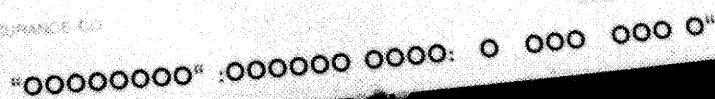


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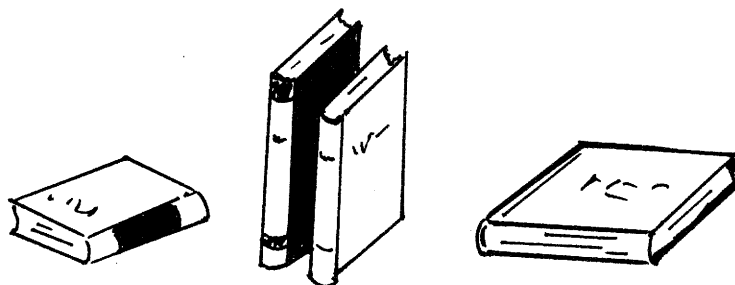
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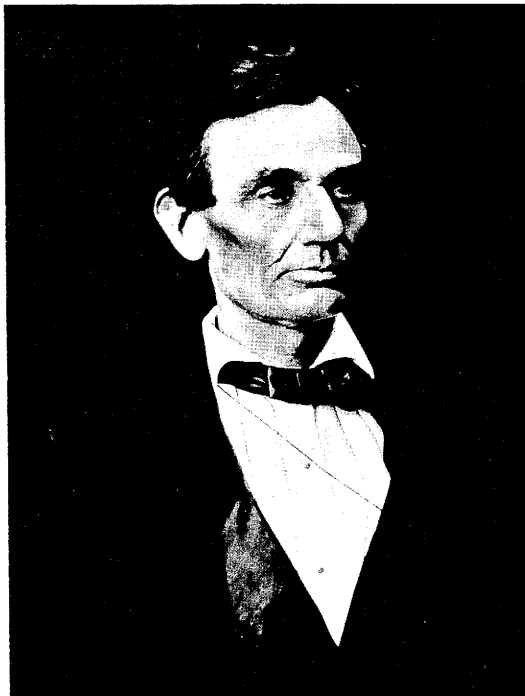
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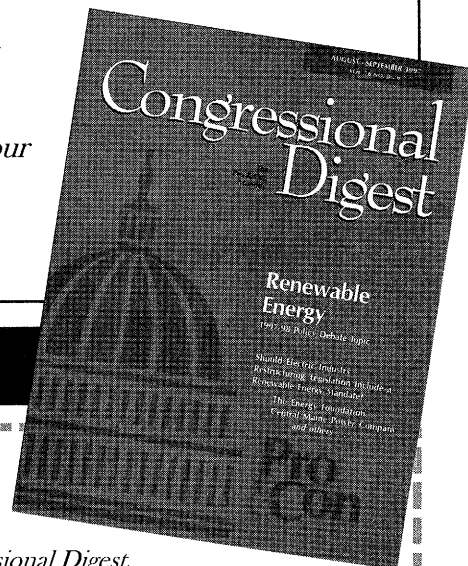


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LINCOLN-DOUGLAS

D E B A T E S

NATIONAL FORENSIC LEAGUE



September 27, 1997

Lincoln Life congratulates the top four winners of the 1997 Lincoln Life Lincoln-Douglas Debates national championship in Minneapolis, and all of the National Speech Tournament qualifiers. It takes great commitment and perserverance to qualify for this event. Every student who qualifies for the National Speech Tournament demonstrates a devotion to communication excellence that will lead them to excellence in their future endeavors.

While I was unable to attend the tournament myself, I was there in spirit with my Lincoln Life associates Carolyn Brody, Tom Coffey, Marty Murphy, Dennis Thuecks, John Blackman, Mary Brazys, Dawn Mann and Amy Haycox. It gave Carolyn great pleasure to present Marc Wallenstein, Ajay Gupta, Melissa Sorbello and Hetel Doshi with their scholarships in front of an audience of more than 4,000 of their peers.

I'd like to extend my personal thanks to Richard Sodikow and his students from the Bronx High School of Science for recognizing and thanking Lincoln Life in front of 7 million viewers on the Today show June 12. What an honor!

Each new school year brings more students to the program. When Lincoln Life began sponsoring the Lincoln-Douglas Debates in 1994, 210 students from 2,474 school across the nation qualified to compete at the National Speech Tournament. In 1997, 224 students from 2,700 schools qualified. We at Lincoln Life are incredibly pleased with the growth in the program, and proud to play such a significant role in making a difference in the lives of the young people of our country.

Jon Boscia
President, Lincoln Life

On the Cover: Lincoln Life Vice President Carolyn Brody and Champion Marc Wallenstein admire Lincoln Life's \$20,000 Scholarship check.

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THE ROSTRUM

Official Publication of the National Forensic League
(USPS 471-180) (ISSN 1073-5526)

James M. Copeland
Editor and Publisher

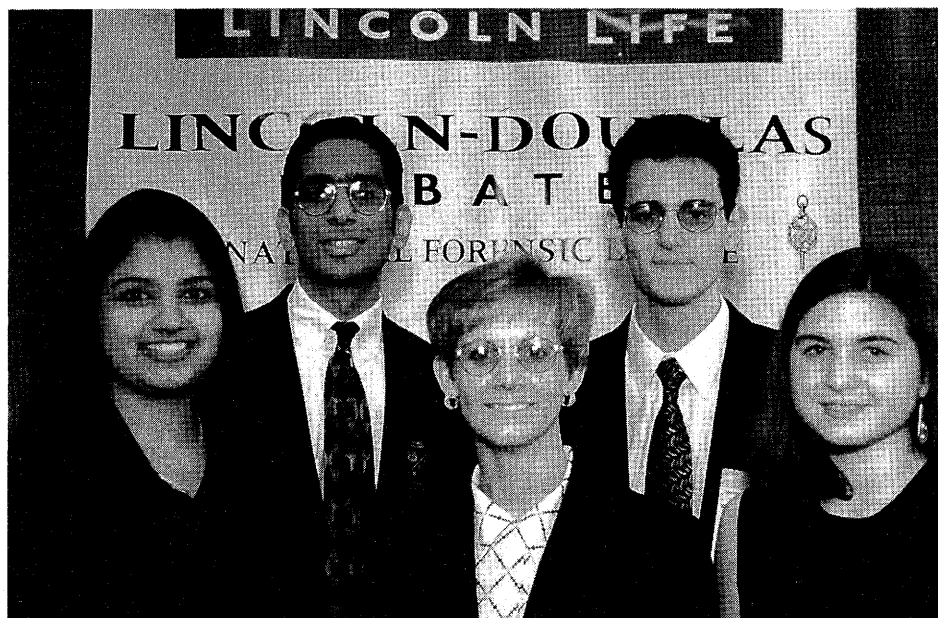
P.O. Box 38
Ripon, Wisconsin 54971-0038
(920) 748-6206

The Rostrum (471-180) is published monthly, except July and August each school year by the National Forensic League, 125 Watson St., Ripon, Wisconsin 54971. Second-class postage paid at Ripon, Wisconsin 54971. POSTMASTER: send address changes to THE Rostrum, P.O. Box 38, Ripon, Wisconsin 54971.

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COMPETITORS SHINE AT NATIONAL LINCOLN LIFE LINCOLN DOUGLAS DEBATES



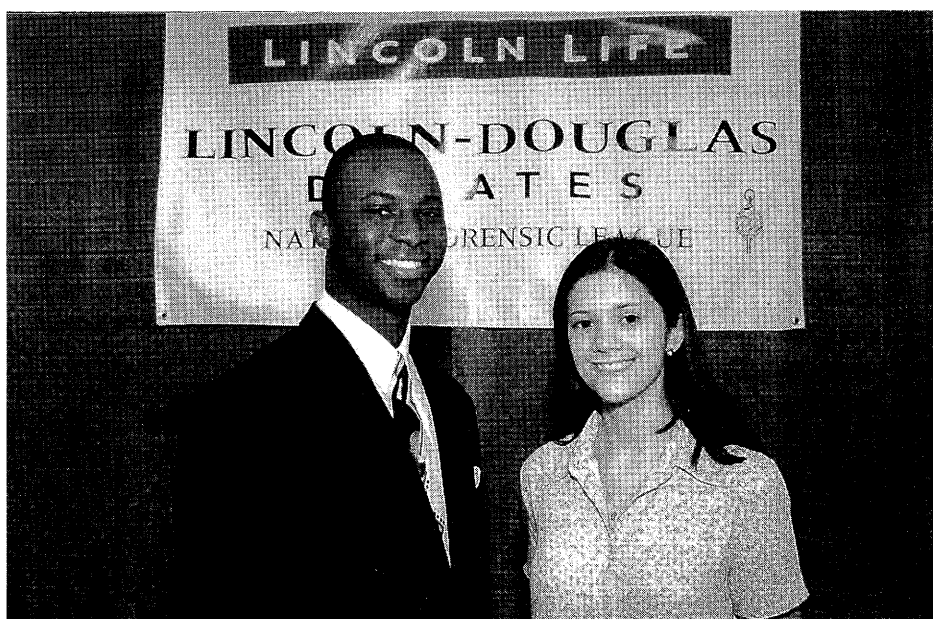
Lincoln Life Vice President Carolyn Brody with the Lincoln Life Lincoln Douglas Debates national scholarship winners.

