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Essentials of Debate

Halbert E. Gulley / Phillips R. Biddle

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PREFACE

The materials in this booklet are based on the sources listed in the bibliography and modified by the experience and practice of the two authors. In addition, the recommendations in the sections on Evidence, Reasoning, The Case for the Affirmative and The Case for the Negative were classroom tested and modified in the Summer Institute in Forensics held at Sacramento State College during the summers of 1970 and 1971. An indebtedness, therefore, is recognized to Michael Dues, Director of Forensics, Sacramento State College, Steve Jenkins, Assistant Professor of Communication Studies, Sacramento State College, and Miss Donna Sparks, Director of Forensics, Grant Union High School.

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THE NATURE OF DEBATE

The crucial distinction between a free society and a dictatorship is the freedom of people to discuss and debate proposals for change. Whereas persons living under an authoritarian regime must, for the most part, remain silent, we as free citizens can study problems, question policies, and argue for change. Thus it is our responsibility to become familiar with the processes and procedures of persuasion and advocacy.

Further, each of us uses persuasion and argument every day in our interpersonal and vocational relations. Striving toward personal goals, earning a living, and contributing to our membership groups require us to give reasons and evidence when attempting to influence other people. Even the simple act of persuading a fellow student to give up an evening of study in favor of a movie requires that you line up arguments, marshal supporting data, and present your whole case effectively.

This book is written for the student who wants both to understand how one person influences others through advocacy, and to improve his own ability to speak up reasonably and effectively.

As we begin our study of debate, we should remember that persuasion and advocacy are not ends in themselves, but means

whereby two or more people with a problem proceed sensibly to debate alternatives in order to achieve the most favorable solution. The decision—what to do—is the end product. Debates, in school or anywhere, make little sense as games or entertainment if they are ends in themselves. Though students may profitably practice debating—searching for facts, analyzing problems, and advocating opposing solutions—the excitement of such contests and the sweet taste of victory over opponents should not obscure the real purposes of school debates, which are to educate students in the use of advocacy in decision-making and to develop their effectiveness as advocates.

Finally, it is important to note that debate and advocacy are specific approaches within a larger process of decision-making through communication. Communication, obviously, takes many forms. It can be oral, printed, or electronic. It can serve various purposes—entertaining, confusing, informing, and so on. Debate and advocacy are types of communication with the general purpose of influencing, and as such they use their own unique methods to serve specific ends.

DEBATE AS A TYPE OF ADVOCACY

We can illustrate the kinds of choices involved in advocating a particular course of action by describing a specific case. Let's suppose that in your school the Pledge of Allegiance was at one time recited as part of the morning's opening exercises, but that two years ago the practice was abandoned because teachers and students opposed it. Now let's suppose that you have been troubled by this omission and have decided, after some deliberations in your own mind, that the daily Pledge of Allegiance should be restored.

Perhaps you would first talk over the wisdom of trying to get the Pledge of Allegiance reestablished with your closest friends and teachers. If you received encouragement from this small group of intimates, you and your supporters might decide to launch a campaign to influence the school to change its present policy.

The present policy forbids the Pledge of Allegiance in morning exercises. The issue would be "Should the Pledge of

Allegiance be part of the morning exercises?" The policy you would want to have adopted is that the Pledge of Allegiance should again be part of morning exercises. The formal proposition you would try to have adopted is *"Resolved,* That the Pledge of Allegiance should be part of opening exercises each morning."

To work for a change in the present policy, you and your group would survey the alternative means of influence open to you. Some you would reject at once, without serious consideration. For example, if you had the authority, you could restore the Pledge of Allegiance by force: A policeman could be stationed in each classroom with orders to shoot anyone refusing to say the Pledge. Or, if the head of your school were willing, he could use coercion: He could threaten to abolish all student clubs and social events unless the Pledge were restored at once. Or the principal could use bribery: He could promise to dismiss school one hour early every Friday afternoon as a reward for saying the Pledge. These alternatives would undoubtedly be rejected at once because they all have undesirable side effects.

Your group could also use deception. You could wage a propaganda campaign and wear down opposition to saying the Pledge. The difference between persuasion and propaganda is that the latter uses exaggeration, distortion, and outright falsehood to make an unsound argument seem plausible. One example of such methods is the repetition of a lie or half-truth so often that at least some hearers begin to accept it.

If you were willing to deceive, for instance, you could start a whispering campaign by saying, "The Communists caused the elimination of the Pledge of Allegiance in morning exercises." A campaign of deception might include a staged incident in which so-called Communist demonstrators would swarm over students gathered around the school flagpole to say the Pledge of Allegiance. The "Communists" would tear the flag from the flagpole. Those staging such a fake incident would see to it that local news photographers happened along to get pictures that would appear in the newspapers and perhaps on television news. Then the deceivers would start an intensive telephone campaign to ask that the parents of students call the school board members, advocating reinstatement of the Pledge "to teach those Communists about Americans."

The main objection to such deception is that the end does not justify these means. In fact, in the example we are considering, the means in a sense constitute a denial of the end; for the Pledge of Allegiance mentions "liberty and justice for all," and this includes the right to be dealt with openly and fairly by others. Even on the most practical level, deception is almost always exposed and in the long run fails to persuade.

Returning to more desirable methods of persuasion: Your group could wage an advertising campaign as a preliminary to advocacy in public meetings. For example, you could put up posters in the school with slogans such as: *Pledge your support to the Pledge; Show your faith in freedom: speak up for saying the Pledge;* and *Make the scene: say the Pledge.* It is likely that no change in policy would come about, at least not soon, as a result of such advertising, although sentiment for restoring the Pledge might be increased and opposition softened.

To increase your chances for success, you would probably want to call for a meeting of the entire student body and faculty, with school board members in attendance. Here there would be speeches, films, or other messages advocating restoration of the Pledge of Allegiance. If those present were divided fairly evenly between supporters and opponents of restoration, however, it would be unfair to have only speeches favoring restoration. To give every view a fair and open hearing, the program for the meeting should include both proponents and opponents.

It is in such a situation as this that your group could use debate effectively. Debate is a form of advocacy where two sides have equal time to show reasons for and against a change, together with the advantages and disadvantages of each policy. When planning a debate, arrange to have an equal number of debaters speaking on each side of the issue. All speakers should have the same amount of time for their pleas. Sides should alternate, with one speech for and the next against change in the present policy. There should be ample opportunity for questioning of each side. Time for defense and rebuttal should also be provided. As a result of this procedure the opposing groups should be able to decide more intelligently whether or not to change the present policy.

It is clear that debate is a form of advocacy designed to influence, since each side attempts to persuade the listeners to

agree with its position. As a step toward decision-making in such a situation as this, debate has at least four virtues:

1. Debate forces groups to explore various courses of action that might otherwise be overlooked or forgotten. Because of its format of equal time, its procedure of alternating points of view, and the calm, respectful way it calls for hearing out the opposition, debate provides the best possible opportunity for each side to make its case.
2. Debate exposes weaknesses in a course of action by holding it up to the scrutiny of attack, defense, and rebuttal. Even strong partisans of a particular viewpoint will discover weaknesses in their position when forced to defend it or when planning an attack on the other side.
3. Debate gives the minority (in a debate, the losing side) the maximum opportunity to present its case under the favorable conditions of equal time, respect, etc. Members of a minority can more readily acquiesce to the majority policy when they know that they have had a full, fair, and reasoned hearing. Conversely, if minority members feel they have not had a fair hearing, they will be less likely to accept the majority policy, and more apt to continue active opposition—to demonstrate against it, and so on.
4. Debate is superior to force, coercion, bribery, and deception—a virtue that has already been stressed. Thus debate is much more likely to lead to a workable and lasting policy.

Of course debate has its limitations. It must be conducted in an atmosphere of sincere respect on each side for the views of the opposition. If such an atmosphere does not exist, the virtues suggested above will not emerge. Moreover, if arguments are not reasoned and fairly presented, the debate may infuriate the losing side and cause it to fight even more bitterly in the future against the majority view. Under conditions of fairness and respect, however, debate of the kind described here can be a positive step toward reasonable decision-making.

EXERCISES

1. Give examples of the use of advocacy in your everyday transactions with other people during the past week.

2. To what extent do you agree that debates make "little sense as games or entertainments which are ends in themselves"?
3. How would you define *persuasion? argumentation? advocacy? debate?*
4. Review the discussion of nonrational means of influencing others. Extend it by listing and describing other means of nonrational influence.
5. List four benefits of debate.
6. List some disadvantages of debate.

SPECIAL PROJECT

Conduct a persuasive campaign to bring about some change in policy within your school. Divide the campaign into three stages to illustrate the three forms of ethical persuasion: First, conduct an advertising campaign, utilizing your knowledge of audience attitudes and interests. Secondly, formulate an argumentative brief such as a lawyer might present to the judge in an appeals case. Finally, develop an advocate's campaign, using argument plus evidence plus well-presented messages adapted to audience interests and attitudes. After you have demonstrated these three forms of persuasion, ask the class to assess the characteristics and the effectiveness of each.

FORMS OF DEBATE

We have said that debate is a form of advocacy designed to influence. It is used when disagreement develops over a particular proposal for change. The advocates of change and their opponents try to influence those who have the power to decide or to help decide. To be more explicit, *debate is reasoned advocacy, for or against a proposal for change, during the course of which each speaker attempts to persuade the audience that his suggestions should be accepted.* Further, debate involves procedures that have already been agreed upon. As you study debate and prepare to actively participate in it, you should be aware of a number of ground rules and terms that will be helpful to you.

In debate, the team of speakers who advocate a change in the established system is called the AFFIRMATIVE; the team opposing the change, the NEGATIVE. Each team works out its position or line of argument and presents its CASE for changing

or for retaining the present system. Each speaker has the privilege of giving an opening speech, usually called a CONSTRUCTIVE SPEECH. In most kinds of debate a speaker also defends his position from attack and rebuilds his arguments in a REBUTTAL SPEECH. The various procedures for debate can be recognized most quickly by describing particular types.

TRADITIONAL DEBATE

Traditional debate is the type most familiar to school debaters. The two sides, affirmative and negative, are given equal time and speak in a predetermined order, with the affirmative having the opening constructive speech and the closing rebuttal speech. Each debater speaks twice, first as a constructive speaker and then as a rebuttal speaker. There can be any number of speakers on each side, and the speeches can be of any length, but the common form of traditional debate calls for two members on the affirmative team and two on the negative, with constructive speeches each ten minutes long and rebuttal speeches five. The order of speaking is as follows:

CONSTRUCTIVE SPEECHES
- first affirmative speaker
- first negative speaker
- second affirmative speaker
- second negative speaker

REBUTTAL SPEECHES
- first negative speaker
- first affirmative speaker
- second negative speaker
- second affirmative speaker

The two members of each team work together to present a unified case supporting their side of the proposition. The case is presented in the constructive speeches. Rebuttal speeches allow debaters the opportunity to attack the opposition's case and to defend their own.

CROSS-EXAMINATION DEBATE

A form of debate which borrows heavily from the courtroom is cross-examination debating. Developed at the University of Oregon, it is conducted in the following manner:

CONSTRUCTIVE SPEECHES

constructive speech by first affirmative speaker
cross-examination by first negative speaker

constructive speech by first negative speaker
cross-examination by second affirmative speaker

constructive speech by second affirmative speaker
cross-examination by second negative speaker

constructive speech by second negative speaker
cross-examination by first affirmative speaker

REBUTTAL SPEECHES

summation and rebuttal by a negative speaker

summation and rebuttal by an affirmative speaker

Cross-examination debating lends itself to many variations. For example, three speakers rather than two may be used on a team. The speeches may be of any convenient length. One speaker may open and close the case for his side, while another may conduct all the cross-examination.

Obviously, participation in a cross-examination debate requires thorough preparation and careful study of the questioning procedure. One of its special values is that it forces the debater to know his evidence, analysis, and arguments. It keeps him from relying completely on a speech prepared in advance. It requires the examiner to ask a series of short, pointed questions that expose the weaknesses in the opponent's case and arguments. Another possible advantage of this form over the traditional form of debate is that it allows the debaters to engage in attack and defense of their ideas early in the exchange of speeches—a procedure which, if well done, may be more stimulating to the listening audience than that of traditional debate.

PROBLEM-SOLVING DEBATE

Problem-solving debate, first used at the University of Washington, is a combination of discussion and debate. Although there are two teams of three speakers, the teams are not designated as affirmative and negative, and the problem is stated as a question rather than a proposition. Whereas in traditional debate the proposition might be, "*Resolved,* That gambling should be legalized"—with the affirmative team advocating a change in

the present gambling policy, and the negative arguing for its maintenance—in problem-solving debate both teams ask the same question: "Should gambling be legalized?" Hence the competition lies in determining which team does the better job of analyzing and answering the question. A problem-solving debate proceeds in this manner:

ANALYSIS

The first speaker for Team A presents his team's analysis of the problem.

The first speaker for Team B presents his team's analysis.

SOLUTION

The second speaker for Team A presents his team's proposal for solving the problem.

The second speaker for Team B presents his team's proposal.

EVALUATION

The third speaker for Team A evaluates the analysis and solution of any or all of the preceding four speakers. He may praise the work of Team B and he may even criticize his colleagues if he has reacted in this way.

The third speaker for Team B evaluates what has been said by previous speakers.

If there is to be a decision following the debate, the judgment consists of three appraisals: which of the first speakers presented the better analysis, which of the second speakers more adequately supported his solution, and which of the third speakers gave the better evaluation.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE

Parliamentary debate is the kind of debate that goes on in a legislature, such as Congress or the British House of Commons. A chairman presides to recognize speakers, maintain order, and conduct business such as entertaining motions, controlling debate, and conducting votes on motions. Ideally, opposing sides should sit facing each other, with chairs placed at right angles to the front of the room. The debate is usually conducted in the following manner.

The meeting is called to order by the chairman. The resolution to be debated is introduced and seconded by two members favoring the motion. At this point it is customary for

two or three principal speakers to give opening speeches for and against the resolution or main motion. The chairman recognizes the mover of the resolution first. A principal speaker against the motion speaks next. He is followed by another principal speaker supporting the motion, and so on. After the appointed speakers have been heard, the chairman asks if there is further discussion. General debate then continues, under rules adopted by the house, until there is sentiment to end debate and vote on the resolution. The question—in this case the motion—is then decided by members voting for or against the resolution.

