

LD Debate Strategies For Success

Rhonda Smith

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KNOWLEDGE IS POWER – READ AND UNDERSTAND THE TOPIC LITERATURE.

- Discussions, YouTube, books, podcasts.
- The best sources are think tanks, books, journals – Search Gale, EBSCO, JSTOR
- Focus on dates of sources when time matters.

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Framework is the Foundation

- Sets up impact calculus
- Sets up mindset
- Clarifies Round
- Allows Focus
- Mitigates craziness
- Etc.

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Definitions

- Define terms when it makes a difference.
- Don't define excessively
- Use definitions that help your advocacy.
- Define terms that might confuse a judge
- Define “terms of art” using relevant sources (Dept. of State, Dept. of Justice, UN)

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Example

Resolved: Prioritizing economic development over environmental protection is in the best interest of the people of India.

Random House Dictionary defines a priority as an action that is done earlier in time [or] occurrence; thus, the advocacy of the Negative is that environmental protection policies ought to happen *chronologically* before economic development.

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Philosophy/Theory/Value

- Most Versatile Justice, Morality, Societal Welfare, Societal Good
 - Should be accessible to both cases
 - Should be intuitive
 - Should be explained in case
 - Should be simple
 - Linking into the framework should be the priority
- A value is a broad concept rather than a specific one, but it can be narrowed in the analysis under the value.

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Example

I value **justice** because the resolution is prefaced with the phrase, “in matters of justice.” Therefore, only matters that concern achieving justice are relevant. Justice is defined as “giving each their due”

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I affirm the resolution: **Resolved: Justice requires the recognition of animal rights.**

I value Justice as giving each their due. There are four reasons:

- 1) Contextually the resolution suggests debate concerning justice and thus should be the highest value.
- 2) Skepticism and relativism are not takeouts to justice. **The framer's assumed justice to exist and thus can be flated. The AC burden is only to prove the predicate of the sentence true.** Furthermore, I will clarify the interpretation that I am giving. **Stating that justice does not exist makes no sense in the fact that I am presenting and debating that interpretation of justice, making it exist in the real world.**
- 3) Justice provides a guide for action. It gives us a clear standard of which actions are just or not. **If we had no such standards as to what is just, then all actions would be permissible and thus justifiable. In turn, this also implies that anything is justifiable, including the requirement of recognition of animal rights since making the requirement, which is an action, would be justifiable.**
- 4) Justice gives us a standard of culpability. Innocents are not as culpable as the guilty because they have done nothing wrong. In addition, it makes no sense to hold innocent culpable for their omissions. If we held individuals accountable for actions they did not commit, then we would hold an innocent individual accountable for the death of an African child. Through this, we would give individuals infinite amounts of positive obligations which in no way would be met.

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Criterion

- Action oriented – the mechanism to reach your value
 - Should be accessible to both sides
 - Should be clear
 - Explain in case why this criterion should be preferred – warrant
 - Explain in case how this criterion will lead to achieving your value
 - Link every argument and attach to the framework
- Fluid – In theory, this criterion could be used with multiple topics and multiple values.

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The criterion is **respecting human worth**. Any articulation of one's due requires a respect for human worth because worth is the innate value that distinguishes humans from commodities. For example, it is absurd to discuss what automobiles are due. Therefore, while expressions of dignity may take many forms, the most fundamental respect for dignity is preventing objectification that occurs when the life of individuals is reduced to a property value.

Appelbaum

Rights inviolability is a claim about the status of rights, not, at least not directly, about the status of persons. Now, rights must claim some measure of inviolability if rights are to be reasons for action with any sort of prescriptive force. But why this is so, and why rights are to be taken seriously, cannot be because rights are ends in themselves. That is a fetishistic claim, both untrue and unnecessary for taking rights seriously. Persons are ends in themselves, and so have a high degree of inviolability, expressed by rights to nonviolation, and these rights have moral force—that is, some measure of inviolability. But it does not immediately follow from the recognition of a high degree of person inviolability that rights should have an equally high degree of inviolability that is, that rights should be absolute, or nearly absolute, even when specified. Here, then, is a preliminary answer to Kamm: though indeed it may be a contradiction to violate a constraint in order to express the high inviolable status of constraints, constraints do not have the status of high inviolability. It is no contradiction (though it may be a mistake) to violate a constraint in order to express the inviolable status of persons. The primary objects of our respect and concern are persons, not rights, so there is neither futility nor contradiction in violating the rights of persons if that is what circumstances demand to treat them as ends in themselves

Justice is based off of respecting rights, the moment these rights become disregarded is the moment justice is void. If I prove to you that I protect the human worth of individuals the best, you negate.