Marc Wallenstein, a sophomore at Greenhill High School in Dallas, Texas, won an \$8,000 scholarship and the Lincoln Life Lincoln-Douglas Debates 1997 national championship.

Other Lincoln Life scholarship winners are: Ajay Gupta, senior, Jenks High School, Okla., \$6,000, second place; Melissa Sorbello, senior, Martin County High School, Stuart, Fla., \$4,000, third place; and Hetal Doshi, senior, Vestavia Hills High School, Vestavia Hills, Ala., \$2,000, fourth place. These top four finishers are also presented paid summer internships at Lincoln Life during their college years.

"We are proud to sponsor this dynamic program," said Lincoln Life President Jon Boscia. "This training makes for better speakers, improves self confidence and enhances future employment potential. We believe in building and strengthening education for the youth of our country."

Two students earned sole distinctions at the Lincoln Life Lincoln-Douglas Debates national championship, despite returning home without a Lincoln Life scholarship award. Abdul Berete (left), a senior at Bergenfield High School in Bergenfield, NJ, was the only debater at the 1997 tournament to advance to the elimination rounds by unanimous decision, receiving winning votes on all twelve preliminary judges' ballots. Vanessa Torres (right), a senior at Academy of Our Lady of Guam, became the first student from Guam to advance to the elimination rounds of the NFL National Tournament. Two hundred seventeen students, reduced from a field of more than 20,000 over the past seven months, competed in the annual Lincoln Life Lincoln-Douglas Debates national championship. Berete finished in the top 25 lasting ten rounds, Torres was eliminated after round 8.



Undefeated Abdul Berete and first Guam qualifier Vanessa Torres celebrate after preliminary rounds in the Lincoln Life Debates.

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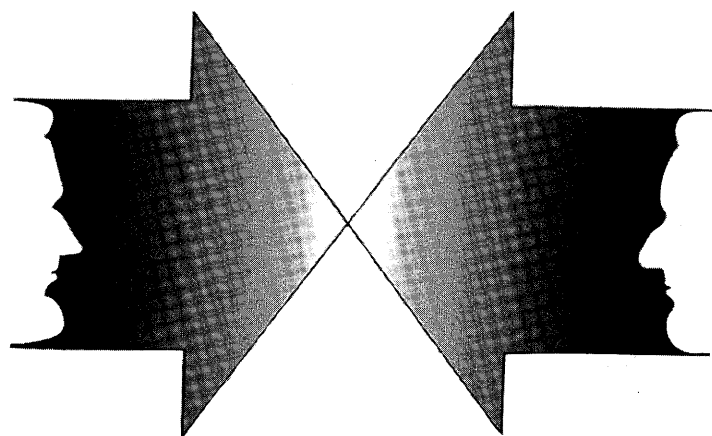
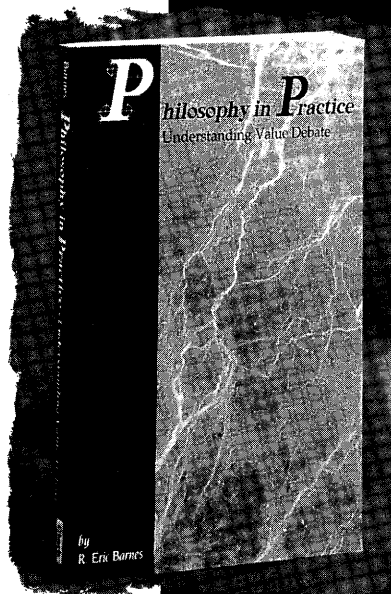
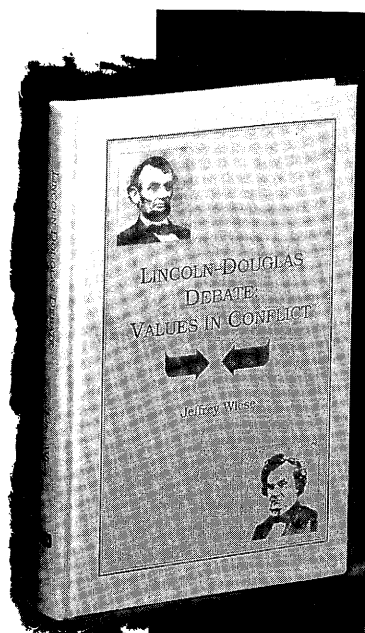
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A MODERATE APPROACH TO ANALYZING A LINCOLN DOUGLAS RESOLUTION

by Marilee Dukes

To begin, I feel it necessary to say that this article was solicited. In no way, do I pretend that I have some corner on truth for Lincoln Douglas debate. No one should interpret this article as an approach that will always work; it is an approach that I believe is simple and valid. My perspective on the activity is relatively conservative in that I believe that it is the **purpose** of Lincoln Douglas debate to weigh values that are in conflict—the values that are assigned by the resolution. I am also convinced that, given this as the purpose of the activity, there is very little room for definitions that allow for abusive positions or that are designed to define the other side out of the round. Because I am so firmly convinced of this, my students do not play the game from a perspective other than what we can reasonably believe would be the issues actually posed by the resolution. Given this concept as a basis, I would like to explain how my students and I approach a new topic and why I think this works.

1. Carefully examine the grammatical structure of the resolution. Many students use the words in the resolution in the wrong part of speech, which, of course, completely alters the meaning of the resolution.

Additionally, a value premise is frequently pretty obvious, if you just look at the structure of the sentence.

For example, consider the resolution *That individual obedience to law plays a greater role in maintaining ethical public service than does individual obedience to conscience*. Clearly the goal outlined by the resolution is "maintaining ethical public service." Thus, the obvious value premise is ethical public service.

Sometimes familiarity with the grammatical structure will clarify the issues which inhere in the debate.

For example, in the resolution *That individuals with disabilities ought to be afforded the same athletic competition opportunities as*

able-bodied athletes, there is an elliptical clause. The elliptical portion is "as able-bodied athletes *are afforded*." This grammatical structure changes the ideas from equality of treatment to equality of privilege. Understanding that the affirmative burden is simply to afford similar opportunity for athletic competition for disabled athletes, not to provide the same activity, such as football or pole vaulting, allows the affirmative much-needed ground in this debate.

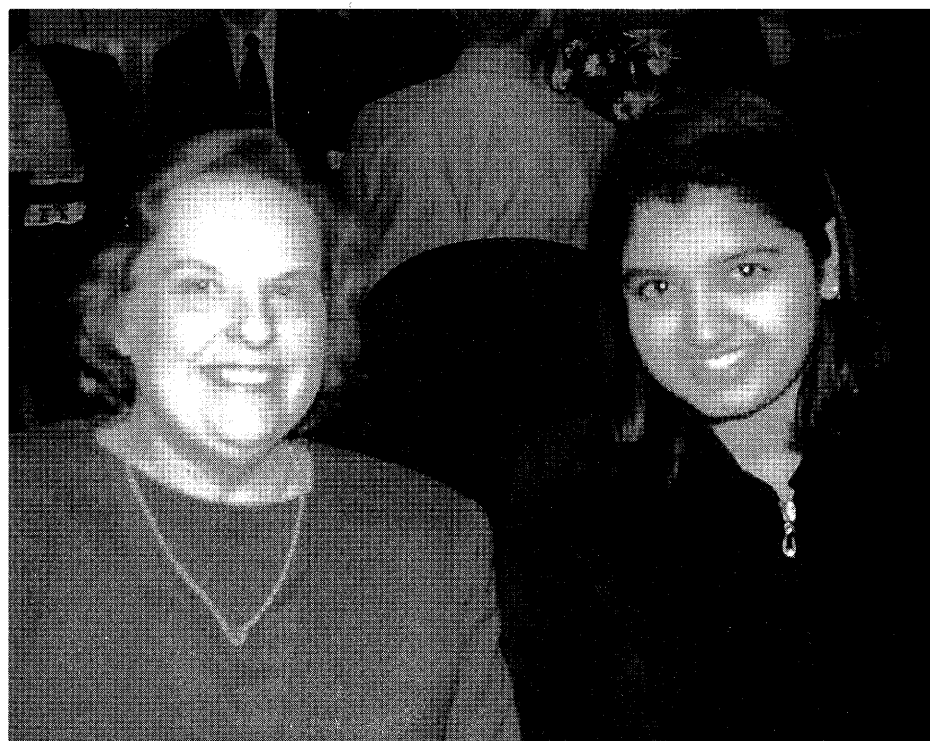
2. Define the words. Definitions should be fair. It is frequently useful to reword a sentence using the definitions so that you understand what the words really mean in the context of the resolution. It is also useful to take note of possible abusive definitions so that you can prepare for positions that could spin off these definitions. When this happens, debate usually degenerates from the issues that should be the basis for values debate.