Procedure for this type of debate can best be illustrated by including a specimen set of rules that might be adopted by an assembly wishing to hold regular parliamentary debates:

> All members of the audience are encouraged to speak from the floor, and to express convictions on the resolution before the assembly, under the following special rules:
>
> 1. The audience will seat itself according to sentiment on the resolution. Those who are for the motion as it is stated should sit on the chairman's right (as he faces the audience). The opposition should sit on the chairman's left.
>
> 2. There will be two principal speakers for, and two against the resolution. The first speaker for the motion will read it, move for its adoption by the assembly, and be recognized as the first speaker for the resolution. Maximum time for principal speakers is seven minutes; at the end of six minutes the chairman will rap his gavel to warn the speaker that he has one minute remaining. When the seven minutes have passed, the chairman will ask the speaker to conclude his remarks.
>
> 3. Principal speakers will not be subject to interruption.
>
> 4. At the conclusion of the principal speeches, general debate will be in order. The chairman will ask, "Is there further discussion?" The chairman will recognize speakers from the floor under the following rules:
>
> a. The method of gaining the floor is to rise and address the chairman: "Mr. Chairman."
>
> b. The chairman will recognize speakers for three minutes each.
>
> c. The chairman will attempt to recognize alternately speakers for and speakers against the resolution.
>
> d. Principal speakers may speak in the general debate. However, the chairman will recognize a speaker who has not spoken previously before recognizing a member who has spoken.
>
> e. Any speaker may interrupt a speaker from the floor by rising, and without waiting to be recognized, addressing the chair: "Mr. Chairman, will the speaker yield for a question (or comment or

observation)?" The chairman will ask the speaker if he is willing to be interrupted, or the speaker may at once decline or accept. If the speaker yields, the interruption will not be included in his speaking time.

5. All speakers will be confined to speaking on the resolution before the assembly.

6. Debate may be ended by general consent (if no one wishes to speak further), or by a motion to end debate. The proper form of this motion is: "Mr. Chairman, I move to end debate." To carry, this motion requires a two-thirds vote.

7. The motion to adjourn may not be offered until there has been a vote on the resolution.

8. The resolution before the house may be amended. The motion to amend requires a majority vote. The motion to amend must be related to the resolution, although it may be hostile to the intent.

9. Any question not covered by these special rules will be decided in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order, Revised.*

VALUES OF DEBATE

Any of the foregoing types of debate can be adapted for use in the classroom. Your group may find it desirable to begin with traditional or problem-solving debate and then progress to cross-examination and parliamentary debate; or you may wish to invent your own variations. Whatever type you and your classmates choose, you will find that debate is a demanding enterprise. It will require you to search for facts, to analyze carefully, to think straight, and to work hard on developing your case, improving your delivery, and so on. Hence you may find it prudent to ask what personal benefits you can expect for your efforts. At least four are readily seen:

1. Debate will give you practice and training in careful research methods. It will help you to develop a respect for primary sources of information, and teach you methods of verification and documentation of events and circumstances. A good debater learns to be ever-curious, to inquire about the facts, and to feel dissatisfied until he understands a problem fully.

2. Debate will help your capacity to think lucidly and rationally. The intensive examination of clashing points of view required of debaters will sharpen your ability to clarify issues. Debate demands rigorous thinking, logical analysis, and keenness in spotting fallacious reasoning in yourself and in others.

3. Debate can increase your ability to communicate ideas clearly, precisely, and impressively. The debater must present clear arguments and evidence or he cannot hope to influence others. The ability to organize a case, to state arguments concisely, and to present ideas skillfully and persuasively results from debating practice.

4. Debate will help make you a better listener, one who can grasp quickly what others are saying. In the process, you will no doubt find you are becoming more tolerant of the views of others. Debating should convince you that there are at least two sides to every argument. When you are a listener during debate class, you will avoid becoming argumentative and belligerent, and strive to be thoughtful and cautious, always asking how an argument looks to the other side.

There are other valuable outcomes for you, the student of debating, but these four suggest the primary gains. Probably no other single course in school has the potential for helping you to grow in so many desirable dimensions. As you turn to the details of participation in the chapters that follow, you should keep these desired outcomes in mind.

EXERCISES

1. Define the following terms in your own words:
   - **a.** affirmative
   - **b.** negative
   - **c.** case
   - **d.** constructive speech
   - **e.** rebuttal speech
   - **f.** traditional debate
   - **g.** cross-examination debate
   - **h.** problem-solving debate
   - **i.** parliamentary debate

2. Compare and contrast the types of debate described in this unit by answering the following questions: For what purposes and in what situations are these forms most useful? Which forms are most adaptable to the classroom?

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY

Hold a debate of each of the types discussed in this chapter. Draw up a set of rules for the use of each.

II

PROPOSITIONS AND EVIDENCE

This chapter is concerned with preparing for a profitable debate. There are two preparatory steps: You must decide upon a debatable proposition and you must find evidence to support your proposition.

DEBATABLE PROPOSITIONS

Before describing what makes a proposition debatable, we will examine the possible types of debatable propositions. Many kinds of propositions can be considered for debate, but only certain kinds are actually suitable and profitable.

TYPES OF PROPOSITIONS

Propositions may be classified into four major categories: *fact, value, causation,* and *policy.* Propositions of policy are the most frequent kind debated in interscholastic and intercollegiate tournaments; the other kinds are designed for special situations or are actually subordinate contentions supporting propositions of policy.

Propositions of Fact—The use of the term *fact* to designate a type of proposition may be puzzling to you, for a fact is a fact and thus is not debatable. For our purpose, however, we are using the word *fact* to mean a *probability*—which is, therefore, debatable. We can define a probable fact as one concerned with the existence or nonexistence of some phenomenon in the past, present, or future. It is not concerned with the manner in which the phenomenon exists or how we behave regarding it. The following examples will help you to see how the word *fact* is used to mean a probability dependent on evidence and reasoning presented by the speaker:

PAST FACT: A large number of high school graduates were unable to attend college.

PRESENT FACT: Congress does not want a balanced budget.

FUTURE FACT: American armed forces will be withdrawn from Vietnam.

Propositions of Value—A proposition of value goes beyond a proposition of fact. While the latter asserts the existence of a phenomenon, the proposition of value asserts the *manner* in which the phenomenon exists; for example, X is good or X is detrimental or beneficial. It is, in brief, an assertion or judgement of value about some person or institution or program. Like the proposition of fact, it can be about the past, present, or future:

PAST VALUE: John F. Kennedy was an outstanding President.

PRESENT VALUE: United States foreign policy is detrimental to American prestige.

FUTURE VALUE: The budget deficit will damage domestic programs.

Propositions of Causation—A proposition of causation is closely related to a proposition of fact. The proposition makes an inference about cause and effect relationships. Such relationships are usually complex and not directly verifiable. Propositions of causation are concerned with past, present, and future reasons why some phenomenon has occurred.

PAST CAUSATION: High tuition costs were the main causes of failure to attend college.

PRESENT CAUSATION: Excessive spending is the reason why the budget is not balanced.

FUTURE CAUSATION: Public pressure will bring about the withdrawal of American forces from Vietnam.

Propositions of Policy—A proposition of policy is the most usual type of proposition debated. It involves all three of the preceding

kinds of propositions, and is best understood as a judgment which affirms or denies that a particular course of action should be taken. Here are some examples of propositions of policy:

> The United States should withhold economic aid from dictatorships.
> The United Nations peace-keeping forces should be expanded.
> The future development of nuclear weapons should be prohibited by international agreement.

By examining these statements we can see that our acceptance or rejection of a proposition of policy depends upon our decisions regarding facts, values, and causes. Suppose that you are debating the proposition "*Resolved,* That the Federal government should require automobile manufacturers to equip automobiles with anti-pollution devices." The debater must advance the factual proposition that the air is polluted with toxicants. He must also advance the value proposition that toxicants in the air are harmful to the individual and his environment. Implicit also is the causal proposition that automobiles without effective anti-pollution devices cause pollution.

This example shows how each of the three propositions functions as a subordinate contention in support of the policy proposal. Under certain special conditions, when a debating group does not have power or authority to recommend courses of action, then fact, value, and causation become the major proposition under consideration.

EXERCISES

1. Examine the following propositions and determine whether each is a proposition of fact, value, causation, or policy:
   a. The United States is in a recession.
   b. Military spending is detrimental to the United States economy.
   d. The Federal government should adopt a program to rebuild our cities.
   e. The United States should nationalize public utilities.
2. From the above list, select one proposition of value and write out the factual proposition which must precede it.
3. Find news articles or editorials illustrating the four types of propositions.

REQUIREMENTS FOR A DEBATE PROPOSITION

A debate proposition should meet certain standards. As a debater, you should know these requirements because they will help you to word a proposition for debate, and to recognize weaknesses in the wording of propositions already under consideration:

1. A proposition should deal with a significant contemporary issue. When preparing for a school debate you would be unwise to choose a topic that already has universal acceptance. For example, the proposition, "*Resolved,* That the United States should levy a graduated income tax," was a significant issue at the turn of the century, but today it would not stir much interest. A better proposition on a tax issue would involve advocating that loopholes in the present tax law be closed.

2. A proposition should contain only one central idea; two main ideas can result in needless confusion. For example, the following proposition contains two ideas: "*Resolved,* That the President be elected by direct vote of the people and that his term of office be limited to four years." It would be better to debate the first, arrive at a decision, and then go to the next.

3. A proposition should be free from emotionally loaded terms. The proposition that contains words such as *cruel, sadistic, immoral,* etc. gives special advantage to the side advocating its rejection. Even a relatively neutral word such as *socialism* can be troublesome. For example, the proposition, "*Resolved,* That the United States adopt a form of socialized medicine," requires the affirmative to argue that a negatively loaded term—socialized medicine—has practical merit. It would be better to reword the proposition. "*Resolved,* That the United States should provide a program of medical care for people of all ages," presents the same idea without placing the affirmative speakers at a disadvantage.

4. A proposition should affirm a major change from existing practice, thus placing the burden of proof on the affirmative. One of the fundamental concepts in debating is the BURDEN OF PROOF. While this term may seem awesome at first, some examples should make it clear and useful. The present policy or *status quo* is presumed to be right, that is, the appropriate policy to follow until someone advances a counter proposition with good and

sufficient reasons supporting it. One does not have to prove one's innocence. The person advocating guilt has the burden of proof. So, too, a supporter of present policy does not have to argue for its worth. The person advocating a change from the present policy has the burden of proof. Hence, the proposition, "*Resolved,* That the United States should station troops in Europe," does not advocate a change from the present policy. Rewording the proposition would place the burden of proof properly: "*Resolved,* That the United States should withdraw its troops from Europe." Since the current United States policy involves us in Europe, the debater advocating a change is now required to present evidence and reasons against the present position.

EXERCISES

1. Apply the requirements for a debate proposition to a proposition you have chosen from news articles and editorials.
2. Apply the requirements for preparing a debate proposition to the following propositions:
   a. *Resolved,* That the pernicious custom of voting a straight ticket should be abandoned.
   b. *Resolved,* That the United States should nationalize and prohibit strikes in the coal mines.
   c. *Resolved,* That the present method of electing the President of the United States should be retained.
   d. *Resolved,* That a liberal education which broadens students and makes them aware of the cultural influences of their heritage is superior to training which prepares the student for his life work.

Reword those propositions which you consider unsatisfactory.

EVIDENCE

As a member of a team of advocates for or against a particular proposition, you should have at your disposal current, adequate, and dependable evidence supporting your position. Collecting and evaluating evidence, however, cannot begin until you know what you are looking for.

TYPES OF EVIDENCE

Schemes for classifying evidence are as numerous as textbooks on debate and argumentation. Here we offer a system to help you estimate the force or power of your evidence before you use it.

Evidence with probative force is evidence that can prove the truth of your assertions. Such evidence is usually expert testimony and numerical data whose sources pass the tests of dependability. The testimony of a recognized expert in a particular field serves as extermely powerful evidence. Once the expert has passed inspection as a dependable source, his observations will help greatly to prove the truth of your assertions. Numerical data or statistical evidence can be directly verified, and is irrefutable if the sources can meet the tests of dependability discussed later in this chapter.

Nonprobative Evidence cannot prove the truth of your assertions. However, such evidence should not be overlooked or omitted by the debater, for it can often make a point more understandable. The most common type of nonprobative supporting material is *restatement,* that is, expressing an idea over again using other words. By so doing the speaker may utilize certain words or phrases which will make his assertion clearer or more intelligible than it would have been with statistical evidence alone. You have probably heard a debate in which the speaker presented statistic after statistic without interruption, until you felt completely overwhelmed. Even in tournament debating, the speaker should intersperse his probative evidence with certain nonprobative remarks, in order to make the debate more interesting, lively, and compelling.

Comparisons and *contrasts* also serve as forms of support for statements. Comparisons point out similarities between the idea expressed in your assertion and some idea more familiar to your audience. Short forms of comparison are called *similes* or *metaphors.* The longer version is known as an *analogy.*

Before leaving the subject of comparison, you will want to consider both figurative and literal comparisons. The literal comparison is between two things from the same class—for

example, man with man, machines with machines. The figurative comparison, on the other hand, is between two objects which fall into unlike classes—for example, life compared with the game of chess.

The contrast is just the opposite of the comparison. It amplifies the idea in an assertion by placing it against another idea to demonstrate basic lack of similarity. Democracy, for example is unlike autocracy, because it derives its power from the people. Autocracy derives its power from itself or something other than the persons over whom it has control.

We might also include in the category of nonprobative evidence such items as hypothetical examples, repetition, and definition of terms. The point is clear: a debater should seek information other than hard probative evidence to make his points intelligible. Remember, however, that only probative evidence can prove your points, and proven points win debates.

EXERCISES

1. Choose any one of the debate propositions you found in your examination of news articles or editorials. Assume that you are debating either the affirmative or negative of the proposition and prepare a list of sources, library and nonlibrary, which would assist you in your research.
2. Match each of the definitions in the right-hand column with the corresponding term in the left-hand column:

a. Expert testimony	**a.** is nonprobative evidence.
b. Nonprobative evidence	**b.** cannot prove the truth of the assertion.
c. Restatement	**c.** is the most common type of nonprobative evidence.
d. The comparison	**d.** is probative evidence.

LOCATING EVIDENCE

Basic library sources are familiar to you. It is important that all such sources be searched for information relevant to a debate topic. In addition, there are less obvious places to examine for evidence.

Personal experiences—Students often assume they have had no personal experience that could be of use in debate. On some topics, this assumption is valid. On others, however, debaters may have been personally involved in relevant situations. In considering pollution, for example, a student may know about this matter firsthand, and his debate speech will be much more lively and convincing if his personal knowledge is used.

Observation—Another common misconception is that information must come almost wholly from printed materials. On a topic such as financial aid to education, for example, a debater can learn much from observing firsthand what is going on in various kinds of schools.

There are three requirements for observing and reporting firsthand observations: The first is seeing accurately. The observer must be in a favorable place long enough to learn what is there. The second is reporting accurately. This requisite involves exact use of words. The third is reporting fairly. The observer must describe what he saw without regard to whether he liked what he saw. After he has observed competently and reported fairly, he is free to draw conclusions introducing his own opinions as to what should be done.

Interview—A valuable source of evidence for many debatable topics is the interview. A superintendent of schools may give you valuable information about Federal aid to education. He can also give you his opinion about the need for such aid. Before interviewing an expert, you must arrange for the interview at his convenience and plan carefully what you want to ask. Do not waste time with trivialities or with questions already answered in printed sources.