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Require - to call for or exact as obligatory.
Recognition - acceptance or acknowledgment of a claim, duty, fact, truth, etc

Singer 1 writes,

The thought behind this reply to Taylor's analogy is correct up to a point, but it does not go far enough. The thought behind this reply to Taylor's analogy is correct up to a point, but it does not go far enough. **There are important differences between humans and other animals, and these differences must give rise to some differences in the rights that each have. Recognizing this obvious fact, however, is no barrier to the case for extending the basic principle of equality to nonhuman animals. The differences that exist between men and women are equally undeniable, (with supporters of women's liberation who agree that their differences, though not so different, exist). Many feminists hold that women have the right to an abortion on request. It does not follow that since these same people are campaigning for equality between men and women they must support the right of men to have abortions too. Since a man cannot have an abortion, it is meaningless to talk of his right to have one. Since a pig can't vote, it is meaningless to talk of its right to vote. (There is no reason why other animals should have equal consideration for us.) The extension of the basic principle of equality from one group to another does not imply that we must treat both groups in exactly the same way, or grant exactly the same rights to both groups. Whether we should do so will depend on the nature of the members of the two groups. The basic principle of equality, I shall argue, is equality of consideration; and equal consideration for different beings may lead to different treatment and different rights.**

Thus, the standard is **promoting equality of consideration.**

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This does not entail animal rights are equal to human rights or that humans and animals are completely equal because:

- 1) The resolution does not explicitly claim they are equal or make any comparison.
- 2) We weigh between competing rights claims. This is prevalent concerning the distinction between rights for innocents and the guilty as well as positive and negative rights. Certain rights must come before others because of their value.
- 3) We have side constraints for action. Human rights can be that side constraint to animal rights. Just because we recognize certain rights does not mean we always allow them. For example, if I were to support the right to self defense it would make no sense to launch a nuclear missile at myself and my aggressor with the intention of self defense. A side constraint would be necessary to filter out counter-productive actions.
- 4) Humans in and of themselves are not equal, so it makes no sense to extend a fake equality to animals.

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Observations

- Logical statements on what it means to affirm or negate the resolution
- Can serve various purposes:
 - Burden shifting
 - Burden increasing
 - Setting up a certain criterion
 - Limiting ground
 - Spiking out of certain arguments
 - Defining topicality

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Limiting Ground

Resolved: Immigration reform should offer a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants currently living in the United States.

Observation: As per the resolution, today's debate is limited to arguing about the benefits of a path to citizenship. Simply legalizing their presence in the US but not allowing them a path to citizenship is negative ground. Therefore, the impacts on the affirmative side must solely stem from a giving these people citizenship.

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Defining Resolutional Actors

Resolved: Immigration reform should offer a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants currently living in the United States.

Observation: Because the resolution requires an action from the US Government, impacts must be linked to benefits for the United States.

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Burdens

Resolved: Unilateral military force by the United States is justified to prevent nuclear proliferation.

- Observation: The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy explains the 3 necessary standards for a justified use of military force based on Just War Theory:
 - [First] Just cause. modern just war theorists speak of the one just cause for resorting to military force being the resistance of aggression. Aggression is the use of armed force in violation of someone else's basic rights.
 - [Second] Last Resort. A state may resort to force only if it has exhausted all plausible, peaceful alternatives to resolving the conflict.
 - [Third] Probability of Success. A state may not resort to war if it can foresee that doing so will have no measurable impact on the situation. The aim here is to block mass violence which is going to be futile.
- Thus, to show that unilateral military force is justified to prevent nuclear proliferation, the affirmative must meet these 3 burdens.