The following examples really occurred:

Consider the resolution *When in conflict, society's goal of eliminating discrimination ought to transcend an individual's right to par-*

ticipate in exclusive voluntary associations. Some people defined "participate in exclusive voluntary associations" as the activities of hate organizations, including the crimes committed by such organizations during the 1960's. Apparently the point was that to *participate* in any way antithetical to eliminating discrimination had to include actually doing something to harm minorities. This analysis completely ignores the use of the word *right* in this resolution. There are no rights to break the law or to harm people.

In the topic on disabled athletes, the word *same* became a major point of contention. The best rounds I heard defined same as similar. With a definition of same as exact, the debate became silly—that disabled athletes should be allowed to play for the Chicago Bulls.



Coach Marilee Dukes with TOC L/D Champion Hetal Doshi

Tautologies can lead to fallacious reasoning and poor debate.

For example, in the topic *That individual obedience to law plays a greater role in maintaining ethical public service than does individual obedience to conscience*, law was

sometimes defined as "collective conscience." The debate became that to obey law was also to obey conscience, so no matter which side you debated, the value was conscience. Needless to say, the debate was confusing.

On the topic, *When in conflict, a business's responsibility to itself ought to be valued above its responsibility to society* some people argued that business' responsibility to society is to be responsible to itself. If both sides are the same, there is absolutely no reason to debate, except to discuss a critique on the resolution. At this point, the educational value of the discussion becomes questionable.

Phrases like "when in conflict" are designed to preclude such circular argumentation. If these phrases are accepted for what they are clearly designed to do, there is room for debate. If debaters contend that conflict is armed conflict or conflict is competition among businesses, then we will debate what the words mean, not which values ought to be prioritized.

It is also useful to pay special attention to the use of different words in different parts of the resolution. The chances are good that the wording committee had a reason for their choices. It seems to make sense to ask yourself why.

For example, in the resolution *When called upon by one's government, individuals are morally obligated to risk their lives for their country*, the use of *government* tends to make the claim legitimate because a recognized authority, not a revolutionary group, would make the "call". The word *country* seems designed to preclude forcing the debate into extremes like a *government* like that one established by Adolph Hitler. There seems to be a huge difference in fighting for Germany and fighting for Hitler.

This realization focuses the debate on the principles in conflict, not extreme examples.

In policy debate, there are specific standards for topicality arguments which allow for debate over

the issue of topicality, about the meaning of words. In Lincoln Douglas debate, there are no stock issues, no clearly defined burdens or standards. Thus, it is virtually impossible to have a good "topicality" debate in LD. I have even heard some debaters use as their standard for topicality "my definition came first in the dictionary". Placement in the dictionary may do well as a guide for pronunciation, but it fails as a standard for best definition.

Given my conservative approach, the debate should be about which *value* is superior. Perhaps it is understandable that I do not like debates about the meaning of words. I think that this is a good approach to topic analysis because, while not everyone agrees with my perspective on arguing definitions, a large number of judges do. It would seem to make sense to begin the debate by not putting yourself at a disadvantage because so many judges just do not think topicality issues are a part of Lincoln Douglas debate, while virtually no one actually requires a discussion of definitions.

3. Identify real-world examples within the resolution. Almost all topics began because of an incident, a real example of the conflict. Considering this does two things: a. It allows you a great source to begin the research. With rare exception, there was a values discussion that surrounded the incident. Looking up those discussions that occurred immediately after the incident can provide good basic insight into what people really think about the values conflict. b. It helps you to discover where the real debate probably lies. Values debate is seldom one that should involve extremes. Both sides get to defend some good things, and both sides must defend some bad things. Otherwise, there is no debate. When a debater attempts to take a position in an extreme, the debate generally becomes the proverbial 2 ships in the night. It is at this point that critics of the activity think that LD is simply dueling oratory. When the debaters find real, defensible, yet debatable positions, we have good Lincoln Douglas debate.

The following examples may clarify:

Exclusive, voluntary associations were an extension of all-white country clubs. This topic was a di-

rect spin-off of the PGA incident which occurred in 1990. PGA golfers discovered that the all-white country club which was hosting had discriminatory membership policies, and golfers threatened not to attend the tournament unless those policies were changed. At the same time, the reality is that there are also all-black fraternal organizations which are very protective of their membership. It is important to note that it was the society, not the government, that influenced the change in the original scenario at the PGA tournament. This provides a very compelling point for clarification if one side is trying to claim that the word *society* in the resolution really means government. The government had absolutely nothing to do with the change that was wrought in this situation; the golfers themselves affected the change. There were numbers of articles following the incident that both established the horrors of discrimination and claimed that, while discrimination may be bad, people do have a right to associate with whomever they please.

The 1990 nationals topic was *That individual obedience to law plays a greater role in maintaining ethical public service than does individual obedience to conscience*. This topic was clearly inspired by the Oliver North incident.

A 1993-94 topic was *The public's right to know is of greater value than the right to privacy of candidates for public office*. This was following the 1992 election in which names like Gennifer Flowers became familiar. Earlier elections had pushed people like Gary Hart out of the presidential campaign because of this question.

In all of these situations, the right vs. wrong of the values conflict was discussed in virtually every periodical in America. The ideas discussed in the media may seem simplistic, but they will be easy to explain and probably easy to sell to most judges. At least you have an historical basis for discussion. [Of course, this is not to say that examples should be the primary focus of the actual debate, simply a beginning point for topic analysis.]

4. Find the middle ground where the debate really is. Consider all of the values embedded in the resolution. My students and I spend

a lot of time on this--days of class discussion. This is just critical.

For example, on the discrimination topic, the affirmative can easily extrapolate to fairness, equality, dignity, etc. The negative has a seemingly more difficult job because it appears that they must defend that discrimination is good, and a debater is not going to win many rounds doing this. Consider, however, an individual's right to privacy, to choose, to associate in a private world with whomever s/he pleases, to be a morally autonomous person. Consider the ramifications of having society dictate your moral choices. If you do some reading and a lot of thinking, it becomes pretty obvious that there are values claims on both sides. The debate is not about how good the KKK is, nor is it about the idea that women are somehow inferior and should be treated in that manner. In reality, there are two very legitimate values claims.

It is silly to pretend that the other side "must" defend the extreme. A debater may manage to enrage a few judges, but most good judges are going to listen to both sides and vote on the issues rather than inflammatory rhetoric.

In LD solvency is just not an issue.

The affirmative on the topic, *That in US policy, the principle of universal human rights ought to be prioritized over conflicting national interest*, was not obligated to prove that American policy would somehow solve for human rights violations. This is terribly unfair because the affirmative does not get to present a specific plan that could be designed to preclude some specific disadvantages or even some specific solvency arguments.

It is certainly valid for a debater to argue that there is no moral obligation where an action is not possible, but neither side should get involved in a solvency or a counter plan debate. It is likewise valid for a debater to argue that when "ought" is the operative term, there is an obligation to try.

Likewise, we usually get pretty bad debate when one or both of the debaters tries to argue from the slip/slope fallacy. I am personally convinced that if one debater tries to force the debate into a collapse of the social order, then the other debater has a perfect right to

try to force it to oppression. We learned when we debated oppression versus no government that that particular conflict does not make for good debate.

I am convinced that the smartest thing a debater can do is to find a position that virtually anyone can believe. These topics are debatable. There are believable positions on both sides.

5. Defend as little as possible. In LD, there is no presumption because there is no policy and no status quo to presume "innocent". There is no analogous courtroom scenario. BOTH SIDES have a burden of proof, and should defend that their value is preferable, not just that the other side is wrong. [This is, of course, one of the huge differences between policy and LD] Thus, both the affirmative and the negative must defend a value. I am fully aware that some coaches and judges do not agree with me about this. However, I would maintain again that, unless you are sure about the perspective of your judge, there is little reason to take a chance on attitudes about presumption when a huge number of judges expect both sides to defend a value. Assuming my position on burdens, it is seldom necessary, or even a good idea, to present a position that claims that the other value is evil. This is almost impossible to sell because if the topic is debatable, both values are, *prima facie*, good [or bad]. Generally, it is the debater's obligation to outweigh, and this is where the position needs to set up.

It is absolutely critical that arguments have impact, that they matter in terms of the value premise, which is supposed to be the basis for a decision. This is also why it is better to use a value premise that can be adapted to virtually anything the other side may say. Otherwise, the argument is about which value premise is better, not about which resolutive value is better--which leads to the proverbial 2 ships. Even if you do not like to use value premises, there needs to be some kind of impact on a values level that gives an argument meaning.

It makes competitive sense to interpret the resolution so that the debate will be limited to the actual values conflict and does not require a defense of the actual interpretation of the meaning of the resolu-

tion. If you set up your argument so that you are going to have to defend that your interpretation of the resolution is correct, you put a huge burden on yourself.

a. The judge may not believe you. When you premise your actual position on some kind of strange interpretation of the resolution, you take a real chance on judge intervention.