Library research—The richest source of facts for debate is that almost unlimited storehouse of ideas, the library. The challenge here is to know what kinds of materials are available and how to locate them efficiently. Find out what kinds of general reference works, books, current magazines, newspapers, and government publications will be of help to you, and how they are arranged in your own library. Moreover, remember that you can always seek the help of a trained librarian in the event you cannot find what you are looking for.

DETERMINING THE VALIDITY OF THE EVIDENCE

As a debater, you will want to gather a large amount of information on the debate subject—particularly factual evidence supporting the position you intend to argue. Before you can use any of this evidence however, you must make every effort to determine its validity. Begin with an open mind, read widely, and listen carefully. Above all, never permit yourself to accept any conclusion suggested by the evidence until you have applied the following tests:

1. Is the evidence internally consistent? To make this test, examine the testimony of your source for internal contradictions; if you find any, discard the evidence. Such contradiction is frequently found between the headline of a news story and the story itself. One example appeared in a California newspaper in February, 1970: The headline read, "$130 Million Welfare Cost Cut Is Planned by Reagan." Although California's governor is not a noted supporter of welfare programs, a careful reading of the accompanying story showed that he was only referring to several bills then in the state legislature which would have cut the state welfare costs by $130 million; nowhere in the article was there any evidence that Governor Reagan endorsed such cuts, as implied by the headline.

Another example of internal inconsistency occurred in June, 1970, in a widely circulated Los Angeles newspaper. The headline read, "A Bumper Crop of Teachers," suggesting that California's colleges and universities had produced too many teachers for the students who were in the schools—analogous to a farmer who produces too much corn for the demands of the market. A reading of the article revealed a curious contradiction: California's student population had increased predictably, but local school districts were financially unable to hire the needed teachers. In fact, a statistical table showed a steady increase in the student/teacher ratio. Hence, the "bumper crop of teachers" mentioned in the article was misleading—implying a surplus of teachers when the real problem was a shortage of funds.

The point here is simple: Were a debater to assume that these headlines were consistent with the stories and not read the articles with this test in mind, he would arrive at an unreliable conclusion. Such a disclosure of inconsistency can be embarrassing when pointed out by an opponent during a debate.

2. Is the evidence externally consistent? To answer this question, you must determine whether the evidence is consistent with other known evidence. In other words, your evidence should be corroborated by evidence from other reliable sources. If you cannot find such external corroboration, you should be prepared to prove that the sources for your evidence are superior and more reliable than the sources for the contradictory evidence. This test is not designed to persuade the debater not to use evidence which cannot be corroborated. We are only suggesting that externally inconsistent or contradictory evidence should be viewed with suspicion.

3. Can the evidence be authenticated? The debater has an obligation to know the source of his evidence; that is, he should be prepared to authenticate it. It may very well be just as effective to say "It has been reported that. . ." as to say "Mr. X, the well-known authority, reported that. . ." but in doing so you should be confident that your report comes from a dependable source.

4. Is the evidence timely? To decide, you must know whether the evidence is contemporaneous with the assertion you want to support. If the proposition is one of present fact, such as the misuse of firearms today, evidence gathered a decade ago is not acceptable; if the proposition affirms a past fact about misuse of firearms, today's evidence is not applicable.

5. Has an adequate amount of evidence been presented? The answer to this question depends somewhat on the scope of the inference. If you want to make an inference about the United States, for example, an analysis based on only six selected states would be inadequate. The skillful debater will survey the major geographical regions of the country and cite his findings from each area based on large representative samples.

The problem of adequacy will be considered again in a later section. It is not a simple problem. In every case, you should seek statistical information based on a dependable source with a reputation for representative data-collection procedures.

DETERMINING THE OBJECTIVITY OF THE SOURCE

In this section we want you to place an emphasis on the source of the evidence, rather than the evidence itself. Separating the evidence from the source is not an easy task, but doing so will

bring you one step closer to resolving the contradictions that may exist between two sources of evidence. Upon finding contradictions in reports of two observers of the same event, too many debaters are tempted to call one a liar. Instead, we suggest that you impeach one source by pointing out a bias or conflict of interest which accounts for the contradictions. Willful distortions do occur, but an unreliable source can be disqualified best by applying the following tests of objectivity:

1. Does the source have a personal interest in the event reported? This is not always easy to determine, but an effort must be made to discover why your source said what he did. If you show that he can obtain some reward—financial or otherwise—and his livelihood, career, or future is dependent upon his observations, then his testimony is likely to be viewed with suspicion.
2. Are the source's own views compatible with those he reported? If they are, his testimony is open to suspicion. This test is not perfectly discrete from the first one, but it is designed to direct you towards an ideological bias rather than a financial one. For example, a highly prejudiced judge may "see" crimes committed by a Black as more reprehensible than the same crimes committed by a White; and Americans who believe that the American conduct of the war in Vietnam is more humane than that of the French may be apt to report instances of humane conduct consistent with their beliefs.

We are not suggesting that you must find an observer who is completely free from all interest or involvement. However, if the source has a known personal interest or heavy investment in what he is reporting, then he should not be relied upon. At the very least, an interested source should be used only when his report can be corroborated with that of another, disinterested, source.

DETERMINING THE COMPETENCE OF THE SOURCE

Even if your source has a reputation for honesty and has no reason for potential distortion, you still cannot conclude that he is completely dependable until you are certain that he knows what he is talking about. In other words he must have the appropriate intellectual resources:

1. Was the source in a position to know or observe what he is reporting? This test applies directly to the testimony of persons who claim to be experts and who are providing testimony for your case. But it also applies indirectly to sources which provide numerical information. One important thing to note in this context is the physical or temporal distance which separates the observer from the thing observed. If he claims to be an eyewitness, he has to have been on the scene at the time the incident occurred. If he could not have been there then he is probably relying on other sources who must meet the same tests of dependability. If you can say with confidence that your source knows, "because he was there," then you may move on to the next test. If you cannot, your source is a secondary one and may not realize that his eyewitnesses were undependable. You, as an advocate, bear the burden of verifying all sources.
2. Does the source have acceptable credentials? Here we are referring to the source's formal training in the field of knowledge relevant to the dispute. The requirement of relevancy will give you some difficulty, but just be very careful of a person who has earned a reputation for being an expert in one field of knowledge and attempts to shift that prestige to another, unrelated field. It is more than likely that a nuclear scientist is not an expert on American education, despite his own extensive schooling; or that a golfer is not an expert on hair dressing, regardless of his popularity or golf score.

Formal training is not the only way a person becomes competent in his field. Remember to examine the person's informal training or experience with the subject matter. For example, Wayne Morse, former Senator from Oregon, was trained in the law but became an expert on Latin American affairs because of his long service in the Senate as a member of the Foreign Relations Committee dealing with Latin American matters.

EXERCISES

1. In your own words, summarize the tests concerned with the validity of evidence.
2. Examine a major political speech reported in an edition of *Vital Speeches* and apply the tests of validity to the speaker's evidence.

3. In your own words, summarize the tests concerned with the objectivity of sources.
4. Examine the reporting of a major news event by a national newspaper (*New York Times, Christian Science Monitor,* etc.). Apply the tests of objectivity to the sources the newspaper has cited.
5. Match each definition in the right-hand column with the corresponding term in the left-hand column:

a. Validity of the evidence	a. card stacking
b. Competence of the source	b. authenticity
c. Objectivity of the source	c. in a position to know
d. Acceptable credentials	d. a personal interest
e. Internal consistency	e. validity of evidence
f. Unrepresentative sample	f. competence of the source

SUMMARY

In this chapter we have covered two important and primary steps which must be considered when preparing for debate: selecting the proposition and establishing the supporting evidence. Worthwhile debating requires thorough understanding of these steps. To assist you in learning them we have provided self-tests after each section.

Remember that most debates are about factual claims, causal claims, value claims, or policy claims. In addition to these types of propositions, we have suggested that every proposition should deal with a significant issue, be phrased with only one central idea, and be free from emotionally loaded words; further the supporter of an issue must assume the burden of proof.

In the section on evidence we indicated that some evidence has probative force but that nonprobative evidence should be included if it makes the debate more interesting, lively, and compelling.

Finally, we have recommended that you determine the validity of evidence by considering internal and external consistency, timeliness, authenticity and adequacy, and the objectivity and competence of the source.

III

REASONING

During the research period, while collecting evidence for and against the chosen debate proposition, you will need to keep in mind: a) a basic model of reasoning, b) the procedures for constructing arguments to support factual, value, and causal contentions, and c) recommendations for organizing a coherent case. This chapter will focus on these three needs.

A BASIC MODEL OF REASONING

Evidence is essential to successful debating, but it is of little value unless a conclusion that will advance the advocate's case can be drawn from it. Inference—that is, the movement from data to conclusion—is a process that can be thought of as a mental leap, and can be made with a minimum of effort. What we want to do here is show that reasoning from evidence to conclusion occurs naturally, and that the conclusion will be valid if certain precautions are taken.

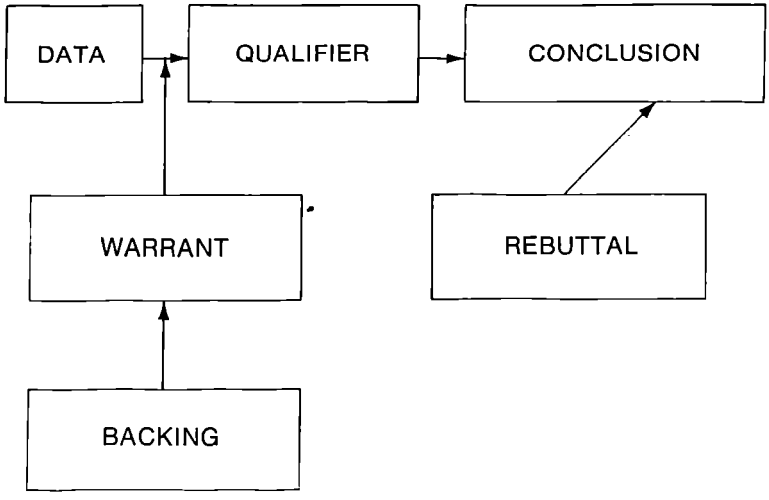
An interesting method for demonstrating the process of reasoning has been proposed by Stephen Toulmin in his book,

The Uses of Argument.[1] We have adopted this model because it will help you to see the structure of the reasoning process. The following paragraphs and diagram explain the components of the model:

COMPONENTS

Conclusion (C)—the proposition the debater hopes to prove
Data (D)—the evidence the debater presents to support the conclusion
Warrant (W)—the statement that justifies the step from data to conclusion
Backing (B)—the authority for the warrant
Qualifier (Q)—the exceptions or specified limitations restricting the scope of the conclusion
Rebuttal (R)—the circumstances under which the conclusion would not be acceptable

RELATIONSHIP AMONG THE COMPONENTS



To illustrate how these elements function in debate, observe the following processes as an advocate attempts to argue that Russia

[1] Stephen Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument* (Cambridge: The Cambridge University Press, 1954).

is more likely than the United States to first place men on other planets:

> According to a recent NASA report, Russia has developed rockets with greater thrust than those of the United States. Since tremendous thrust is needed to push a mammoth rocket to another planet, and since NASA engineers estimate that a rocket large enough to carry two men to the nearest planet and back will require three times the thrust of existing rockets, it seems reasonable that Russia will probably place men on other planets ahead of the United States—unless, of course, the Russians pursue other goals in rocketry.

Conclusion—Russia will probably place men on other planets ahead of the United States

Data—According to a recent NASA report, Russia has developed rockets with greater thrust than those of the United States

Warrant—tremendous thrust is needed to push a mammoth rocket to another planet

Backing—NASA engineers estimate that a rocket large enough to carry two men to the nearest planet and back will require three times the thrust of existing rockets

Qualifier—probably (in the **Conclusion**)

Rebuttal—unless, of course, the Russians pursue other goals

In this argument you will note that the components are not always explicit and in some cases are only partially stated. You will find this to be true with most arguments you meet as a debater. As practice with this model increases, you will be able to supply the missing parts with great ease. When you reconstruct the argument, you will be able to detect what elements should be added to make it better. If you are opposed to the argument, you will be enabled to refute it more intelligently.

EXERCISES

1. Match each definition in the right-hand column with the corresponding term in the left-hand column:

a.	Conclusion	a.	the circumstances under which the conclusion would not be acceptable
b.	Data	b.	the contention or proposition
c.	Warrant	c.	the evidence of justifying statements supporting the conclusions
d.	Backing	d.	the statement which authorizes the step from data to conclusion
e.	Qualifier	e.	the limitations restricting the scope of the conclusions
f.	Rebuttal	f.	the evidence or authority for the warrant

2. Select an editorial from a newspaper or magazine, or find an argument in a published speech, and detect as many of the components of the Toulmin model as you can.

ARGUMENTS SUPPORTING FACTUAL CONTENTIONS

In Chapter Two we noted that propositions of fact are those which deal with probabilities, and are therefore debatable. Furthermore, they deal with the existence or nonexistence of phenomena, and represent conclusions based on a number of specific cases. Let us examine a typical factual contention with its supporting argument, and analyze them according to the Toulmin model. Remember, the advocate is inferring that a general pattern is characteristic of all similar examples, not just those observed as data. He is, in short, making a nonevaluative factual inference. Consider the following hypothetical example:

> There is a general assumption that elected officials, particularly Congressmen, have been involved in conflict-of-interest legislation (C). By conflict of interest, I mean that our elected representatives have enacted legislation which directly benefits their private interests. For example, Congressman Lake, Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, had a special rider for submarines attached to the military appropriations bill. The submarines were not requested by the Navy and they were to be built in Lake's district by industrial concerns which invest heavily in his campaigns (D). A study by the *Christian Science Monitor* revealed that Representatives and Senators have heavy financial investments in companies which do a very large portion of their business with the Federal government (D). These data seem to be typical of a general trend among our elected officials, at least our elected Congressmen (W).

Conclusion—The conclusion is a factual inference about a particular situation. In this example, the conclusion is that our elected officials, particularly Congressmen, have been involved in conflicts of interest. Note that the advocate did not say *all* or *none*. This was done because one counter example will refute an *all* or *none* claim. Further, we debate about probable factual conclusions. If it were true that *all* or *none* had conflicts of interest, the claim would not be debatable.

Qualifier—The qualifier here is implicit in the claim that a high proportion of Congressmen are involved in conflicts of interest. Again, the advocate would have been foolish to assert *all* or *none*.

Warrant—The warrant in this example, as in all arguments of this type, is the justification for the leap from data to conclusion. The data are typical—they represent the class of objects covered by the generalization. In this example the advocate explicitly stated "these data seem typical."

Backing—The backing for the warrant, which explains the method by which the data were collected, was not stated in this example. Nonetheless, the advocate should be prepared to demonstrate that the *Christian Science Monitor* study is based on data collected without bias, and that the example of Congressman Lake is not atypical.