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Mitigating Opponent Impacts

Resolved: Current US foreign policy in the Middle East undermines our national security.

Observation: Because the resolution is a truth testing resolution, the affirmative side will win today's debate if we can explicitly show how any part our foreign policy is weakening our national security. It is not sufficient for the Negative to prove that we derive benefits from the Middle East because we can obtain benefits while still have our national security undermined.

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Topicality

Resolved: Current US foreign policy in the Middle East undermines our national security.

Observation: In this round, we are weighing the impacts of actions the US government is currently implementing, not comparing them to alternate policies.

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Overviews

- Bird's eye view of how round is playing out in relation to the framework.
- Specific arguments go after the overview.
- Remind of the framing and prevents repetition – increases rebuttal efficiency

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Impact

- Example of a bad overview: "Extend our nuclear war impact. It is better because 1) magnitude—nuclear war would kill millions. 2) time frame—our impact happens right away. 3) probability—war is very likely."

YUCK! What is war bigger than? How does it weigh against the case? Why is there so much jargon?

- Same points but much better: "Extend our Russian nuclear war impact. It turns and outweighs their global warming advantage. 1) Nuclear war causes warming, that was our Smith evidence. 2) Nuclear war would cause extinction immediately, while warming will take decades. 3) Our Jones evidences establishes that war with Russia is the most likely scenario for global conflict, that means that any doubt on the ability of the case to solve means that you should prefer our impact." We link to protecting citizens but also to their criterion of preserving dignity because we better mitigate conflict and allow discourse
- Less jargon, refers to evidence, comparative... MUCH BETTER!

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Framework

- Include implications – carry out the impact
- Analysis of warrants to clarify links
- In rebuttal, delink opponent arguments
- Try to win framework, but win either way – I'm winning on human dignity because _____, but I'm also winning on maximizing discourse because _____.
- Comparative analysis of framework – Human dignity is predicated on discourse. If individuals do not have the ability to work collaboratively toward solutions for social issues, dignity cannot be sustained.

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Refutation Strategies

Cases can cause one to lose a round, but refutation is generally where rounds are won.

Many competitors, especially those who aren't writing their own arguments, are not prepared for deep questioning and responses on their arguments, so being able to engage in deeper analysis of their arguments will give you a key edge in round.

The main goal when responding to the opponent's case is to throw them off their game, making future speeches more difficult. The harder you make them work, the higher the chance they will make critical mistakes. Refutation allows the debater to highlight the flaws and unwarranted arguments in the opponent's case. Taking out the premises of the cases is an easy way to ruin a case position.

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Answering Confusing Positions

What makes a case confusing

- Unusual burdens
- Break norms: more than one standard, confusing cards, unclear rhetoric
- They are bad
- Why do they win
- Opponents crumble
- Debars let their opponents clarify everything in the CX
- Judges want to seem smart

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What you do

- **Perceptually** win these rounds
 - Confusing cases create a persuasive difference
 - Appear to be the reasonable one that links back to the resolution
 - Utilize CX time to see where it links to the text of the resolution (hit CTRL F).
- Remain calm.
- Remember adrenaline and the game.
- Don't give up on flowing.
 - Flow at least the structure of the case (i.e. turn, links to the resolution, numbers).
 - Stop, look at the judge and point out how confusing it was – the judge will likely be glad you said so.

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- **Exploit missing warrants**

- **Use CX**

- Ask for a thesis if they must
 - ALWAYS have them be strict to the case
 - Ask like "without using the rhetoric of the card"
 - Read cards while emphasizing flaws – theoretical v. proven
 - Use active listening → "why" questions don't make it seem like you don't know what they mean understand.
 - Status quo isn't always best – historical examples.
 - Remember to expose holes in their link story. Delinking arguments can be one of the most effective strategies.
 - Layer your attacks.
 - Reason out philosophical evidence...does it mean what the case says it means

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Creating Offense

Taking out opposing arguments is not enough to win the round. Highlight the harms of their position.