For example, on the resolution on human rights v. national interest mentioned above, many coaches and judges believe that, because there is no modifier other than US in front of the word policy, the debate deals with both domestic and foreign policy. Some debaters based a position on the assumption that the resolution was limited to foreign policy. Regardless of how you may feel about this particular discussion, a number of people just do not buy this limitation. Why would you want to design a position that a judge may, on face, reject?

b. This puts a huge burden on your rebuttal time. If you have to argue that your definition is valid or that your interpretation of the resolution is valid, you will waste valuable rebuttal time which needs to be spent on arguing the actual issues. It is not terribly difficult to design a position in which such issues do not matter.

c. The debate is usually just boring as dirt. Most interesting discussion surrounds the values in conflict, not the interpretation of the words in the resolution.

6. Generally, my team spends a great deal of time reading, considering the ramifications of the wording, and asking why. We have lengthy discussions about why arguments are true and why issues matter. If we cannot answer our own questions, we do not run the argument.

Finally, these are simply suggestions for a moderate approach to resolutive analysis. I would certainly welcome suggestions from anyone who can help me to add to the educational value of the activity for my students.

(Marilee Dukes has coached national champions in both Lincoln Life Lincoln-Douglas and Policy Debate. She has served on the LD topic Selection Committee. This paper was originally presented at the 1996 NDCA Fall Convention.)

CONQUERING A NEW TOPIC

by William H. Bennett

One of the most unusual aspects of high school Lincoln Douglas debate is the large number of topics used every year. The National Forensic League spreads five throughout the year. Some larger tournaments use non-NFL topics. A few states have other topic selection methods.

The diversity of topics is a potential strength of the event. The more topics a debater encounters the greater the amount that can be learned. But for the majority of debaters the result is a modest learning curve because too little time is spent learning about, and developing unique strategies for each new topic.

What is a good debater to do when confronting a new topic? How does a good debater prepare?

Now entertain conjecture of a time
When creeping murmur and the poring dark
Fills the wide vessel of the universe.
From camp to camp, through the foul womb of
night,
The hum of either army stilly sounds,
That the fix'd sentinels almost receive
The secret whispers of each other's watch.
Fire answers fire, and through their paly flames
Each battle sees the other's umber'd face:
Steed threatens steed, in high and boastful
neighs
Piercing the night's dull ear, and from the tents
The armourers, accomplishing the knights,
With busy hammers closing rivets up,
Give dreadful note of preparation.
[Shakespeare, Henry V, IV, Chorus, I]

The Beginning Steps

The first step is to find out what the topic is. If at all possible the topic should be learned well in advance of the first tournament. Good preparation usually requires at least two weeks lead time.

Occasionally the tournament invitation or special mailing will notify each squad. But for most teams it will be the National Forensic League, through an announcement in the *Rostrum*, that announces the topic.

Eager or intelligent competitors do not have to wait for their magazine. The NFL has a special phone number, 920-748-LD4U, available 24 hours a day that announces each new topic as soon as rules allow its release.

The second step is to define every possibly important word of the topic. When in doubt the de-

bater should research definitions on too many words rather than too few. Often a student scholar cannot determine early in her research which words are the most controversial or likeliest to be important. In this situation it is better to find definitions for most topic words.

And at least three types of dictionaries should be consulted: lay, philosophical, and legal. If the topic has a specific field context (e.g. government, politics, economics) a specialty dictionary in that field should also be consulted. The diversity of sources has two purposes: to be sure no obvious meaning or topic intent is overlooked, and to give the debater different options in case construction and response.

Next is the brainstorming session. The debater, his colleagues, coach, friends, parents, and or anyone else who can be cajoled to join participates. Everyone writes down the topic verbatim. One person is appointed recording secretary. Then case ideas are suggested, being sure that no suggestion is criticized in any way. The avowed purpose is to generate as many ideas as possible.

When suggestions peter out the group discusses which ideas have merit and which should be stricken. The debater(s) then select their choices but keep the entire list so that opponents possible cases can be considered too. Identifying as many possible cases or issues as possible reduces the chance of being taken by surprise in a tournament debate.

The fourth step is to build a bibliography. This library and computer work will include philosophical sources (book, *Philosophy Index*), historical and contemporary sources (computer data bases, *Social Science Index*, *The New York Times Index*, and others), and debate publications (*The CDE Value Encyclopedia*, *Baylor's Value Handbook*, etc.). Step five, of course, is to pull and copy the best of these materials.

Moving Ahead: Case Building

Looking at the gathered research, and considering the brainstorming list moves the debater

close to the next step: making the first draft of the value and criteria sections of his or her affirmative and negative cases. But the competitor should also consider, before writing, which of the available positions s/he is most familiar with and able to explain well and defend under strong attack. If more than one option remains available the competitor will get a competitive advantage by selecting a value not often used in her region of the nation.

Then should follow a second bibliography and research session. This one should focus on finding pragmatic, historical, and contemporary examples that demonstrate the validity of the criteria and value.

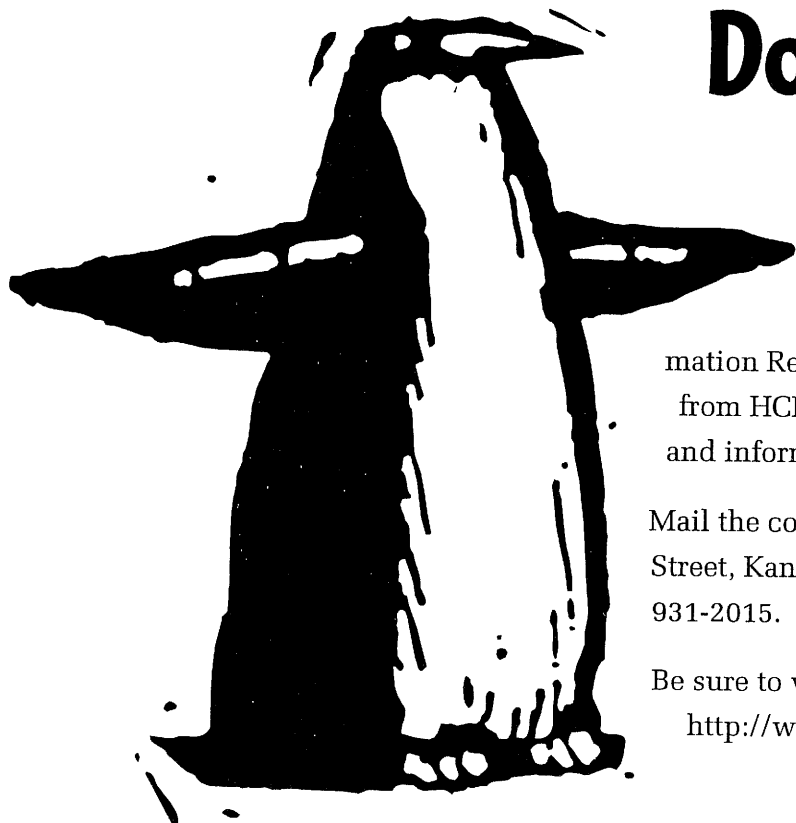
Step eight is to identify the most likely opposition arguments. Four components should go into this set of educated guesses: past history, topic wording, research results, and subscription services. Stronger opponents can anticipate and preempt or develop answering strategies for familiar values and or strategies.

Topic wording usually lends itself to certain common values and or criteria being used. Thought, coach input, and discussion with friends will spot the most obvious options early. Cases should be constructed to take advantage of or preempt the most obvious opposition options.

Research and subscription services can alert you to strong but less obvious case options. Some opponents take their cases verbatim or with only modest modifications from case subscription services. The good competitor will be prepared to defeat these cases.

Step nine is to complete the first draft of cases for both sides. Often this can mean making sure that the affirmative is long enough, and that the negative is not too long. After completing this draft and making modifications to improve the rhetoric and clarity of the case, cross-examination drills should commence.

The cross-examination drills should involve at least three sessions
(Bennett to Page 23)