Data—We have reserved the discussion of the data until this point to emphasize their importance when arguing in support of factual contentions. The debater must have data which are typical of the class of material covered by the proposition and an adequate number of examples of such data. Keep in mind that testimony and numerical data are evidence with strong probative value, but that nonprobative evidence can make your point more intelligible.

Rebuttal—The rebuttal, as we noted, prepares the arguer to beware of circumstances which make his conclusion susceptible to attack. It can take the form of an attack on the data, the warrant, or the backing, but it always limits the acceptability of the conclusion. When preparing arguments supporting factual conclusions therefore, ask yourself the following questions:

1. Do your sources of evidence merit belief? Are they objective

and competent? Again, remember not to attack the moral character of a source. He can be impeached, however, by evidence of bias or general lack of experience. (Here we suggest that you look back to Chapter Two and review the tests of the sources of evidence.)

2. Has enough evidence been presented? Obviously, the greater the amount of valid evidence from objective and competent sources, the greater the probability that your conclusion is true. In the example we have been considering, we must determine if the study by the *Christian Science Monitor* was based on enough data.

You may wonder how much data you are required to present before a generalization is justified. Although there is no precise measure by which to gauge the adequacy of your data, common sense dictates that you take into consideration: a) what proportion of all possible cases has been examined and, b) the method by which the data have been collected. If your data represents a very limited sampling of relevant cases, you can be accused of hasty generalization: An analysis of the conduct of Congressmen from five of the fifty States yields much less persuasive data than one based on twenty states. An advocate should also look for a reputable survey—a survey which may not have examined all of the data, but which meets the following and final criterion.

3. Are the instances representative? That is, does the evidence represent all members of the class of material covered by the generalization? This question asks whether the data are biased. In the example we are considering, note that the advocate did say "these examples seem to be typical." He should have provided backing for that warrant. If the instances are not random, the advocate can be accused of stacking the cards—that is, using an unrepresentative sample. These two major fallacies will be dealt with again in Chapter Six (pp. 66–68), in the section "Detecting Errors."

EXERCISES

Build an argument supporting the factual conclusion that fresh water supplies for large Eastern cities in the United States are contaminated:

1. Diagram the argument using the model presented in this chapter.
2. Test the reasoning you used by following the recommendations suggested in this chapter.
3. Ask a classmate to attempt refutation of your argument.
4. Make any repairs to your argument that may be needed after your classmate's attack.
5. Ask another classmate to refute your rebuilt argument.

ARGUMENTS SUPPORTING VALUE CONTENTIONS

Value contentions go one step beyond factual contentions and assert the manner in which some phenomenon exists. Consider air pollution: In a factual contention the debater would argue to a factual conclusion that "air in our major cities is polluted." This conclusion does not assert that polluted air is harmful. Making an assumption about detrimental consequences without actually proving those consequences sometimes constitutes the weakest link in the reasoning process.

When we conclude that polluted air is harmful to our health, we utilize a value system. In the following (fictitious) argument supporting the claim that "polluted air constitutes a serious social problem," a debater could argue:

> I have shown you that air pollution exists—that in our major cities the air people breathe contains contaminants. Beyond that, however, is the fact that this contaminated air constitutes a serious social problem—that contaminated air is harmful to the people who breathe it and to the physical environment (C). Dr. M. N. Fuller, writing in the *Journal of the American Medical Association,* for August, 1969, states that "respiratory ailments are the direct result of breathing contaminated air (D)." A report published by the Department of the Interior, May, 1969, shows numerous statistical tables relating lung, throat and nose ailments directly to breathing contaminated air (D). In addition to its harmful effects on humans, contaminated air is also harmful to the physical environment (C). Referring to that Interior Department report again, we find that, when exposed to contaminated air, buildings deteriorate more rapidly, rubber insulation decays, and nylon rollers become nonfunctional; in short, polluted air eats away at man's physical environment at an annual cost of well over 13 billion dollars (D). This constitutes a serious problem.

Conclusion—You will note that this argument has two minor contentions: Contaminated air is harmful to people who breathe

it; and contaminated air is harmful to the physical environment. The major conclusion, however, is that polluted air constitutes a serious social problem. This is a value judgement, and to establish a value judgment is the purpose of this form of inference.

Data—The data for a value conclusion, as in the example above, are generalizations about the components or characteristics of the situation described. The data answer the question: Why does polluted air constitute a serious problem? Answer, because it harms both the people who breathe it and the physical environment exposed to it.

Warrant—The warrant, which is implicit in this illustration, utilizes an established value system which justifies the statement that air pollution is harmful. The value system is, quite simply, that if polluted air is found to harm people and their environment then it is bad.

Backing—The backing, you will recall, supplies evidence for the warrant. Few people will argue that ill people and a deteriorating environment are good things. However, if the warrant you use for your value argument is contested, you should be prepared to back it up.

Rebuttal—As with all forms of reasoning, the rebuttal applies to data, warrant, and backing. If the argument is a complex one, as with every value claim, we suggest you consider the following questions:

1. Is the warrant justified? That is, if the minor conclusions are supported, are you willing to accept the inference that what exists is harmful?
2. What backing is provided? We do not recommend that you attack an unassailable point, such as the one in our example. But some debaters utilize warrants that are not generally accepted. Simply be on the lookout for such instances and be prepared to attack them.
3. Do the data or justifying statements meet the requirements of sound conclusions outlined in the rebuttal section on factual arguments? Simply go right to those minor arguments and look for an adequate amount of representative data from sources worthy of belief. Is a physician writing in the Journal of the American Medical Association worthy of belief? How many

instances of respiratory ailments were considered? Does this amount constitute more than should have occurred in areas of unpolluted air? Were the deteriorating elements in the physical environment representative of the class of things about which the conclusion was drawn? In brief, look for hasty generalization and unrepresentative sampling.

EXERCISES

1. Suggest data that might bolster each of the following value contentions, and explain the warrants connecting data and conclusion:
   a. War is immoral.
   b. Our school is a valuable asset to the community.
   c. The President of the United States is a great man.
2. Find an argument in a speech which supports a value contention:
   a. Diagram the argument using the model presented in this section.
   b. Is the warrant explicit? If not, what criteria or value system is used as a warrant?
   c. Does the warrant need backing? If not, why not? If so, what kind of backing?
   d. Do the data and the sources of the data meet the requirements of dependability? Support your answer with examples.

ARGUMENTS SUPPORTING CAUSAL CONTENTIONS

On both sides—affirmative and negative—of every debate case, the debaters have to answer the question "why?" In the preceding example the debater would want to know why air pollution exists. If the debate is concerned with a proposal for reducing air pollution, then an understanding of the cause of this pollution is absolutely necessary before the proposal can be considered.

When a debater observes an event and looks back in time to the forces responsible for it, he is reasoning from effect to cause. When he designates events in the present as causes of future effects, he is reasoning from cause to effect. The notion underlying causal relationships is that the universe is a logically related whole with an interlocking unity, and that nothing

happens without an explainable cause. Thus, an event is the result of an earlier event and, in turn, leads to other consequences. Reasoning about causal relationships involves breaking into this chain at some point, and this is true whether the debater is reasoning from cause to effect or effect to cause. Let us examine a causal argument and observe some of its essential elements. In the following example, the speech and specific sources are fictitious.

In a debate concerning conflict of interest, a debater had established the extent to which our elected representatives manifested conflicts of interest and the detrimental effects of these interests; he then turned to the key question "why". Specifically: "Why do conflicts of interest exist, and what is their major cause?" He reasoned as follows:

> We know that greed and an obsession with wealth are the underlying causes of most illegal behavior. A conflict of interest can only serve to stimulate avarice among our elected representatives if they are "encouraged" to engage in such behavior—that is, if nothing exists which defines conflicts of interest as wrong or illegal. In brief, loopholes in the codes of conduct which govern and guide our elected representatives allow for conflict of interest (C). The loopholes, then, are the causes of the problem. According to R. N. Maccoby, in his book *Congressional Ethics,*[1] the code of conduct for United States Representatives is so loose and ambiguous that almost any behavior is allowed. No limitation is specified, he says, on the amount of holdings a Representative may have in a company doing business with the government (D). A study published by the *Christian Science Monitor,* May, 1970, stated that elected representatives with stock in armaments industries doing business with the government claim they are well within their rights (D), as indeed they are.

Conclusion—The conclusion in this example is an inference from effect to cause. Given the existence of the effect, conflict of interests, what is the cause? It could just as well be an inference from cause to effect. Given the existence of very loose conflict-of-interest laws (the cause), will stronger laws, restricting conflict of interest, reduce the number of interest conflicts (the effect)? The conclusion is an inference that because of one event, another will follow; or that because these events were causally related in the past, they will be similarly related in the future.

[1] You should be able to cite bibliographical information on a source such as this upon request.

Data—While we realize that the debater should have more data than is presented here, we can readily see that he is relying on expert sources for evidence that directly supports his claim.

Warrant—The warrant in this argument is not stated. However, the warrant is the underlying assumption that since the two events vary together, and the cause precedes the effect, they must be causally related. Hence, if the code of ethics were completely abolished, more conflicts would occur. If the code were strengthened, fewer conflicts would exist.

Backing—The backing for the warrant in this example is implied. The debater can provide expert testimony from a textbook on argumentation or logic regarding the above warrant or he can give other examples of two things which are known to be connected causally and which also have the properties of varying together, with the cause preceding the effect.

Rebuttal—Rebuttals for causal arguments apply to data, warrant, and backing. The following are typical rebuttal questions:

1. Does the evidence meet the requirements of logical dependability? (See pp. 21–22.)
2. Are the sources objective and competent? (See pp. 22–24.)
3. Is the alleged cause the only cause of the effect? If there are other independent causes, then adoption of a proposal which would remove only the alleged cause would not be likely to remove the effect.
4. Are there cases of the existence of the cause without the existence of the effect? In the example given, are there cases of very loose codes of ethics but almost no conflicts of interest? If so, the two are not causally related.
5. Are there cases in which the cause did not occur, but the effect did? For example, are there instances of very strong codes of ethics in which the rate or frequency of conflicts of interest is still high?

EXERCISES

1. Assume that your argument that fresh water supplies in large Eastern cities are contaminated (see p. 31) is sound. Continue your research and build an argument on the causes of this contamination.

2. Test your evidence for dependability.
3. Test the adequacy of the warrant. Does it require backing? If not, explain why not. If so, provide it.
4. Are there cases in which the cause occurred and the effect did not follow? If so, what conclusions do you draw about the causal relationship?

ORGANIZING A COHERENT CASE: THE BRIEF

Up to this point we have been concerned with the relationship between evidence and contentions. In this section we will focus on the relationship between contentions and the major proposition. Occasionally the major proposition is one of fact, value, or cause, but in interscholastic or intercollegiate debate it is more often one of policy. A proposition of policy cannot be supported directly by evidence. It must be supported by minor contentions which are in turn supported by evidence. For example, the proposition, *"Resolved,* That the Federal government should establish a program to control air and water pollution," must be supported by minor contentions which are in turn supported by evidence. We will discuss this example further on the following pages.

Reasoning from contention to major proposition can best be understood by studying how a brief is prepared and organized. Debaters often insist that the word "brief" is an ironic misnomer, considering that it refers to the whole argument on both sides, outlined in great detail, complete with minor arguments, evidence, and references to the sources of evidence. Note that the brief includes the arguments on both sides of the proposition. This is important, for the skillful debater, no matter which side he is on, knows every argument of the opposition. Failure to do so would greatly weaken his position. In addition to being comprehensive, the brief should also continue to grow. As long as you work with the proposition and debate the issues contained in it, you should continue to add new evidence and contentions, to revise old arguments, and to delete those pieces of evidence which you have found weak or extremely susceptible to attack. Never allow your brief to become static.

The brief has three sections:

Introduction—This section presents the essential points of analysis. It sets the stage for the controversy by explaining briefly the immediate cause of the controversy, the history of the controversy, the definition of terms in the proposition, admitted and waived matter, and the main issues.

Body—The main part of the brief is a logical outline of the contentions, the evidence which supports the contentions, and the sources of that evidence. For example, if the first issue presented in the introduction is the question, "Is a change necessary?" the first contention in the body of the brief under the affirmative position is, "A change is necessary." Every major assertion is designated by a roman numeral and followed by the word *for.* Every statement subordinate to an assertion is designed to support or prove that assertion. Symbols of **A, 1, a,** and so forth, are used to indicate the supporting statements. Hence, all assertions labelled with roman numerals are approximately coequal with one another, as are all statements labelled with capital letters. Furthermore, **A, B,** and **C** are subordinate to the assertions they support. These notions of coequality and subordination are essential for the construction of a coherent set of supporting arguments. Study the following example. It is the outline for the affirmative case of the debate proposition we discussed on page 32: *"Resolved,* That the Federal government should establish a program to control air and water pollution."

I. A change in our policy regarding air and water pollution is necessary, for
   A. Freshwater supplies in the United States are dangerously contaminated, for
      1. Freshwater lakes are dangerously contaminated, for
         a. Freshwater lakes in the western United States contain excessive amounts of mercury. According to a 1970 report from the Department of the Interior, all but two lakes in the western United States contain high levels of mercury.[1]
         b. Freshwater lakes in the eastern United States contain contaminants. According to the same report, D.D.T., mercury, etc. . . .[2]
      2. Freshwater rivers are dangerously contaminated, for
         a. Freshwater rivers in. . . .
         b. Freshwater rivers in. . . .

[1] See United States Interior Department Report, Number 227, May, 1970, p. 47.
[2] Ibid.

B. Air in the United States is dangerously contaminated, for
   1. Air in our cities of 1.5 to 2 million people is contaminated, for
      a. . . .
      b. . . .
   2. Air in our cities of 2 to 8 million people is contaminated, for
      a. . . .
      b. . . .

Notice that the sources for the evidence are given between the arguments. You may use footnotes or you may place the sources in the left-hand margin.

It is vital that you understand the relationship between contention and support. Every assertion must be followed by a justifying statement or direct evidence. Direct evidence is used with those assertions for which no further subdivision is necessary. In the example above, assertions at the levels designated by lower case letters require direct evidence.

It is equally important that you see the logical relationship between coequal and subordinate assertions. Subdivisions **A** and **B** are assertions, and they are coequal. So, too, **A 1** and **A 2** are assertions and they are coequal. Furthermore, assertions **A 1** and **A 2** are subordinate to **A.** To assist you in organizing a logically coherent case, we suggest that your subordinate points under any given contention utilize only one basis for division. That is, we suggest that your points be places or locations of the phenomenon being discussed (east, west, north, south), or types or kinds of items being discussed (air and water or lakes and rivers), or the time of occurrence (past, present, or future). Your case would not be coherent if you insisted that two points designated as subordinate coequals were actually from different or mixed bases of division: For example, the two assertions "**A 1** Freshwater lakes are. . . **A 2** Water supplies for eastern cities which rely on mountain lakes are. . . ." are not coequal and therefore both confusing and not comparable.