Link Turns

- The type of turn used most often is the **link turn**. It changes the direction of the link meaning that instead of providing less of a bad thing, the action specified provides more of a bad thing.
 - "X increases Y, and Y good = affirmative ground"
 - Link turn "X decreases Y, and Y good = not affirmative ground or better yet negative ground". The link turn is the most common way to generate offense, namely because the types of arguments it implies tend to be intuitive responses.
- **Impact Turns**
 - Changes the implication of the impact.
 - "X increases Y, = affirmative ground."
 - "Y bad. Because X increases Y = negative ground".
- Using both impact turns and link turns results in a **double turn**, kind of like a double negative.
- Because both types of turns reverse the implication of something, using both turns in conjunction actually reinforces your opponent's original claim. If their argument is "X increases Y, and Y good. Thus, X" and you say both that X decreases Y and Y is a bad thing, then you are functionally saying X decreases a bad thing, which means we should in fact do X. (Intro to Debate)

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Defensive Arguments

- No warrant – be sure debaters understand how to recognize a warrant v. just evidence.
- What is bad? Good? Who decides?
- Non-unique
- Permutation

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Weighing arguments

- **Necessary to compare arguments in the round.** Prevents the judge from having to spin the narrative of who won. Gives the debater agency in the decision.
- **Scope** - How broadly is the impact felt across a population or even the world?
- **Magnitude** - How severe is the impact?
- **Probability** - How likely is the event?
- **Reversibility** - Can the harms be undone?
- **Timeframe** - Is it a short-term or long-term harm? Will the harm come about now or later?

Probability and magnitude are most common. Compare weighing mechanisms in final speech i.e. high-probability events are worse than high-magnitude ones.

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Theory

- Considers violations in the rules of debate. Calls out arguments that defy acceptable norms in a debate round.
- Misuse of definitions, sources, etc.
- Abusive arguments/strategies
- Explain the rule (interpretation), how they are breaking it (violation), and why having that rule is important (standard), then articulate how it affects the round (voter).
- Violations may include things like time skew, new arguments, fairness, education.

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Responding to Theory

Counter-interpretation

- competing interpretation A rule that is not in violation and is competitive with the original interpretation. Illustrate why both rules cannot be enforced at the same time. If they are mutually exclusive and your rule should be prioritized, it's irrelevant whether you satisfy the other rule. Be sure you link to the questionable material in your case.
- No violation or both debaters are in violation.

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Trends from Premier Debate

Counterplans and Alternatives

- Text – What does the it do and who is the actor?
- Competition - Explains the trade-off between the affirmative position and the CP **and** why the CP is a better solution.
 - Mutually exclusive – avoid permutation (can't do both)
 - Net benefits – CP is better DA to affirmative (both is bad)
- Solvency – Counterplan better solves aff impacts.
- Net Benefits – Avoid affirmative harms.
- PIC – Both plan and counterplan used together.

I have uploaded to the UIL SAC depository an example case and analysis to further explain this concept.

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Crystallization

- Maintain understanding of round by judge (s)
- Keep important issues on the forefront.
- Voting issues – Agency in the decision.

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Singer 2 writes,

When we say that all human beings, whatever their race, creed, or sex, are equal, what is it that we are asserting? Those who wish to establish a hierarchy, segregation society have often pointed out that by whatever test we choose, it simply is not true that all humans are equal. Like it or not, we must face the fact that humans come in different shapes and sizes; they come with differing moral capacities, differing intellectual abilities, differing amounts of benevolent feeling and sensitivity to the needs of others, differing abilities to communicate effectively, and differing capacities to experience pleasure and pain. ==== **If the demand for equality were based on the actual equality of all human beings, we would have to stop demanding equality. It would be an unjustifiable demand.**

Singer [discusses this passage](#), who is the first. DeCamp Professor of Bioethics at Princeton University and Laureate Professor at the Centre for Applied Philosophy and Public Ethics at the University of Melbourne. Peter, and Tom Regan. "All Animals Are Equal." *Animal Rights and Human Obligations* (1989): 148-62. Print.

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