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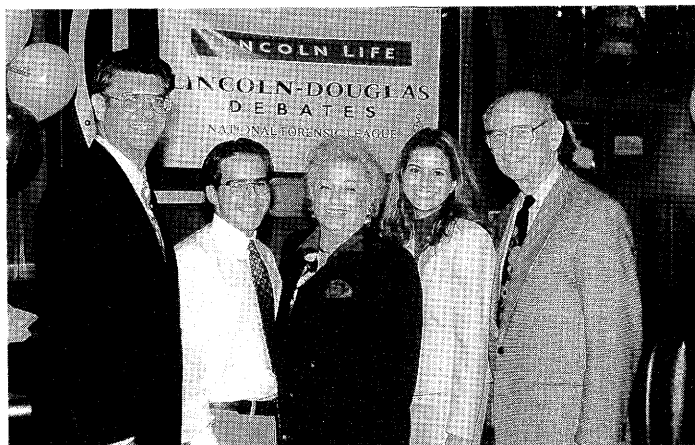
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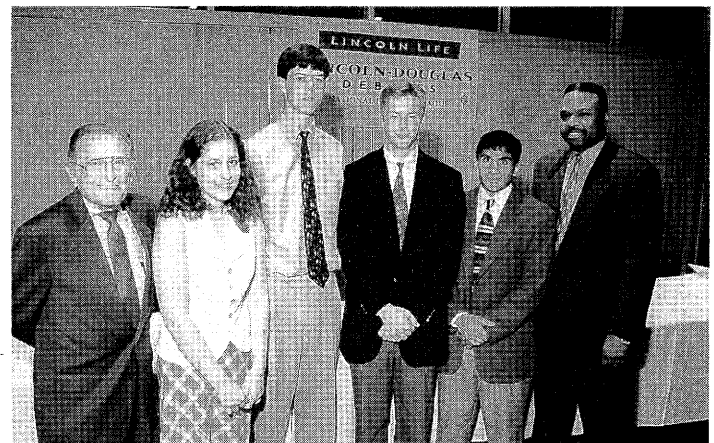
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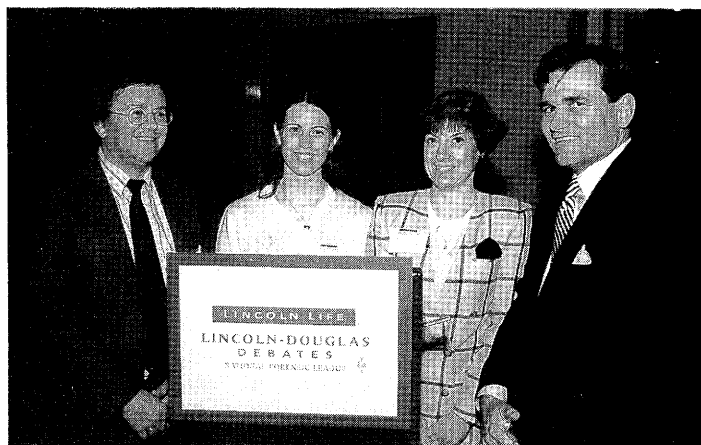
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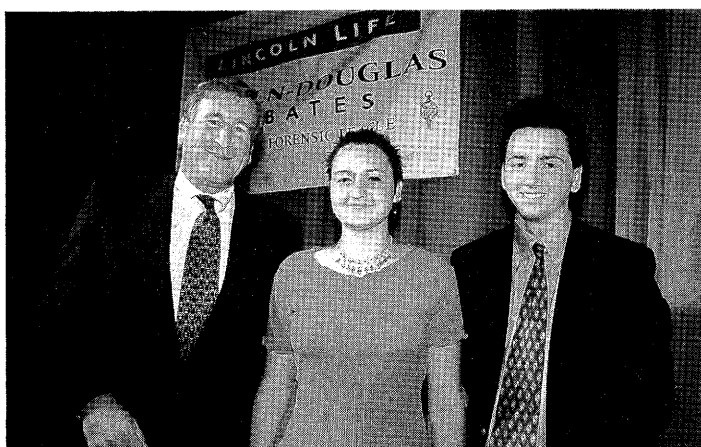
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AN INTRODUCTION TO THE VALUE PREMISE

by Jason Baldwin

One important but confused and confusing area of Lincoln/Douglas debate is the nature and use of a value premise and criterion. These terms, or ones like them (e.g., value, core value) are intended to signify standards which should ideally clarify the debate; in practice, they often muddy the waters even more. The meaning of values and criteria varies from region to region, and the result is that L/D rounds at large national tournaments (for instance, NFL's) can be very confusing. It is my conviction that there are better and worse ways to employ the language of values in values debate. This article is an attempt to sketch out what I believe to be a sensible and useful approach to value premises. I will consider, in turn, the purpose of the value premise, its selection, its integration into a case, and its treatment in rebuttals.

Purpose

The purpose of proposing a value premise and supporting criterion is to provide a standard for the judge to use in deciding who wins the debate. For in any given L/D resolution, there are many possible grounds of argument on both sides. I might argue for a position on the grounds that it is morally obligatory, or that it is progressive, or that it has worked well in the past, etc. . . . The approaches one may take to a broad question of values are almost limitless. Obviously, many approaches will be incommensurable with one another; what moral duty requires may not always be in my self interest. And just as obviously, there is not time in a 35 minute debate round to consider all the possible approaches to a resolution. The value premise narrows the field of play. It attempts to identify what the most important value at stake in the resolution is. When a debater says, "My value premise is X," he is in essence saying, "Out of all the angles from which you, the judge, could evaluate this resolution, X is the most important angle, and should therefore be the angle from which you decide the winner of this debate." The value premise, then, should clarify the muddy resolutional waters for a judge. It

provides a common standard by which to weigh widely disparate arguments. If freedom is the value premise, then an argument that the resolution is good because it promotes equality will be irrelevant. A debater will be successful to the extent that he proves his side of the resolution better conforms to/promotes the value premise, unsuccessful to the extent that he fails to make those connections. So the purpose of the value premise is to function as a sort of yardstick by which the multiplicity of arguments on a given resolution may be measured.

The purpose of the criterion, in turn, is to define the nature of the value premise. Value premises tend to be broad and general themselves, requiring further specificity to make for a truly useful standard. For example, it may be correct to suggest that justice is the most important value in a given resolution, but this immediately raises the question of how justice itself should be understood. There are many theories of justice, and for a judge to weigh arguments, he needs to be presented with one of these specific theories. Perhaps John Rawls's distributive theory is the best standard, or John Locke's natural rights theory, or one of the hundreds of others which have been proposed through the ages. Of course, a criterion need not be identified with a particular philosopher's work, but philosophy provides a rich array of thoughtful possibilities for criteria, and reference to a great mind can also enhance a debater's credibility. The criterion is, quite literally, a criterion for the value premise, detailing how the judge will recognize when that broader value has been adequately supported.

Selection

Let us turn our attention to the selection of a proper value premise and criterion. Understanding the purpose of these elements gives us some guidance already. Because the value premise is to be used by the judge to evaluate the arguments offered by both sides, it should be a standard which is fair to both sides. It is utterly pointless, and also abusive, to propose a value premise

that only your side can win. On the resolution "*That liberty is more precious than law*," neither liberty nor law would be an appropriate value premise. For if you are affirmative, and you argue that your side of the resolution better upholds liberty, all you have really argued is that your side of the resolution better upholds your side of the resolution. And there is no possible way for the negative to uphold such a value premise, so it hardly provides a fair standard for the judge to use in weighing the competing arguments. Your value premise and criterion must together be a reasonable, neutral standard that either side has a fair chance to win. If you are writing a case with a value premise you could never win from the opposite side, you should choose a different value premise. Good debates are won in the contentions, not with the value premise alone.

A second requirement of the value premise is that it be relevant, and preferably central, to the resolution. Some resolutions will state outright the fundamental value at issue, for example, "*That the possession of nuclear weapons is immoral*." Clearly, both sides are to debate the morality of nuclear possession. It would be foolish to propose social progress as a value premise in this resolution, because social progress is peripheral, at best, to the debate over the morality of deterrence. Many resolutions are not so clear about what the most important value is. As we ponder whether "A business's responsibility to itself ought to be valued above its responsibility to society," it becomes apparent that any number of possible values premises and criteria might be relevant. But even on these more open-ended resolutions, some values are obviously out of bounds. Values such as peace or the sanctity of life are not central issues in determining the locus of a business's responsibility. There is admittedly a degree of connoisseurship involved in picking a good, relevant value premise. But my hunch is that most irrelevant value premises are chosen on the basis of their compatibility with an argument the debater has already decided to make. Value premises

should be chosen with reference to the resolution, not simply because they work with a particular argument.

A third thing we can say about the value premise and criterion is that they should be narrow enough to be really useful in deciding a round. To say, "My value premise is morality; my criterion is duty," will not clarify very much for a judge. Ditto for, "My value premise is justice; my criterion is rights," and, "My value premise is progress; my criterion is growth." These are all vacuous statements. They provide nothing hard and fast for a judge to grab hold of. A good way to think about the proper specificity of a value premise is in terms of falsifiability. This concept, borrowed from the philosophy of science, tells us that a statement or standard is meaningless if it is so broad and flexible that no possible set of circumstances could falsify it. A bad value premise can be over-broad in just this sort of way. What argument cannot claim that it produces growth of some kind, and thus contributes to progress? Growth and progress, by themselves, thus cease to be useful standards for decision. A value premise and criterion must be specific.

What I have said about value premise selection thus far has been primarily negative in tone: *do not* pick a value premise that is one-sided, irrelevant, or vague. Even when these conditions are observed, much freedom remains for debaters to select from a variety of possible value premise/criterion combinations. There is no sure-fire formula for deciding how to pick a value premise. But for those debaters who find themselves at a loss for the proper value, I will make one suggestion: read. I cannot think of a much better way to choose an intelligent standard for an argument than to see what standard the experts seriously engaged in that argument appeal to. Perhaps you know that morality is the natural value premise on a resolution dealing with a controversy in medical ethics, but you cannot decide on a criterion. Do some reading on medical ethics to find out what types of moral standards Daniel Callahan, Peter Singer, Leon Kass, and other medical ethicists believe are important considerations. Very rarely, in my experience, do debaters create

apt value premises and criteria *ex nihilo*. Resourceful debaters will take advantage of the published sources in selecting useful value standards.