Conclusion—The conclusion to a brief is a summation of the arguments, together with a repetition of the major proposition. It may list all the main contentions advanced in the body, starting each statement with the word *since.* For example: "Since it is true that . . . and since this is so . . . we are confident you will agree that. . . ."

Remember that a *brief* is a complete outline of both the negative and affirmative positions. When it is complete, the order of sections is as follows: a) introduction, b) body of arguments supporting the affirmative position, c) conclusion of affirmative position, d) body of argument supporting the negative position, e) summary of negative position.

EXERCISES

1. Match each definition in the right-hand column with the corresponding term in the left-hand column:

a. Coequal assertions	**a.** The whole argument on both sides
b. Subordinate	**b.** all assertions labelled with the same class of symbols
c. Brief	**c.** assertions supporting the proposition contained in the body of a brief
d. Contentions	**d.** a term indicating that the contentions are not coequal with the next highest governing statement

2. Structure a major argument which has two supporting contentions that are coequal and designate the place or location of the phenomenon argued about.
3. Select any complex argument from a brief of your own or from a newspaper or news magazine. Outline the argument.
   a. What basis of division is used?
   b. Are the main points coequal? Illustrate.
   c. Are the minor points subordinate to the main points? Illustrate.

SUMMARY

In this chapter we have examined the process of reasoning appropriate to argumentation and debate. To assist you with your arguments of fact, cause, and value, we laid out the Toulmin model with its six constituent parts—data, qualifier, conclusion, warrant, backing, and rebuttal. We noted that in the case of a value contention, since you weigh the arguments in terms of criteria, the structure of your argument will always be complex.

Hence, the data section of your argument will not consist of direct evidence but of justifying statements, *supported* by evidence.

Another type of reasoning we have discussed is concerned with the relationship between levels of contentions in the body of the affirmative or negative case. In examining this process we focused particular attention on the notions of coequality and subordination. As we pointed out, using consistent systems of designation will help you with this aspect of case-building.

IV

THE CASE FOR THE AFFIRMATIVE

Thus far we have examined debatable propositions, evidence and appropriate tests of evidence, and reasoning patterns useful for debating. In this chapter we will examine the basic issues inherent in any and every proposition of policy and the procedures by which the affirmative answer these issues. In the next chapter we will consider the negative options in response to the affirmative position.

MAJOR ISSUES INHERENT IN EVERY PROPOSITION OF POLICY

There are two major issues which must be considered before a proposition can be accepted for debate: a) Is there a need for changing the present system? and b) If adopted would the proposed change meet the need? Let us consider first the question of *need.* The following is an outline designed to help you answer this question:

I. Are there indications that the present system is not meeting (has not met, will not meet) certain ends or objectives?
   A. Where? To what extent?
   B. How long? Who/what is involved?

II. So what? Are there indications that failure to meet certain ends or objectives results in significant harms?
   A. Who is harmed? What is the nature of the harm?
   B. Where is the harm? When did it occur?

III. Why? What is causing the present system to fail?
   A. What was the initial reason?
   B. Why has the problem continued?

Continuing our outline, we consider the question of *plan:*

IV. What proposal, if adopted, would remove the causes without producing detrimental side effects?
   A. What is workable? Do we have the resources? The personnel? In short, could we bring it about?
   B. Would it remove the causes?
   C. Would other results—advantageous or disadvantageous—follow?

Before we consider how the affirmative should respond to each of these questions, we must determine what kind of argument is appropriate for each issue. Issue **I** calls for a factual argument. **I A** and **I B** are questions concerned with extent, location, and type. No value judgment is requested.

Issue **II** is a value argument. It asks for a value judgment supported by subordinate contentions of value. The minor contentions may be factual, but the warrant through which the debater moves is composed of a value system. At this point you may want to review the section on value arguments (pp. 32–34).

Issue **III** is a causal contention, and the specific logical movement here is from effect to cause. The effect, of course, is the argument stated in **I**—the indications of failure to meet certain specified ends or objectives. **III A** and **III B** are the issues of inherency. The present system must be inherently incapable of correcting the problem; hence, the present system itself is a contributory cause of the problem.

Issue **IV** and its subordinate points are all causal and move more logically and specifically from cause to effect. These specific arguments will become clearer as we consider the affirmative response to the issues.

THE AFFIRMATIVE RESPONSE

The affirmative case is an outline of particular arguments worked out by the members of an affirmative team. Remember that the affirmative team are the proponents of change and are expected to assume the burden of proof. They must produce good and sufficient reasons for giving up a system already in operation. If the reasons given by the affirmative for change are "equal" to the reasons given by the negative in response, then we are not impelled to adopt the affirmative position. If the affirmative position is better, more probative than the negative, then we will adopt the affirmative proposal. The responsibility of the affirmative may seem difficult, but if you select and word your proposition with care, there will be evidence available for your position.

THE STANDARD CASE

The standard case, sometimes called the *stock issues case,* has four major arguments, corresponding to the four divisions of need and plan outlined above. In the first argument the debater states that the present system is not meeting certain specified ends or objectives and that this failure is widespread and rather consistent. For example, in a debate on the proposition "*Resolved,* That oil companies should be prevented from engaging in all offshore oil operations," the outline of the argument could be as follows:

I. In recent years we have observed a large number of offshore oil exploration and oil extraction accidents.
   A. Such accidents have occurred off the West coast of the United States.
   B. Similar accidents have occurred off the East coast.

The supporting contentions of argument I are divided in terms of the places where the accidents have occurred. The subdivisions could have pertained to the types of accidents (oil exploration and oil extraction) or the times when the accidents have occurred (1960–1965 and 1965–1970). We suggest that you research the topic and let the evidence be your guide in determining what kind of supporting contentions you will present. Remember that

you must look for experts who have studied the problem of oil spills. They will supply testimony and numerical data supporting your contentions.

Do not deal with the harms or the reasons for the accidents in argument **I.** These points belong to the second section of your presentation, in which you answer the question "So what?" The outline of argument **II** might run as follows:

II. These offshore oil accidents have severely harmed our environment and our economy.
- **A.** The environmental harms include excessive loss of fish and other wildlife as a direct result of the accidents.
- **B.** The economic harms include loss of tourist business and loss of revenues from the fishing industry.

In Argument **II B** the debater can show direct economic loss, for which figures are readily available. On the other hand, Argument **II A** presents a somewhat more difficult problem for the debater because sheer numbers of dead fish, whales, birds, etc., may not be accepted as a harm. The recent concern for protection of the environment, however, should be some indication that an awakened public is interested in losses that may not be directly quantifiable. Again, let the evidence be your guide.

The third argument under need is the most difficult, for here the debater must indict the present system as responsible for the problem. This indictment is called the *inherency argument.* If the present system is shown to be inherently incapable of correcting the problem, then there is nothing the negative can do to argue for its continuation. Hence, when this argument is solidly built, the negative is forced to present some kind of counter proposal—a problem we will deal with in the next chapter. Continuing with our example, the "why" argument could be as follows:

III. Technological immaturity makes safe oil operations inherently impossible.
- **A.** The oil companies are inherently incapable of conducting oil exploration operations safely.
- **B.** The oil companies are inherently incapable of conducting oil extraction operations safely.

Note that this argument asserts that the oil companies cannot conduct safe operations because they do not have the necessary knowledge. What the debater must do to support the proposition that all operations should cease is to show that each and every one is a potential menace because we have pushed our desire for oil beyond our ability to extract it safely. Under any proposition, the affirmative must say that the present system *cannot* get the job done; to say that it *will not* do it is inadequate. Take the issue of medical aid for all people for example. The same argument is essential. You must show that under the present system, private and public, many people cannot get medical coverage, because the system itself *cannot* provide such coverage. That the system *has not* provided coverage may be an indication that it will not, but it is *not* a indication that it *cannot* do so.

Another way to look at this inherency problem is to think of the absence of the action proposed by the affirmative as a major reason for the present problem. The lack of the action involved in the previous example means unrestricted oil operations—the major cause of the problem outlined in I and II.

A final, very important argument is the *plan argument.* You can assert a problem with harms and causes but if you do not present a cogent proposal for change you cannot expect adoption of your proposition. Depending on the time limit placed on the first speaker, the second affirmative speaker normally presents the complete plan argument. Continuing with our example, we add the following:

IV. Immediate prohibition of all offshore operations would put an end to these harmful consequences without incurring other serious disadvantages.
   A. The proposal could be brought about by passing a Federal law requiring the Secretary of the Interior to suspend all Federally licensed offshore oil operations. This suspension would continue until drilling without mishap is technologically feasible.
   B. Only immediate suspension of offshore operations will result in the elimination of the causes of this problem.
   C. The major disadvantage of such suspension—loss of offshore oil supplies—is not crucial, because
      1. We have huge oil reserves in the United States.
      2. We have oil reserves in other countries.

Subordinate argument **A** gives details of the plan, including a discussion of the material needed. The most important plan argument, however, is **B,** which asserts that the *plan* meets the *need.* If your causes are well-outlined and supported, this step in the plan demonstrates how the causes of the harm would be eliminated. Argument **C** is not always presented as part of the constructive speech, but the supporters of the proposal must be ready to counter negative attacks on any of its possible disadvantages. One way to counter such attacks is to cite advantages which outweigh the disadvantages.

EXERCISES

1. The following is an example of the first contention in a standard affirmative case that the present situation needs to be changed. Develop this argument by filling in the subheads organized either by a) the places where the phenomena have occurred, b) the types of phenomena that have occurred, or c) the times when phenomena have occurred.

STANDARD AFFIRMATIVE CASE

I. A large number of Americans are not receiving adequate medical care. (First contention: Need for change)

A.

B.

C.

2. Add a second contention to the example above, asserting that harms are resulting from the facts alleged in the first contention. Develop this second argument with appropriate subheads.

3. Take the current national debate proposition, or last year's debate topic, and develop the major contentions of a standard affirmative case.

THE COMPARATIVE-ADVANTAGE CASE

Thus far we have outlined what can be considered a standard or stock response to the major issues. Most debate coaches and theorists of argumentation believe that this is the best kind of case to present. We agree. Another type of case that has been used off and on for some years is the *comparative-advantage case.* This type is not useful when the proposal is a cease and desist

order, such as prohibition of offshore oil drilling. However, when the proposal requires the implementation of a new program, it is possible to compare the advantages of such a program with those of the status quo. This approach in no way relieves the affirmative debater of his burden of proof or of the necessity for indicting the present system. However, the logic employed differs somewhat from that of the standard presentation. With this case the debater argues that his proposal would be more advantageous than the existing program. Implicit in this argument is the assertion that the absence of the advantages is really a harm—a harm perpetuated by the present system. If the proposal were adopted the harm would disappear because the new program would eliminate it—the major advantage.

An affirmative team presented a comparative-advantage case in support of the proposition, "*Resolved,* That the Federal Government should establish a program to control air and water pollution." The arguments presented were as follows:

Adoption of the proposition would result in three major advantages:

I. A Federal program could expedite such a project best because
   - A. Local municipalities are susceptible in influence from local industrial polluters.
   - B. State programs operate on an unstable financial base.
   - C. Regional programs are susceptible to conflicts of interest.

II. A Federal program would result in more uniform standards, because
   - A. Local standards show wide variation.
   - B. State standards show wide variation.

III. A Federal program would result in better enforcement, because
   - A. Local governments do not have jurisdiction over upstream polluters.
   - B. State authority is restricted to state boundaries.
   - C. Interstate agreements depend on state regulations for enforcement.

The underlying logic of this case was as follows: A Federal program, quickly established, with uniform standards and adequate enforcement, would control air and water pollution *better* than the present system. (The extent of air and water pollution was presented in the subdivisions of **I A, I B,** and **I C.**) The reasons why the present system cannot correct the problem as well as could a Federal program relate to delay in time, nonuniform standards, and enforcement difficulties. The specific details

of the program should either immediately precede or follow the discussion of its advantages.

GOALS-CRITERIA CASE

One other less used affirmative case is the *goals-criteria case.* It has two major arguments: One supports the goals or objectives of the proposal. The other presents the criteria of procedures for achieving these goals. The affirmative team argues that the goals are unique to the proposal and will come about only if the proposal is adopted. The indictment of the present system turns on this argument of uniqueness. To put the uniqueness argument another way, the present system is inherently incapable of bringing about the goals or objectives set forth in the first argument. The goals are unique to the affirmative plan.

The comparative-advantage and the goals-criteria cases do not have any standard lines of argument. If you are planning a comparative-advantage case, we can only suggest that you look for ideas related to efficiency, enforcement, financing, and implementation. The proposal you come up with must offer something more or better than the status quo. Remember that the comparative-advantage case does not work well with cease-and-desist proposals. If you are comparing two programs, however, the comparative-advantages case will be useful. When looking for arguments for the goals-criteria case, we suggest that you examine the reasons why a given proposal is being suggested and the reasons why the present system exists. If the present system is failing to meet its own objectives or cannot meet more stringent objectives, then you have a good reason for considering this type of proposition.

EXERCISES

1. What is the major characteristic of the comparative-advantage case?
2. Prepare a plan argument for the comparative-advantage case presented as an example in this section. For assistance refer to the discussion of the plan argument presented under the standard affirmative case (pp. 44–47).
3. Assume that the goal of reducing water pollution has been established. Prepare a proposal for achieving that goal. Argue

that your plan will reach the goal and that this outcome is unique to your plan (*only* your plan will achieve the goal).

SUMMARY

In this chapter we have set forth the basic issues inherent in every proposition of policy. In addition, we have suggested some affirmative responses to those basic issues. The *standard case* is always the first one to consider. If it is well supported it will win many debates for you. When using it do not forget the *harms argument* and the *inherency argument.*

Should you decide to use a *comparative-advantage* or a *goals-criteria case,* do not do so to escape answering the basic issues. The question of uniqueness, which pertains to goals and advantages, is identical to the question of inherency. This will become clearer when we consider negative responses to these cases.

Finally, what we have been saying here is that you must have good and sufficient reasons for recommending the adoption of your proposition. People are inclined to maintain the status quo and not risk something new unless good reasons impel them to do so. If you can conceive of a clear and coherent structure into which to cast your good reasons, we suggest that you do so. The recommendations we have outlined in this chapter are by no means designed to be restrictive.

V

THE CASE FOR THE NEGATIVE

In this chapter we will consider negative responses to the affirmative case. The underlying philosophy here is that, as a negative speaker in defense of the present system, you have studied the affirmative position and know it as well as any affirmative speaker. In short, you should not be surprised by any affirmative arguments. To be sure, you will meet affirmative cases that vary in strength, but the reasons why the proposition ought to be adopted must be supported with evidence, and you should know that evidence well. Furthermore, you should be prepared with a variety of responses. If the affirmative case is extremely strong, you cannot deny that a problem exists or insist that the present system is perfect. Nonetheless, just because the affirmative case is strong, you do not have to give up. There are several viable options open to you.

