive nature of debate means that all arguments are made hypothetically based on competitive considerations. People are unlikely to change their language behaviors because they lose to a language kritik. The primary real world impacts of debate rounds on debaters are competitive.