Integration

Our focus now shifts to the integration of the value premise into a constructive speech. Typically, the statement of value premise and criterion occurs between the definition of terms and the first justification or contention. The value premise should be stated outright, in a form something to the effect of, "My value premise is X." Many debaters have picked up the odd habit of saying, "My value premise is *that of* X." The "that of" construction is unnecessary and archaic. It makes no more sense to say, "My value premise is that of X," than it makes to say, "My favorite color is that of blue." Following the statement of value premise should be an equally straightforward statement of value criterion. Note that the singular is "criterion", the plural, "criteria", do not confuse them.

Because the proposal of a value premise implies that that value is the standard by which every issue in the debate should be judged, you should offer a brief explanation of why you selected the value premise and criterion you did. Where a central value is clearly stated in the resolution, this explanation may be as brief as a phrase appended to the statement of the value premise, for example, "Because the resolution uses the language of 'moral justification', morality should be the value premise for today's debate." When, as is more often the case, the resolution does not explicitly favor one value premise, you may need to explain in a sentence or two why you believe your value premise is the best one. In formulating such an explanation, you may wish to think about why the nature of the underlying conflict appeals to one value or another, again making use of what you have gleaned from your research on the topic. It is acceptable to offer a brief quotation to clarify the explicit connection between your value and the topic, but generic value quotes of the "Justice is the first virtue of social institutions" sort are best avoided.

It is equally important to offer some explanation for your criterion. Many criteria will require you

to perform the dual task of defining the criterion and defending its selection. For example, to propose a criterion of utilitarianism, you should both define the meaning of utilitarianism and explain why it, as opposed to, say, a categorical imperative, offers the best understanding of morality. It is not enough to simply declare by *fiat* that morality or justice mean this or that. The meanings of big values are controversial, and you need to defend your selection of one possible understanding of these values over all others. You obviously cannot offer an exhaustive defense of any value premise or criterion, but you should offer enough explanation to show that you have thought carefully about what values are the most fitting standards for the debate. The entire process of stating, defining, and justifying your value premise and criterion should probably not take more than twenty seconds on either side.

If you are negative and have substantially the same value premise and criterion as the affirmative, you can simply say, "I accept the affirmative's value premise of X and criterion of Y, and my case will show why this value is more consistent with a negation of the resolution." There is no reason to spend time defining and defending a value which the affirmative has already covered. If you do decide to read your value premise analysis when you share the affirmative's value, you should at least make some acknowledgment of the commonality; do not appear oblivious to the fact that your value is the same as your opponent's.

The initial statement of the value premise and criterion are only the beginning of their integration into the case. You create a burden for yourself and your opponent when you offer a value premise; you are in essence saying, "Here's a standard, hold me to it." This means that your value premise and criterion must figure prominently into the subsequent contentions. Each argument that you offer must be offered with reference to the value premise, because any arguments that do not argue for or against the resolution *via* the value premise are irrelevant to the debate. If you propose to defend a business's responsibility to itself over its responsibility to society by means of a value

premise of liberty, and then proceed to offer a contention that the priority of a business's responsibility to itself will increase the GDP, your contention is irrelevant. One common L/D error is to propose a value premise and criterion at the top of the case, then offer two or three contentions, only one of which is explicitly linked to the value premise. Each of your main arguments should be structured around proving how your side of the resolution better upholds the value premise as defined by the criterion. You should begin and end contentions with thesis or summary statements which explicitly reinforce the connection of the argument to the value premise and criterion. And of course, the body of the argument should develop this connection in detail.

Rebuttals

Naturally, the value premise discussion must not end in the constructives; rather, it must permeate the development and clash of arguments through all the rebuttals. In practice, there are roughly three areas of value premise impact in rebuttals. First, there is the possible conflict of the value premises and/or criteria proposed by each debater. If your value premise and criterion are different from your opponent's, this difference must occupy some of your time in cross-examination and rebuttals. It is no help at all for a judge to have two different people each arguing successfully that their positions conform to two different standards; both debaters must aim to conform to common values. Here are three approaches to take when your opponent's proposed value premise differs from your own. (Of course, differing criteria may prove just as large an impediment, and will require similar responses.)

First, and most simply, if the values are very similar to each other, or if one value is clearly a larger case of the other, you may attempt to subsume your opponent's value under your own, or you may conflate the values. If both you and your opponent are driving at the same meaning with different words, appealing to the same values under different labels, then there is no reason to spend valuable time quibbling over semantics. Second, if your values are truly different but not incompatible, and you be-

lieve they are both important and fair, you may propose that both values be accepted, i.e., that both debaters be held accountable for both values. If you choose this strategy, you must be careful to stress your opponent's value as well as your own throughout the course of the rebuttals, for you have accepted it as your burden as well. Third, if the values are radically different or incompatible, you may argue that your value should be accepted as the standard for both sides, and your opponent's, thrown out. If you take this route, you must offer compelling reasons as to why your value premise is better, e.g., because it is more relevant (explain why!), or because it is fairer (explain why!). You *must* offer reasons for your objection; it is unacceptable to merely assert that your value premise is better. Your opponent, of course, is likely to bite back, and this is the most difficult and contentious of the three strategies. It is, however, possible and sometimes necessary.

While competing value premises must be addressed, they should not drain a lot of time from the arguments themselves. I believe that the affirmative has a weak prerogative to determine the value premise, so that if his is fair and relevant, the negative should probably just accept it. Debates over whose value premise is better are tedious and contribute nothing to the question of which side of the resolution is better. Remember, the value premise is not an end in itself, but a means to arguing effectively through contentions for or against the resolution. The LAR who spends a minute arguing over the value premises alone has wasted thirty seconds. Keep value premise conflicts, when they arise, brief.

The point-by-point refutation and defense of the contentions is the second, and most important, area of value premise impact in rebuttals. In a good debate, the contentions are where the round is won or lost, and the value premise and criterion should play just as prominent a role in your extemporaneous attack and defense as they do in your planned constructive. I do not want to suggest formulae by which the value premise may be addressed through the treatment of contentions. I will, however, offer two brief observations. First, the

language of the value premise should be explicit. Do not trust your judge to make even the simplest connections between your points and the value premise and criterion. It is your job to make the connections. Second, do not flinch from attacking your opponent's argument solely on the ground that it is not relevant to the value premise. No matter how good the argument sounds, and no matter how topical it may be by itself, if it doesn't match the value premise(s) you agree upon, it has no place in the round.

The third place the value premise may work its way into rebuttals is in the final summation or crystallization that many debaters present at the end of the last speech. Personally, I find such summations superfluous if the contentions have been argued clearly, rigorously, and selectively up to the end, but when a crystallization is offered, the value premise should be central. The value premise and criterion should be explicitly related to each point you reiterate. Just as the value premise in the constructive should not be relegated to one contention of three, so the value premise in crystallization should not be relegated to one point of three; the value premise is not a point unto itself, but is every point. Be very careful of your handling of the values in crystallization. A bad crystallization can do more harm than good.

The above is an attempt to articulate what I believe to be the dominant and most coherent understanding of the role of the value premise and criterion in L/D. It makes no pretense to be exhaustive or uncontested. And while I believe the value premise is one useful and reliable way to approach L/D argumentation, I do not see any reason why it ought to be only way. In particular, I believe arguments based on history may be just as fruitful an area of dispute as arguments based on values. The important thing for debaters to understand is that once the value premise enters a given round, it makes claims and creates burdens on both sides through the entire round.

(Jason Baldwin, now a student at Wheaton College, was TOC Champion.)

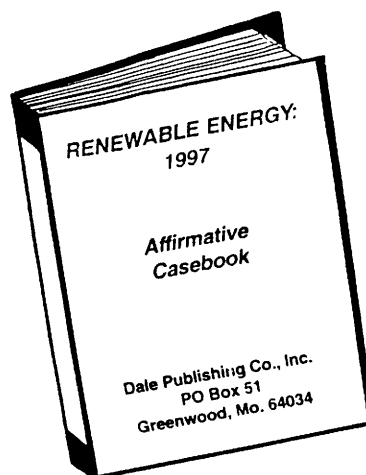
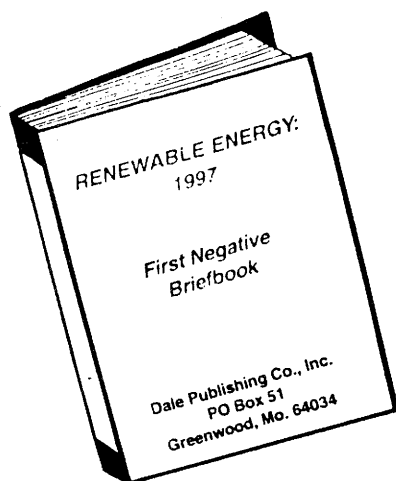
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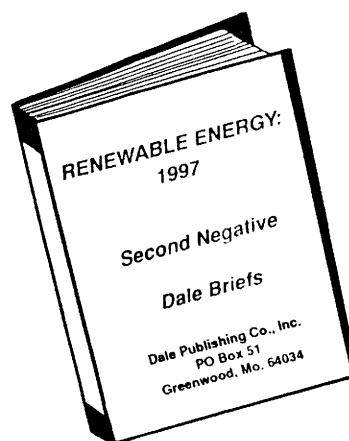
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
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INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS: THE "NUKE WAR" OF LD DEBATE

By Shane C. Mecham

It is common practice for Policy and Lincoln-Douglas debaters to each have a little fun at the other's expense. A typical LD criticism of CX debate is that, "everything leads to nuke war." While there are many far-fetched nuclear war scenarios floating around Policy debate, "those who live in glass houses should not throw stones." Lincoln-Douglas debaters are just as eager to link anything and everything to individual rights as CX debaters are chomping at the bit over nuclear war.