SHOTGUN

The *shotgun* option does not have a unifying coherent philosophy. Both the first and second negative speakers "blast away" at any

place in the affirmative case considered weak and vulnerable. The introduction goes something like this: "We of the negative do not think our opponents have presented a sound case. Let us examine it point by point." The first negative then blasts the definition of terms. Next he attacks the evidence and reasoning used by the affirmative in support of their contentions concerning the existence and extent of harms related to the status quo. He then argues that the imputed causes are false and their presentation misleading.

The second negative speaker focuses attention on the affirmative's plan and attacks it with so many plan objections that the opposition must devote their rebuttal time to answering them, and will be unable to get back to their own case. Some plan attacks can be prepared in advance, but the negative should be ready to adapt their attack to any particular plan presented. Organize you plan objections around the following main headings:

I. Workability: The wherewithal is not available.
   A. One obstacle preventing the plan from coming into being could be the lack of trained personnel.
   B. Another obstacle could refer to financing. Where are we going to get the money?
   C. Another objection could refer to implementation or enforcement.
   D. Another obstacle could refer to the constitutionality. Is the proposal legal?

II. Solvency: The plan, if adopted, will not meet the need.
   A. Return to the affirmative inherency argument. Remember that every cause in the affirmative case must be dealt with in the plan.
   B. Point to any argument which would prevent the plan from removing the causes of the problem.

III. Disadvantages: The disadvantages outweigh the advantages.
   A. Consider disadvantages which are inherent in the proposition debated, regardless of the specific plan designed to implement it.
   B. Consider disadvantages brought about by the specific planks of the affirmative plan.

While the "shotgun" is used a great deal, its major disadvantage is the potential for missing the point. If you enter the competition ready to "shotgun" your opposition, the possibility

that your plan of attack may not be flexible enough in response to a well-documented affirmative case could cost you the debate.

DENIAL

The *denial* option is closely related to the shotgun, except that it has a coherent, well-thought-out philosophy. Its assumption is, very simply, that no problem exists, that everything is all right as it stands. In a debate opposing the proposition *"Resolved,* That oil companies should be prevented from engaging in all offshore oil operations," the denial option might be employed as follows:

NEGATIVE PHILOSOPHY

The negative position in today's debate is simply this: We deny the existence of a widespread problem resulting from offshore drilling operations. Our specific arguments are as follows:

PREVIEW

(You should here offer a brief outline of the main agruments of your position. The following is such an outline.)

BODY OF SPEECH

I. The number of successes per offshore drilling operation makes the small number of mishaps relatively insignificant.
  A. Oil exploration operations have been, on the whole, without mishap.
  B. Oil extraction operations have had minimal problems per number of successful operations.

II. The resulting damage from the few accidents is slight or not permanent.
  A. Injury to wildlife is slight.
  B. Injury to beaches and other aspects of the environment has been corrected by the oil companies.

III. The affirmative team's causal analysis is inaccurate and misleading for two reasons.
  A. Oil companies have the technological ability to conduct explorations without mishap.
  B. Oil companies have the ability to conduct extraction operations without serious mishap.

IV. The proposition, if adopted, would bring about serious disadvantages.
  A. It would cut off an important source of needed oil.
  B. It would cause unemployment in the oil industry.

If you are well-acquainted with the affirmative argument, and you know that you can defend the present system with a straight denial that does not distort reality, use the denial option. The second negative speaker normally takes the fourth argument (plan attack) and proceeds in a manner similar to plan objections outlined under the shotgun option. If you have to distort reality, if a problem does exist, or if the present system is defective in another way, consider one of the other options available to you.

EXERCISES

Match each definition in the right-hand column with the corresponding term in the left-hand column.

1.	Shotgun	a.	a blasting away at every point considered weak and vulnerable
2.	Missing the point	b.	a plan of attack dealing with obstacles preventing the plan from coming into being
3.	Workability	c.	the major disadvantage of the shotgun
4.	Denial	d.	plan will not meet need
5.	Solvency	e.	stated simply: no problem exists
6.	Preview	f.	an outline of the main arguments in the body of the speech

PRESENT SYSTEM SELF-CORRECTING

By selecting this option the negative team concedes that some problem does exist, but alleges that the present system does not need the affirmative proposal or any other modification in order for it to be corrected. It is not a denial, for some problem is admitted. Nor does it call for minor repairs or a counter plan. The underlying philosophy is that the present system has the inherent capability to correct itself. In a debate on the oil exploration example, the negative position using this option would proceed as follows:

NEGATIVE PHILOSOPHY

We of the negative recognize that a partial problem does exist. It is our contention, however, that the oil companies are working

on technological skills which will make offshore oil operations increasingly safe in the future. In support of this position we offer the following arguments, with their supporting evidence:

PREVIEW

1. We admit a partial problem. To be sure, occasional accidents have occurred, but not to the extent claimed by the affirmative.
2. Damage resulting from these few accidents is slight or temporary.
3. The oil companies are capable of developing the technological skill necessary for safe oil operations.
4. Immediate cessation of operations would be excessively harmful to the United States.

In the body of the speech these counter arguments are subdivided and supported. Note that arguments one, two, and four are very similar to those used for the denial. This is as it should be, for the main difference between the two options is the challenge on inherency or causes. Where the affirmative must show that the oil companies are inherently incapable of conducting safe operations, the negative can show that they are progressing toward the desired level of safety. Hence, the claim that the oil companies cannot carry out oil exploration and extraction operations safely is proven false. When this approach is coupled with an attack on the plan presented by the affirmative, the negative side wins the debate. In the event that such an approach would constitute distortion of reality—that is, if the oil companies are not presently developing necessary technological skills—the negative would be wise to choose another option.

MINOR REPAIRS

The *minor repairs* option is one step beyond the self-correcting position, but does not constitute an admission of serious inherent fault. Rather, though minor imperfections exist, the present system can be perfected with minimal modification. Continuing with our example, a minor repairs approach would proceed as follows:

NEGATIVE PHILOSOPHY

The negative position in this debate is one of partial agreement

with the affirmative, but we take issue with the assertion that the present system is beyond repair—that minor defects cannot be corrected. Instead we support the following contentions:

PREVIEW

1. We admit a partial problem, for an occasional accident has occurred, but not to the extent claimed by the affirmative.
2. The damage resulting from the few mishaps is slight and not permanent.
3. The affirmative causal analysis is faulty. An increase in fines for violation of safety standards, coupled with an investment in technological changes, would enhance considerably the likelihood of safe operations.
4. The affirmative proposition requiring immediate cessation of offshore operations would be excessively harmful to the United States.

Following the pattern of the other options, the main arguments are subdivided and supported, and the debater indicates how they affect the affirmative position. Arguments one, two, and four are very similar to those of the self-correction case, with the main challenge directed toward the inherency argument of the affirmative. Remember that if the affirmative proves inherency, the minor repairs option should not be used—for it is futile to fight for repair of a system that is inherently irreparable. In cases where inherency is not shown conclusively, however, this option, if well supported, can sustain the negative against affirmative attack. In fact, the minor repairs case often allows the negative team to build a more flexible case than does a pure defense of the present system, because some fault is admitted and some repair is suggested.

EXERCISES

1. What is the philosophy underlying the negative case that the present system is self-correcting?
2. Explain why the self-correcting position cannot admit to any minor repairs.
3. Compare and contrast the self-correcting case and the minor-repairs case.
4. Those who are dissatisfied with the quality of rapid transit provided for passengers by American railroads often argue that privately-owned railroads operated for profit are inherently

incapable of providing satisfactory passenger service within and between major cities. Review the inherency argument as explained on pages 45–46. In order to argue that the Federal government should nationalize the railroads, the affirmative in a debate would need to show that the failures of private enterprise are built into the profit system; that is, that the private profit system is inherently incapable of overcoming these failures. Assume that you are taking the negative position and want to offer a minor repairs case. Outline the arguments you would use to show that the private ownership system of railroad operation is not inherently incapable of providing satisfactory passenger service. To achieve this position, you must show how minor alterations in the present system could bring about improved service.

COUNTER PLAN

When the affirmative position is well argued, with an adequate amount of evidence and good reasons for the proposition, a denial is inappropriate. If, furthermore, the system is not showing signs of correcting itself and a minor modification would not eliminate the problem, the negative must move to its last option—the *counter plan.* Be aware that by taking this option you are admitting the existence of a problem, and that such an admission relieves the affirmative of some of the burden of proof. However, a debate concerned with the merits of two proposals can be very exciting and in some instances is the most accurate reflection of reality.

Continuing with the example of offshore operations, the counter-plan case could be as follows:

NEGATIVE PHILOSOPHY

We agree that oil spills constitute a problem, although the first affirmative speaker overstated the extent and seriousness of the problem. Further, we suggest that a cease-and-desist order applying to all operations is neither necessary nor appropriate and should therefore be rejected. In its place we offer the following more appropriate and beneficial proposal:

PREVIEW

1. Before presenting our alternative proposal, let us examine that affirmative argument concerning the large number of accidents

and blowouts. We think they have made a hasty generalization.

2. Let us examine the harms that the affirmative has stated. Again, we think the case is overstated.

3. The affirmative argues that technological immaturity makes every oil operation inherently unsafe. We contend that this causal analysis is false.

OUTLINE

I. We admit a partial problem, but the large number of successful off-shore operations offsets the small number of mishaps.
   A. Oil exploration accidents have actually been few in number.
   B. Oil extraction accidents and blowouts have also been few in number.

Transition—Then what is wrong with the second contention?

II. The harms have been exaggerated, for the resulting damage has been slight and not permanent.
   A. Injury and loss of wildlife have been slight.
   B. Injury to the physical environment has been corrected by the oil companies.

Internal summary—We have a problem then, but not one requiring the shutdown of all off-shore operations. Why? because,

III. The affirmative causal analysis is inaccurate. We admit that some leases were granted for drilling and exploration in areas where the ocean floor was unstable, but this does not allow the affirmative to conclude that all operations are technologically immature.
   A. Oil exploration sites where instability exists are potentially hazardous.
   B. Oil extraction sites where instability exists are potentially hazardous.
   C. The remaining sites—the vast majority—do not constitute a hazard.

(If time permits, the counter proposal should be presented in the first negative speech.)

IV. The negative proposal—that is, shutting down sites where unstable conditions exist—would eliminate the main cause of the problem and would not be as disadvantageous as the affirmative recommendation.
   A. We recommend that Congress suspend operations on those extraction and exploration sites where unstable conditions could lead to a possible accident or blowout.
   B. What would be the result? The major causes of harm—operations at unsafe sites—would be eliminated.

Transition—And what about the affirmative proposal?

V. It is unworkable and disadvantageous. (For details on this division, see plan objections under the shotgun option on pages 51-53.)

A counter-plan case is certainly not the easiest one to put together, but if the affirmative position is strong, this alternative is the only reasonable one you have. Keep in mind that the essence of the affirmative proposal is the proposition being debated. You will have a good idea what the proposal must include by studying the proposition as if you were preparing an affirmative case. Just remember that you never go as far as the affirmative, but that the counter plan is only less extreme. If the negative has proposed an alteration of the present system that is as great a change as the affirmative proposal, the negative runs the risk of losing the debate. Running such a risk, however, is preferable to using a negative option that distorts reality or underestimates the strength of the affirmative position.

Before leaving the negative we want to make a few recommendations concerning the comparative-advantage and goals-criteria cases.

Negative response to the comparative-advantage case:

1. Will the desired advantages really occur? Look for obstacles which would prevent their occurrence. Examine the affirmative case for poor reasoning and/or poor support for the claim that the advantages will occur.
2. Are the advantages unique? Is the affirmative plan the only way to gain them? Perhaps the present system will generate the same advantages if it is given enough time. Perhaps the advantages will accrue after a minor change has been made. Perhaps a counter proposal will produce the same advantages at less cost.
3. Are the advantages significant? How significant? How significant when compared to the cost or harms of the proposal? when compared with the present system?

Negative response to the goals-criteria case:

1. Are the goals valid? Are they real? Are they beyond the reach of any system?
2. Are the goals unique? Can the goals (absence of harms) be obtained only by the affirmative plan? Perhaps the present system can achieve them given enough time or after a minor or major alteration.
3. Are the goals significant? How significant? Look for major flaws in reasoning and/or evidence.

EXERCISES

1. When is the counter plan the only appropriate negative response?
2. What is the major risk involved in the counter plan?
3. Below are the outlines of the contentions in three standard affirmative cases on three different propositions. Study them carefully and then outline for each a negative-plan case that seems appropriate.

a. The United States should nationalize all American hospitals, because
   i. Many Americans are receiving inadequate medical care.
   ii. Inadequate medical care is harmful to the nation.
   iii. The present system of private medical care is inherently incapable of providing adequate care for all citizens.

b. The President of the United States should be elected by a direct vote of the people, because
   i. The present electoral system is unsatisfactory.
   ii. The Electoral College system is unfair to populous states and cities.
   iii. The Electoral College system is inherently incapable of guaranteeing each citizen one vote equal to all others.

c. The Federal government should establish a system of direct grants to the states for financing public education, because
   i. The present financing system is inadequate.
   ii. The low quality of inadequately financed education is a serious harm to the nation.
   iii. The present system of financing is incapable of providing high-quality education.

SUMMARY

In this chapter we have presented some recommendations for the establishment of the negative position. It should be obvious that a successful negative case depends on close teamwork and

a thorough knowledge of the negative options. Listen carefully during the presentation of the first affirmative speech. If the case as presented is weak, then attack it at each and every vulnerable point. Do not, however, assume that such an approach will work against every possible affirmative. In some cases denial may be the best approach. If not, consider one of the other options we have suggested. Finally, when you are presented with a comparative-advantage or a goals-criteria case, remember that all of the negative options we have suggested are useful and appropriate. Simply look for those reasons your opponents believe are good and sufficient for the adoption of the proposition, decide on a particular negative response, and present the case according to the recommendations outlined in this chapter.

VI

REFUTATION AND REBUTTAL

Debate is intellectual combat, the purpose of which is to convince others that the more logical position—the one that should be accepted—is the one that you are upholding, regardless of whether you are arguing on the affirmative or the negative side. Thus, by its very nature, debate involves controversy and opposition or the use of argument to attack or defend. In this chapter we will use the term *refutation* to mean the answering of an opponent's argument and the term *rebuttal* to mean the speech or cross-examination in which refutation occurs.

Refutation is extremely important. The debater who neglects his preparation for rebuttal ignores the very essence of debate. If each opposing speaker presented only his own version of the situation, without taking note of a conflicting argument, the effect on the audience would be quite unsatisfactory. A judge, for example, would be hard-pressed to decide which position to favor. Opposing arguments must be scrutinized, evidence must be carefully examined and reexamined and, finally, the debater must make clear to the judge the basis on which he is to choose the affirmative or negative position.

Your skill in refutation will be increased by diligent preparation and practice. Ideally you should first know the

opposition's side as well as they know it. If you have examined the evidence on both sides, you will not be taken by surprise. Secondly, you must train yourself to recognize clashes and follow the pattern of disagreement which unfolds during the debate. You will need practice in pointing out the weaknesses in opposing arguments, defending your own arguments, and reconstructing these arguments after attack. In this chapter we are going to examine the essentials of refutation by considering methods of rebuttal, procedures for detecting errors, strategies involved in cross-examination, and ways of organizing the rebuttal speech.

METHODS OF REFUTATION

Upsetting the opposition's evidence and reasoning and then rebuilding or defending your own evidence and reasoning can be achieved in several ways. You can upset opposing evidence by showing that sources are unreliable, biased, or unqualified, and that the evidence itself is outdated, inadequate, or erroneous. If you cannot directly overthrow the opposition's evidence, you may be able to introduce contrary evidence of your own to prove an opposing conclusion. This can be accomplished by introducing other facts and reasoning which lead to an opposite conclusion, or by showing that the opponents' reasoning is faulty. For these general tests of reasoning and evidence, review Chapters Two and Three.

You can rebuild or defend your own case by introducing new items of evidence from different and well-qualified sources to help prove your points. You can reconstruct your reasoning patterns by introducing additional minor arguments which further substantiate your major contentions. There are also some special methods of refutation which you, as a debater, should be able to use effectively:

Reductio ad absurdum—In "reducing to absurdity," the debater gives the impression of accepting the argument of the opposition while in reality he is extending this argument to its logical conclusion by applying it to such extreme cases that it becomes ridiculous. He simply looks for the general principle upon which the opponent's argument is based and extends it, as we see in the following example: In debating the proposition *"Resolved,*

That the United States should provide a health insurance program for all people," the affirmative team argued that such a program would obtain a large measure of security for all our citizens. The negative took this underlying principle and reduced it to absurdity: "If your objective is to obtain maximum economic security from the state, you should call for nationalization of all businesses, all farms, all industrial concerns. In fact, the only sure way to insure that the state will guarantee you complete security is to go to jail; in prison you will have guaranteed food, guaranteed housing, and absolute security."

To counter *reductio ad absurdum* simply show that the general principle used by the opposition as the basis for extension is not the same as the principle you have used for the basis of your own reasoning. Of course, the best defense is to avoid building arguments which are so general that almost anything can be subsumed under them.

The dilemma—Placing the opposition on the "horns" of a dilemma delights debaters and judges alike. This method consists of showing that an opponent's argument leads logically to only two possible courses of action, both damaging to his case. The proponents of national standards to control water pollution may argue that if local districts raise water pollution standards, they will drive out business; if they do not raise water pollution standards, they will destroy the environment. It follows, therefore that only with a uniform national standard will these two undesirable alternatives be avoided.

At first glance, such a dilemma seems impressive and sometimes even escape-proof. In the short space of time encompassed by a debate, the good debater must be able to find the weakness which almost always exists. To counter the dilemma you should show that there are possible courses of action in addition to the two that have been presented. You can also counter the dilemma by showing that the alleged consequences are unlikely to come about. For example, what evidence exists that business will move out of areas with high pollution standards? Finally, you can show that one of the courses of action really is not deterimental. Perhaps heavy polluters should not only be driven out of particular localities but should be driven out of business altogether.

Method of residues—This form of refutation is very much like

the dilemma, except that in this case one of the alternatives is satisfactory. The debater lists the possible courses of action, one by one, and shows that all are unsatisfactory except the last. In a debate on the prohibition of arms sales to dictatorships, the affirmative used the following argument:

1. Unrestricted sale of arms to dictatorships is unsatisfactory.
2. Limited sale of arms to dictatorships is also undesirable.
3. Therefore, the sale of arms to dictatorships must be prohibited.

The weaknesses of this method are similar to those of the dilemma. If you were confronted by a method-of-residues you could counter by showing that there are additional desirable alternatives not mentioned by your opponents and/or that the alternative they have chosen is not really desirable.

Turning the tables—With this method of refutation, the debater uses the opponent's own evidence or arguments against him. The opportunity for doing so does not occur often, for most debaters think through the implications of their arguments. When such an opportunity does arise, however, it can be used to great advantage. For example, one debater who proved that many states—a total of 23—had adopted his proposal, was effectively foiled when the opposition pointed out that a majority of states, 27, had had the "good sense" to reject his proposal. To avoid having the tables turned on you, remember that your best possible defense is always to think through the implications of your argument before you debate.

EXERCISES

1. Match each definition in the right-hand column with the corresponding term in the left-hand column:

a. Turning the tables	**a.** extending the argument to an extreme position
b. Method of residues	**b.** proving two undesirable alternatives
c. Reductio ad absurdum	**c.** revealing one satisfactory alternative
d. The dilemma	**d.** using the opponent's arguments or evidence against him

2. Try to find printed reports of debates in sources such as *University Debaters' Annual, Congressional Digest,* or the *Congressional Record.* Locate examples of the general methods of refutation and of *reductio ad absurdum,* dilemma, method-of-residues, and turning the tables. Discuss the persuasiveness of each example you find. What could the speaker have done to make his refutation more effective?

3. Listen to a debate by your classmates or outside of class. Attempt to outline the rebuttal speeches as you hear them. Write a report in which you describe the organization of each and evaluate the effectiveness of their organization in terms of the arguments advanced by the opposing speakers.

DETECTING ERRORS

Errors in reasoning and evidence arise from faulty analysis of issues and misapplication of the tests of reasoning and evidence. It is unlikely that your opponent will deliberately distort. More often than not, errors of reasoning and evidence arise from not understanding how to construct an affirmative case and/or not knowing the negative options. The following are some suggestions for detecting such errors:

Hasty generalization—Simply ask the question: Have enough instances been presented to warrant the conclusion? Hasty generalization results, for example, if we observe one student cheating on an examination and conclude that the whole student body is dishonest. For details on this, reexamine the section on arguments supporting factual contentions on pages 29–32.

Unrepresentative samples—This fallacy was discussed in Chapter Three (p. 31), but remember that the instances examined must be typical of the whole group. If you wanted to know what proportion of the businessmen in your city contribute annually to the United Fund or Community Chest, for example, you would not ask only the businessmen who are members of the church you attend or only those who are members of a civic betterment club. These businessmen have already chosen to support objectives similar to the United Fund. Hence a conclusion based on sampling them would be unlikely to

produce the same outcome as a study of all businessmen in the community.

"Post hoc" fallacy—This fallacy occurs when a debater concludes that just because one thing preceded another in time, the first is the cause of the second: For example, two mountaineers taking their first train ride each bought a banana, a fruit they had never eaten before. Just as one bit into his, the train entered a tunnel. "Have you et your banana yet?" he asked his companion. "Nope." "Well, don't. I just bit into mine and I've gone blind."

Was this cause adequate to produce the alleged effect? The answer is obvious. However, the "blind" man was partially justified in his assumption about the effect of eating the banana. If two things are related as cause to effect, the cause must precede the effect in time. But more evidence that this is needed. The two events must also vary together. If our man's "sight" returned when the train left the tunnel, and he continued to eat the banana, then he would have good reason to believe that the two events were not causally related. If this point is not clear to you yet, reexamine the chapter on reasoning and study the section on causal arguments (pp. 34–37).

Outdated evidence—The way to determine whether evidence is outdated is to consider when it was *collected,* not when it was *published.* Keep in mind that a recent publication date does not necessarily mean that the evidence itself was collected recently. You can insist that the evidence be from the same time dimension as the conclusion about it, unless the debate is about some future fact. If the assertion is one of past fact, data collected in the present cannot prove the conclusion; nor does data collected in the past necessarily prove present conclusions. You must document your evidence with the date of collection. If you suppress this information, your opponent could charge you with this fallacy.

Biased source—You can detect a biased source when you become familiar with the tests of objectivity. Review Chapter Two (pp. 13–25) and remember that if the source has a vested interest in what he is reporting, he may be speaking an untruth, perhaps without even knowing it.

Incompetent source—When you reason from the testimony of an authority, be sure he has the right credentials. Debaters often say "according to *Time* magazine . . ." in hopes that the authority of the magazine will carry the argument. Remember that neither a corporation nor a magazine can "say" anything! Some individual had to do the "saying." To check for this fallacy, simply apply the tests of competence outlined on pages 23–24 of Chapter Three.

Should/will not problem—This is really not a fallacy, but a reasoning problem that often outwits inexperienced debaters. The proposition of policy always uses the verb *should.* This means that the proposition should be adopted because it is logically desirable. Hence, if your opponents say that a proposed piece of legislation *will not* be adopted because the governor has invariably vetoed similar proposals, you can point out that *should* and *will* are not synonymous, and that you, as the affirmative, do not have to assume the responsibility for an unreasonable governor. If you give good and logical reasons why the proposition should be adopted, the judge will concur in spite of the *will not* attack.

Will not/cannot and have not/cannot problems—You will remember that the affirmative must show that the present system cannot correct the problem or cannot produce the necessary advantages. This is the requirement of inherency or uniqueness. Very often you will find affirmative debaters concluding that just because the present system *has not* done something this means that it *cannot.* Do not let such an argument go by unchallenged. Take, for instance, our example from Chapter Four: The affirmative must demonstrate that oil companies are inherently incapable of safely drilling offshore; likewise, states must be shown to be inherently incapable of raising the taxes for a project, of administering a program, of enforcing regulations. To prove that they *will not* or *have not* is not adequate; it must be shown that, inherently, they *cannot.*

EXERCISES

1. In debating whether the railroads of the United States should

be owned and operated by the Federal government, it would be possible to offer the following arguments:

a. The Federal government should take over the railroads.
b. The Congress will not agree to nationalize the railroads.
c. The Federal government cannot operate the railroads effectively.

Discuss the distinctions between arguments a) and b), b) and c), and a) and c) above.

2. Explain how you would detect a hasty generalization.

3. List some examples of sources who do not possess expertise but who have testified as experts. One place such "experts" appear is in advertisements for consumer products.

4. Give an example of a popular belief that fits the *post hoc* fallacy.

5. Discuss and evaluate the quality and validity of the following generalizations:

a. All highways are dangerous.
b. The Secretary of State was convicted of misrepresentation in reporting his Federal income tax last year; he is not a fit candidate for Governor.
c. Current movies are obscene.
d. The first bite I have taken of this pie has a salty taste; the whole pie is ruined.
e. A survey of 300 citizens of this state showed that 79% favor jail terms for drunken driving on the first offense. The people of the state thus want the law changed in this regard.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CROSS-EXAMINATION

Cross-examination is an exciting way of applying some general and specific methods of refutation. As such, it requires practice, patience, and application of what we have discussed thus far. In addition we suggest that you consider the following recommendations:

1. Both speakers should face the audience and/or judge during the cross-examination.

2. Both speakers should be courteous.

3. The questioner should try to obtain a short answer and should carefully cut off an excessively long one.

4. The questioner should not comment on the importance of the answer during the question period. The "clincher" should be saved for a later constructive or rebuttal speech.
5. The questioner should know the answers to the questions he asks. If you do not know the answers to your own questions, you may inadvertently give your opponent an opportunity to advance his own case.
6. As a respondent you are required to answer any reasonable question. The fact that the answer to a particular question may hurt your own case does not make it unreasonable.
7. As a respondent you can refuse to answer a "loaded" question, that is, a question which has built into it an unwarranted assumption. The classic example is, of course, the question, "Have you stopped beating your children?" This question implies that you did in fact beat them in the past, an implication which will be confirmed by the mere act of answering "yes" or "no."
8. The respondent has a right to qualify his answers.
9. If the respondent does not know the answer to a question he should admit it.

THE REBUTTAL SPEECH

The inexperienced debater inevitably asks, "Should I refute opposition arguments during my constructive speech? If so, how much time can I devote to refutation, and should it come first or last or be scattered throughout the speech?"

When the first negative presents his case, that case is a refutation of the first affirmative position. So in that sense, you do include refutation in your constructive speech. But you should also attempt to answer directly the opposition arguments in the general or specific ways we have suggested. Do not allow your zeal for rebuttal to obscure the essentially *constructive* aspects of your constructive speech. You will remember we suggested that the second affirmative present the plan and its benefits in his speech. If his enthusiasm for refutation gets out of hand, he will not have time to present his part of the constructive case. The second negative speaker could have a similar problem, for we recommend that he present his plan objections in his speech.

If he forgets this essential task, he could lose the debate. The appropriate place for total refutation, of course, is the rebuttal speech.

In traditional debate the rebuttal speech guarantees the speaker an opportunity to refute the opposing case and to defend his own. Since the time is provided for this purpose, it is considered unethical to introduce new arguments in the rebuttal period. However, the debater should not confuse new arguments with new evidence relevant to arguments already presented. As we have pointed out, additional evidence is essential to successful refutation.

Careful organization is equally important. Too often the debater, in trying to answer each point made by the opposition, will attempt to take them up one by one just as he copied them on his flowsheet. Such refutation will not be clear to the judge. Besides, there is never enough time to wade through a "grocery list" of items. This is a particular problem when trying to answer a long list of plan objections. The debater is forced to stop when time is up, often leaving behind him a litter of unanswered pieces of arguments. The impression left with the listener is that the rebuttal speaker had few effective answers since he left much undone.

In the time available to him, the rebuttal speaker should choose those arguments which most need answering—weeding out trivial details. Then he should work out some kind of organization which will make his major contentions stand out emphatically.

One effective structure to consider is an outline of clashes in the debate up to that point. If you have made an accurate flowsheet (see Appendix, pp. 84–85), the clashes will be obvious. For example, suppose that you and your partner have presented an affirmative case with the four standard arguments: extent, harms, causes, and solution. Suppose the negative team has challenged these arguments without proposing any repairs or counter measures. You might organize your rebuttal points in this order:

I. We have told you that a change is necessary; the negative has objected for these reasons: (1, 2, 3). But these objections are not sound, because

A. (Here you would use both general and specific methods of refutation, keeping close watch
B. for errors in evidence and reasoning.)

II. We contend that the change we propose is the best one available; the negative disputes this for these reasons: (1. 2. 3). But their arguments are not acceptable, because
A. (Here you would organize the objections according to workability, solvency, and disadvantages; concentrate your
B. efforts on overturning the *key* objections.)

Each affirmative speaker may be able to use this same general structure. The second affirmative speaker should include in his refutation whatever new objections the negative rebuttal speaker has added concerning each of these main contentions.

In a debate employing the standard case the negative rebuttal speakers could respond to each argument if they chose. They would say the affirmative speakers have based their case on four major assertions. Then they would attack them one by one. This procedure is quite different from the so-called "grocery list" structure, since here the speaker is dealing with the major clashes in the debate.

A different form of rebuttal is used by the affirmative when the negative offers a counter-plan. In the following outline, notice that Roman numeral **I-III** are concerned with the negative team's analysis of the affirmative case. Numerals **IV** and **V** are concerned with the negative team's plan and a comparison of the negative and affirmative plans:

Our opponents have admitted that a problem does exist, but they have disputed the reasons for this problem and have offered a plan of their own. In order to demonstrate why our plan is better than the one offered by the negative, let us examine their four arguments and their objections.