Fault

A contemporary fault in LD debate is the often times unwarranted focus on individual rights. In the final round at the 1997 Tournament of Champions the eventual victor retorted during cross-examination that, "we are all in LD la la land where we value individual rights more than anything." This statement is funny only because it is true. It seems that the default yardstick in Lincoln-Douglas debate has become individual rights. Whoever better upholds this virtue of virtues necessarily wins the round. Moreover, even when an alternate standard is argued (e.g. security, communitarianism, or environmental ethic) the presumption for individual rights stands, even if argued in an inferior manner. Even if not argued the assumption stands in its impregnable ivory tower-removed from discussion and consideration. I am not saying that individual rights are bad, or should not be discussed. Quite the opposite, the reason that this assumption is harmful is because it removes individual rights from serious discussion and criticism. In the same way that Policy debaters do not have to explain to the judge why nuke war is bad, LD debaters are no longer required to explain why individual rights are good. While such explanation may be unnecessary on an objective level, it is imperative on the comparative plane of debate. It may be extraneous for Lincoln-Douglas debaters to explain why individual rights are good in and of themselves, but they should have to explain why such rights are better than some other evaluative term.

Harms

Without such explanation Lincoln-Douglas debate suffers four harms. First of all, discussion is limited. LD is already dominated by western philosophy. Very rarely do we see any eastern philosophy used as justification. One reason for this phenomena may be that eastern philosophy, in most cases, is not concerned with individual rights. Many other legitimate philosophies fall into this non-individual rights category: communitarianism, communism, environmental philosophies, many religious philosophies, and Benthamite Utilitarianism. In fact, Jeremy Bentham referred to natural rights as "nonsense on stilts." A default focus on individual rights precludes any serious consideration of these philosophies in their true forms.

Second, philosophies are misrepresented. Many philosophy majors would argue that trying to discuss deontology in twenty seconds necessarily warps it anyway, but keying on rights only adds to the problem. When backed into a corner, many Lincoln-Douglas debaters find themselves arguing that communitarianism, for example, better protects individual rights than does classical liberalism. While in some cases this may be true; it is a misrepresentation of the original intent of the philosophy.

Third, the justification of individual rights becomes atrophied. If it is assumed that individual rights are the alpha and the omega of LD debate, then no one ever has to prove it. John Stuart Mill taught us that the "clearer perception and livelier impression of truth" is produced by its "collision with error." When removed from discussion by assumption, the justification of individual rights becomes dilapidated.

Fourth, debate becomes ridiculous. LDers are quick to point out how silly Policy debate can become when it is removed from serious consideration of viable policy options, and turns into two teams racing to nuclear holocaust. Lincoln-Douglas debate faces the same dilemma. An unnecessary focus on individual rights could transform

our activity from a consideration of moral obligation and philosophy into a race to rights violations, despotism, and Nazism. While some topics may warrant discussion of such issues, many do not. A discussion of individual rights in some resolutions is like the Sputnik in my living room. It is well designed, but it just does not belong there.

Remedies

There are three courses that may help to alleviate this dilemma. First of all, we should not give rights default status. Doing so limits the scope of debate, and is an injustice to individual rights, which deserve to be discussed rather than assumed. We should be more *tabula rasa* in our consideration of standards. If a debater successfully argues socialism as the standard, then that is the one we should use.

Second, we should not be so quick to link everything to individual rights. Some topics, or sides of topics, do not lend themselves to rights justifications. Let us not shove the square peg through the round hole. We should talk about rights when they are applicable, and not discuss rights when they are not applicable. This mindset will help to preserve a wide base for discussion in the activity.

Third, we should be willing to weigh rights. Etzioni, Rawls, and many other philosophers are willing to compromise the rights of one for the good of the whole. If one debater wins individual rights and the other wins national security - for example - the debate is far from over. We should listen to who better justifies their position relative to their opponent's position. To give presumption to individual rights, and not hear that debate would be a great injustice to LD. If taken to heart, these three remedies could bring us back onto an even keel when considering individual rights.

LD is not necessarily a discussion of individual rights; in the same way that CX is not necessarily a discussion of nuke war.

(Shane C. Mecham debated at Lincoln-Southeast (NE) HS. He competed at Nationals and TOC.)

THE CASE FOR TRAINING L/D DEBATE JUDGES

by Rusty McCrady

We all know the conventional wisdom: Lincoln-Douglas Debate is for the person on the street. It's for plain folk. Any reasonable listener should be able to comprehend the opposing arguments and decide which side won. Therefore, judges in this event need no special qualifications.

While all of the above may in part be true, many an L-D coach has at one time or other dared to mutter the classic complaint: Can't we get better judging at our tournaments? There's no consistency. My debaters are upset. Maybe they are right.

If you read the web pages published by some of the students who compete in this event, you'll see that it isn't just you and some of your competitors who are complaining. The problem of inconsistent, even arbitrary Lincoln-Douglas debate judging seems to be one that exists nationwide.

Two years ago, with the support of our county school system English supervisor (and resultant financial support), we in Montgomery County, Maryland attempted to do something to address this problem by offering our new and veteran judges a three hour Lincoln-Douglas Judge Training session. What follows is a description of the session, and a summary of the results we've seen since we started running these one-shot training courses, both from the coaches in our league and from the judges themselves.

I had discussed the idea of judge training with Joe Gannon, our league's tournament director in 1995, and we wrote up a proposal and submitted it to our county English supervisor. (Her support was crucial; she attended the first session, and has subsequently been enthusiastic about repeating the training as many times as necessary, until virtually all league judges have been trained.) At our first coaches' meeting of the year in September, 1995, I brought up the idea of doing judge training. The idea was passed unanimously, and all coaches agreed to contact any judges they planned to use that year, both experienced and brand new, to invite them to the training.

We ran a three hour session in late September that year, and another in early December to pick up the judges who were unable to attend the first one. Nineteen judges (and novice coaches) attended the first one, and ten the second one. We had similar attendance at the sessions run in the fall of 1996.

At the start we tried to set a collegial tone by an informal introduction of the participants and instructors (Gannon and myself). Then after giving a brief overview of the session, we focused on four main areas: a line by line explanation of our league's ballot; an explanation of value standards and how a debater might apply them to sample topics; a presentation of an actual Lincoln-Douglas debate which the course participants were asked to judge and then discuss their decisions; and finally, a run-down on the do's and don'ts of judging etiquette. During all four segments, Gannon and I fielded a multitude of questions, comments, and concerns--without doubt the most valuable aspect of the session.

Our league's ballot, which will be the subject of a future article, is more detailed than most. It is broken down into the following sections: Affirmative/Negative Constructive Cases; Cross Examination; Affirmative/Negative Rebuttals; and Overall Evaluation. Each section contains between three and nine criteria-related questions to aid the judge in focusing on the important tasks each debater should try to accomplish in each phase of the debate. To be more specific, here is a sampling of some of the questions:

Constructive:

Core value (value standard) presented and clearly tied to the resolution and argument?

Criteria presented for judging value(s)?

Cross examination:

Questions effectively phrased?

Effective response to questions asked?

Rebuttals:

Shows flaws in other side's arguments?

Further develops arguments in original case, not merely repeat-

ing them?

Overall Evaluation:

Was presentation persuasive?

Effective eye contact and other speaking techniques?

By going over the entire ballot question by question and reminding the participants of the timing of each part of the debate and the use of prep time, we elicited a lot of discussion about the effective use of the ballot. At last, all of our judges were literally on the same page!

In the next segment of the training session, we presented two sample L-D topics for analysis, in order to give the participants some experience with what is involved in developing a case in this type of debate. Past NFL topics came in handy here--we knew they were safe to use, and yet we knew they would work well because they were some of our old favorites. Two that we used effectively were *Limiting constitutional freedoms is a just response to terrorism in the U.S.* and *The possession of nuclear weapons is immoral.* With the first, we instructors came up with appropriate value standards and possible contentions for each side. Then for the second we divided the class up into groups of three and had them do the same thing. To get things started, I had listed twenty possible core values on the board prior to the start of class. Through their involvement in this process we hoped that our judge trainees would gain a deeper understanding of the importance of core values and their linkage to both the resolution and case contentions.

After a refreshment break, we passed out flow paper designed for use in notetaking during an L-D debate, and explained its uses. Then we showed an NFL National Championship Round videotape for the trainees to judge. After we introduced it briefly and reminded them what to watch and listen for, we had them view the tape without interruption--all but the last section where the winner is announced. We asked them to signify by show of hands who they thought had won, and then we asked them to give reasons justifying their decision. (McCrady to Page 23)

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| 1994 | <i>R: When in conflict, protection of the innocent is of greater value than prosecution of the guilty.</i> |
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(McCrady from Page 21)

sions. We were gratified to see that in every session we have run, between 85 and 90 percent of the participants have made the "correct" decision—they agreed with judges in the actual taped event.