I. Our opponents say the problem is not serious. This is false, because
A. (Return to your extent arguments, or attack the
B. negative evidence and/or reasoning directly.)

II. They say the harms are not severe. This analysis is misleading, because
A. (Return to your arguments about the harm caused,
B. or use general or specific methods of refutation.)

III. They say we have failed to prove that the system cannot correct itself. They must have missed our analysis here, because
A. (Return to causes, or use general or
B. specific methods of refutation.)

IV. The plan of the negative will not solve the problem, because
   A. (Look at the problems of workability,
   B. solvency, and disadvantages.)
V. Our plan does not have the same weaknesses as the negative plan, because
   A.
   B. (Here give the specific reasons.)
   C.

The affirmative speakers may want to divide the labor between them, with the first rebuttal speaker taking the first three arguments and the second rebuttal speaker taking the last two. The negative speakers may simply reverse this organization.

We in no way mean to offer these outlines as "canned" formulas for your rebuttal speeches. There are many ways of structuring a successful rebuttal effort. These examples are given to suggest how the debater invents patterns to meet the requirements of a particular rebuttal situation. Whatever structure is used, the rebuttal speech must be organized clearly if it is to be effective: It must cover the main areas of controversy, and it must not become a jumbled mass of disconnected detail.

EXERCISES

1. Listen to an affirmative speech supporting any proposition. Prepare an organized rebuttal speech using both general and specific methods of refutation.
2. Listen to an affirmative plan for solving a problem. Prepare refutation of that plan organized around workability, solvency, and disadvantages.
3. Ask one of your team members to present a negative counter plan to an affirmative case you have developed. Prepare a five-point rebuttal speech against the counter plan similar to the example on pages 71–73.

SUMMARY

In this chapter we have looked at both general and specific methods of refutation. We suggest that you practice these with your teammates in an intra-squad debate—putting heavy emphasis on the detection of errors in evidence, reasoning, and analysis, for you must learn to spot errors before you can deal with them.

We have also indicated that cross-examination is best understood as an application of the methods of refutation. During cross-examination you should attempt to obtain admissions which can be used in later speeches to show weakness in argument, inconsistencies, or irrelevancies.

Finally, we have presented some recommendations for the organization of the rebuttal speech. No matter how much evidence you may have gathered from your research, it will do you little good if you cannot organize it in a meaningful way.

VII

PRESENTATION

Incredible as it may seem, debaters often need to be reminded that they are public speakers; it is quite common to listen to a debater who seems only faintly aware that he is addressing an audience. Always remember that speakers are ignoring the function of public speaking when they use jargon which is incomprehensible except to other debaters, when they talk at a rate much too rapid for comfortable intelligibility, or when they dodge the responsibility for explaining concepts clearly by assuming that the opposition and the judge have already heard and understand their arguments. The debater must communicate his ideas to his audience. Otherwise, he is wasting his own time as well as that of his listeners. Hence, it is always important to apply the standards of good public speaking to debate. The most important of these will be discussed in this chapter.

REHEARSAL

A wise speaker will rehearse any public speech before he delivers it. Although individuals vary in the rehearsal methods they prefer, the following suggestions may be helpful:

1. Do not begin rehearsing until you have sufficient evidence and until your tentative outline is written out. You should practice expressing your ideas clearly. Since you cannot express ideas until you have carefully examined the factual materials which support them, it is only after you have ironed out the wrinkles of organization that you are ready to rehearse.
2. Speak from your outline during rehearsal. At this stage, you can become familiar with the ordering of your ideas. Certainly you do not want to write out the speech in manuscript form and attempt to memorize it word for word. Good debating requires constant, on-the-spot adaptation and often completely extemporaneous speaking. By diligent practice in speaking from outlines, you can develop the extemporaneous skills debate demands.
3. If possible, persuade a friend to listen to one of your final rehearsals. Ask him to feed back to you some of the ideas you are trying to communicate. If you are not getting your thoughts through to him, try different methods of explaining yourself.
4. You may want to word carefully and memorize key opening, transitional and closing sentences, main arguments, and the like. Develop this procedure cautiously, however. Do not memorize long passages. Quotations and involved statistical tables should be typed on cards. When speaking, pick up the card and read it. This tends to make factual evidence more credible to your audience. One debater we knew had a phenomenal memory and could recall long lists of figures as he needed them. But audiences were never convinced; they thought he must be making them up as he went along. Critics would invariably comment that he seemed to be talking off the cuff.

LANGUAGE

The debater shares with every public speaker the need for accuracy and precision in language. You must practice making your ideas clear through careful use of language. The following suggestions should be helpful:
1. Avoid ambiguity. Be especially careful with words such as *socialism, communism, fascism,* and other terms with vague referents.
2. Avoid all-inclusive language. We have mentioned *all* and *none* generalizations in our discussion of reasoning. Such generalizations constitute a serious language problem. Some examples

are: "All businessmen are crooks," "students are lazy," "long-haired men are anti-establishment."

3. Define your terms clearly, carefully, and often. Regard a definition as a process rather than a finished product. For example, when you use the word *democracy,* be sure to specify: "I'm referring to *democracy* as the form of government practiced in the United States today." Consider other examples: "By *pollution* I mean. . . ." or "When we refer to *corruption* in this debate we mean. . . ." When you explain the details inherent in your terms, you make yourself understood quickly, and thereby avoid wasting valuable debate time in clearing up misapprehensions.

4. Make your language as objective and unemotional as possible. Be careful not to color your statements—even unintentionally—by unfortunate word choices: "My opponent spoke for ten minutes and failed to present a case," is preferable to "My opponent shot off his mouth in a long-winded harangue but never got to the point."

5. Be aware of the difference between denotation and connotation. Denotation is the literal meaning of a word, while connotation refers to the associative images the word creates in the minds of listeners. For example, if you refer to yourself as a "revolutionary," you had better specify that you mean you favor "rapid but legal change" for your goal could be interpreted as a desire to "overthrow the government by force and violence."

6. Avoid triteness. Expressions such as "my colleague," "my partner," "honorable judge," "worthy opponents," "we of the negative," are time-worn. Try to think of fresh expressions for these terms.

7. Avoid debate jargon. Phrases such as "We have outlined our need" or "We have established a need" may be confusing to an audience that is not familiar with debate jargon. For example, in a debate on Federal legislation to insure fair employment practices, a speaker said: "If your broad need exists in the South, how are you going to meet your need?" Translation: "If the greatest problems of discrimination in employment exist in the South, and if the South shows the greatest resistance to Federal legislation, how will the affirmative proposal for Federal legislation eliminate discrimination?" Notice we must substitute for the jargon terms concrete words describing this specific problem. Later the same speaker said: "The status quo is

inherently incapable of dealing with the present system." Since the status quo *is* the present system, a translation of this sentence into plain terms shows that it is ridiculous: "The present system is inherently incapable of dealing with the present system."

8. Avoid exaggerated language such as "We have proved beyond a doubt," "We have proved conclusively," "Any reasonable person will concur with us that. . . ," etc. Such overstatements have no place in a thoughtfully constructed brief, and they weaken rather than insure the credibility of your case.

9. Avoid vague references. Phrases like "statistics prove. . . ," "authoritative opinion is that. . . ," etc. are often used to avoid a concrete reference. If statistics prove a fact, cite the figures and give the source where they can be examined. If you do not have concrete evidence to back up an argument, do not imply that you have, for by so doing you leave yourself open to attack from the opposition.

DELIVERY

The big moment for a debater is the actual delivery of his constructive and rebuttal speeches. The weeks of reading and investigation, briefing and case-making, outlining and rehearsing all culminate in the speech presentation. What a pity it is to watch a well-informed and thoroughly prepared debater throw away his claim to distinction through ineffective delivery. Resolve to make the most of every speaking opportunity by making your delivery the very best.

Voice—Audiences do not demand that you have a cultivated, melodious, or beautiful voice. However, they *do* have a right to expect two things: a) to understand you; and b) to listen to your entire speech without strain, pain, or drowsiness. Here are some suggestions to help you make yourself readily understood:

1. Speak with enough volume and force to be heard. At the same time, be natural. Be yourself—speak much as you would in conversation, only speak louder.

2. Articulate the sounds of each word distinctly. The danger in using contractions such as "gonna" or "hafta" is that audiences

may misunderstand your meaning because they miss a word or two. Of course, you should not go the other extreme and make your articulation painfully precise. Just give your audience a fair break; don't make them have to guess what you are saying.

3. Speak slowly enough to be followed. Among errors made by debaters, rapid-fire speaking is in a class by itself. They often try to crowd fifteen minutes of material into every ten-minute speech; then in rebuttal, where time is short and arguments to be answered numerous, they speak even faster. A machine-gun rate does not pay. It is more effective to develop two arguments at a sensible, understandable rate, than to race through three arguments at a pace so rapid the audience cannot follow you.

4. Another requirement for adequate voice usage is that the audience be able to listen to you without losing interest. Above all, avoid a monotonous tone. Listeners find it difficult to respond steadily to a single stimulus for any length of time. In order to hold their attention, you must vary the inflection of your voice. We all have experienced the drowsiness which results from a speech delivered in a monotone, at a fixed loudness level and unchanging pace. Meaningful changes in volume should occur frequently. Some ideas are more important than others and deserve more emphasis. Key concepts may also be emphasized by reducing the loudness level. Rate, too, should be varied. Main arguments, complex causal relationships, involved statistical computations, and the like, should be presented more slowly than other parts of the speech. Pauses between main divisions should be longer than between sentences within a division.

Just in case we may be misunderstood, let us add here that your voice alone cannot make you worth listening to, no matter how skillfully you manipulate it. Obviously you must also be saying something worthwhile.

Bodily Action—Your listenability rating will also be helped by effective movement, posture, gesture, eye contact, and facial expression. Action should contribute to the communication of ideas; it should not call attention to itself. The speaker should be animated. He should face the audience directly, look them squarely in the eyes, and show by his facial expression that he believes what he is saying and wants his audience to listen to

him. Movement, gesture, and other aspects of bodily action deserve careful thought and diligent practice.

Adaptation—Everything the speaker does should be appropriate to the situation. He should always dress neatly, but whether he wears coat and tie will depend on the formality of the occasion. Speaking in a large hall obviously requires greater volume and more vigorous gestures. In his opening remarks, the debater should take note of the occasion; invariably he should make appropriate introductory remarks. In fact, the debater must adapt all his remarks to the particular audience he is addressing. Examples used, simplicity of explanations, and so forth should vary with the age, occupation, level of understanding, and attitudes of listeners.

The appropriate manner of greeting an audience is a minor problem which seems to worry most debaters. It is now old-fashioned to use what once was a standard opening: "Mr. Chairman, Worthy Opponents, Honorable Judges." The best greeting is often the simplest. Usually there is a chairman, and he should always be addressed, since he is recognizing the speaker and assigning him the right to the floor. If there are only a few persons in the audience, the simple word, "Friends," would be appropriate. If you have a fair gathering of men and women, or a large crowd, the simplest acceptable greeting is, "Ladies and Gentlemen." Your opening would then be: "Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen."

Attitude—An audience expects the debater to be courteous and polite to the opposition and to everyone else present. Your conduct before, during, and after the debate will influence audience judgment of you as a speaker. Some participants appear smug before a debate, and cast deprecating glances at the opposition which seem to say: "This one is going to be easy." During the debate, while a member of the opposition is speaking, debaters have been known to confer constantly, hold an audible conversation, grin indulgently as if the speaker were an idiot, or in other ways ignore what the opposition is saying. Make no mistake about it, this kind of discourtesy will brand you as a debater who is not really interested in intelligent deliberation about an important public problem. Even after the debate is over, audiences

will be disappointed in you if you are flippant about a critic's suggestions for improvement, or rude to the opposition.

The speakers who happen to be opposing you are not stupid. They are just as intelligent, just as sincere, and just as competent to debate the proposition as you are. Even if they are not, society expects you to pretend you think that they are! We meet together to give each side a fair hearing. It is inconsiderate to be sarcastic about the preparation, abilities, or attitudes of the opposition. Sarcasm is an easy weapon to use, and at first it seems like great sport to the user. A debater once said to a team of girls: "We always thought that your University offered courses in political science; but apparently it doesn't because these girls don't seem to know any of the simple fundamentals of political science. As debaters, we think these girls ought to stick to being mothers." In this case, the judge filled out his ballot and left the room before the debate was over! Sarcasm has no place in intelligent deliberation.

EXERCISES

1. Listen to a competitive debate. Make a list of the ambiguous terms, the trite phrases, the jargon, etc.
2. Write an essay in which you evaluate the delivery of one of the debaters, including language, voice, and bodily action.

APPENDIX

THE FLOWSHEET

The flowsheet is extremely important to a debater. On it you should keep a running record of the debate—that is, the essential arguments and your potential responses. On the following page is a typical flowsheet. We suggest that you purchase an art pad, a legal pad, or some other conveniently bound pad of paper that is large enough to give you space for recording the arguments. Make vertical lines on the sheet to separate the speeches and horizontal lines to divide the major arguments and the responses to them. The example given here is for a standard debate. **1A** refers to the first affirmative speaker, **1N** to the first negative speaker, and so on. Should you enter a tournament with a different format, you will have to vary your flowsheet accordingly.

With some practice you will soon develop your own shorthand system to facilitate the recording of a great deal of information. Cooperate with your partner; but in all cases keep a flowsheet of your own. Indeed, while your partner is debating, you will want to keep a record of what he is doing as well so that you can complete any arguments he does not have time for.

	CONSTRUCTIVE SPEECHES				REBUTTAL SPEECHES			
	Speaker 1A	Speaker 1N	Speaker 2A	Speaker 2N	Speaker 1NR	Speaker 1AR	Speaker 2NR	Speaker 2AR
Argument 1								
Argument 2								
Argument 3								
Argument 4								

JUDGING BALLOTS

When judging a debate the judge must consider several factors: the individual debater, the individual debater in comparison with the others, the individual team, and the individual team in comparison with the other team. The most commonly used ballot is the Debate Ballot *Form C* of the American Forensic Association. *Form D* is also popular, but it does not include the judging criteria found in *Form C.* Here we will consider the points common to both forms and the judging criteria found in *Form C.*

1. The judge is asked to rate each debater individually according to standard criteria: analysis, reasoning, evidence, organization, refutation, and delivery. The judge ranks the debater from one to six on each of the six criteria. Thus a debater can earn from six to 36 points. The following chart is an example of the form used to rate the individual debater:

DEBATER	1	2	3	4
Analysis				
Reasoning				
Evidence				
Organization				
Refutation				
Delivery				

2. The judge is asked to rate each team according to quality: superior, average, fair, or poor.

3. The judge is asked to rank the debaters in relation to each other. The best debater is ranked one, the next two, and so on. Note that in the first judging step individual debaters may earn the same number of points but in comparative ranking, ties are broken.
4. The judge is asked to decide which team has debated more effectively.
5. In addition, each judge is encouraged to prepare comments, and criticisms designed to improve the individual debater.

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