We concluded the session with a handout on suggestions about etiquette and decorum during debate rounds. It's difficult to know how much to leave to good old common sense in this area, but we spelled out a few principles we thought bore reminding: how to introduce oneself and the two debaters; how to keep time, allot prep time, and give useful but unobtrusive time signals; why the judge should not eat or drink during rounds; how to keep the debate moving and minimize distractions; when guests are or are NOT allowed to observe; and how to finish up the round by thanking the participants but NOT giving any oral critique beyond "You both did a fine job." Joe and I at first wondered whether we even needed to broach the etiquette issue, but then we thought back on some horror stories we'd heard over the years: judges loudly opening potato chip wrappers, fraternizing with debaters, making either helpful or (yes, in some cases) sarcastic comments during the rounds, and so on. So we gave our brief spiel on etiquette, emphasizing that the judge is the ADULT in control of the room.

In the two seasons since this training was implemented, complaints about judges, from both coaches and students, have been cut in half. More significantly, the judges' response to the training has been encouraging both on the written evaluation forms they filled out and from their informal comments in the months afterward. Both new and experienced judges have told us that the training was an idea that was long overdue, and that they are better judges because of it.

So the judge training idea seems to have worked for the Montgomery County Debate League. Joe Gannon and I would be glad to pass on the specifics of our plan to any out there who are interested in trying it out.

(Rusty McCrady is the debate and forensics coach at Walter Johnson High School in Bethesda, Maryland. In the past years he has served as president of the Montgomery County Debate League.)

(Bennett from Page 10)

sions on each side of the topic. Preferable both coach and experienced squad members should participate, assuming the stance of a very dubious opponent. The more intelligent and dubious the questioner the more useful this test of case ideas, rhetoric, and case structure. After each session the debater should compile a list of notes of case wording and idea improvements that are needed. When the questioning sessions are over the cases should be rewritten.

Next comes the crucial test, the tempering fire of being used in practice rounds. Again the strongest, most experienced and antagonistic opponents should be used. Friends are seldom honest critics. Flowsheets and careful critique notes should be made of every round. At least two rounds on each side should occur.

The Payoff: Final Steps

The most important parts of getting ready to win now occur. The debater takes her or his experience and notes from the cross-examination and practice debates and completely rewrites both cases. This editing adds necessary arguments and subtracts those that did not work. "Did not work" includes arguments that added nothing, or were confusing, or were turned into arguments for the opponent. Almost as important are rhetorical changes, finding better phrases and delivery techniques (usually noted on the side of the transcript).

Step fourteen is to practice on both sides again. This allows the debater to get more familiar with case changes. And it allows even more improvements to be noted and made.

As the first tournament gets close it is time to write short evidenced blocks against strong opposition arguments. You should use two sources to decide what blocks to write. First use the notes developed in step eight when you tried to identify probable opposition arguments. Then use the arguments that gave you the most trouble in practice rounds. For the best opposition values, criteria, and examples you identify write four point blocks. The best blocks will often include one short quote, an example, a reference to a case point that might be considered a preempt, and the one best remaining analytical response or attack.

The last step occurs only after competition actually starts. The smart debater will use the ballots gathered after each tournament. Ballots tell what went wrong (sometimes even in rounds that you won). The best debaters will use them, rather than argue with them, to make minor or large case changes before the next tournament. If, for example, a judge misunderstood an argument you were making then the rhetoric and delivery must be changed.

Underview

Victory usually comes from one of three sources: work, luck, or intelligence. Factors two and three are not controllable. But through the fire and flame of research and practice the Lincoln Douglas debater can arm himself to win.

(William H. Bennett is chairperson of the C.D.E. National Lincoln Douglas Institute.)

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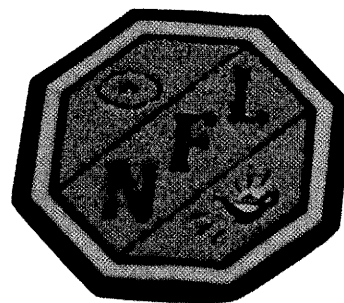
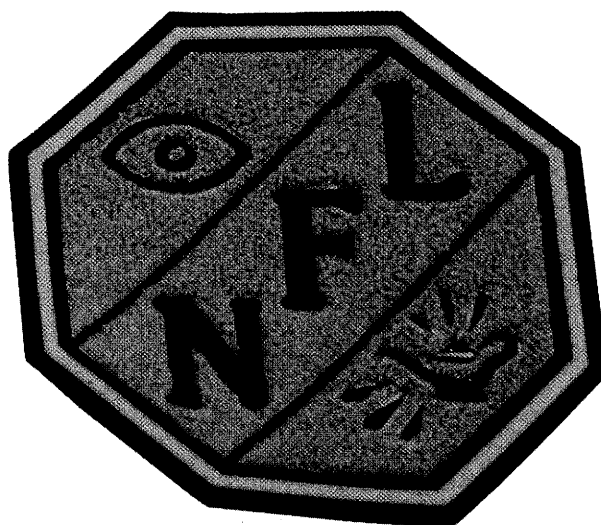
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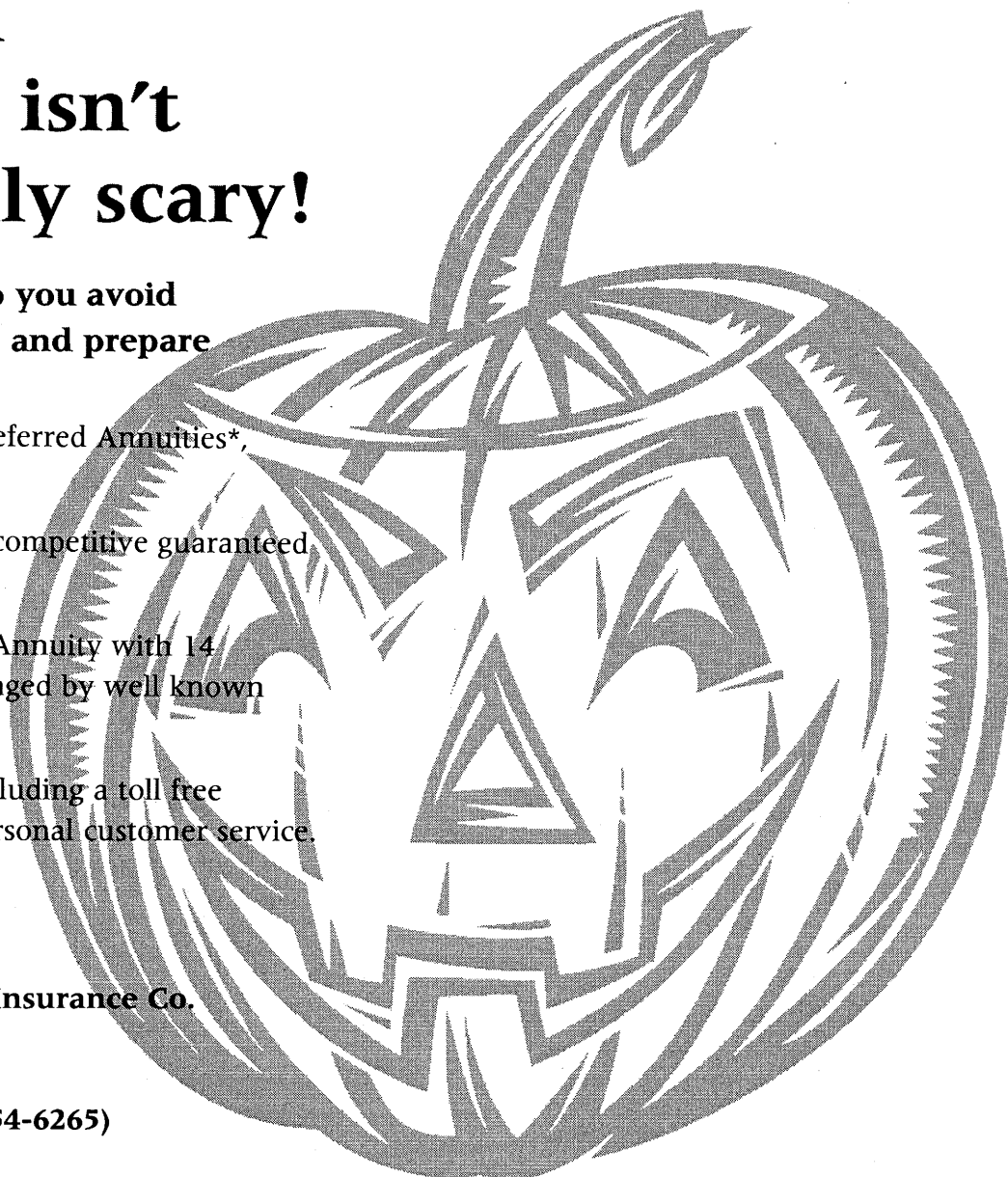
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